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of Georgia**

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## **Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at Higher Educational Institutions of Georgia**

### **ABSTRACT**

The Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) method focuses on teaching the main subject through a foreign language. This method is already successfully used in various around the world no specific formula or textbook exists so far. Based on the study of the existing literature, the possibility of using CLIL at Universities of Georgia and its anticipated results are analyzed in the present thesis. Target language of CLIL is mostly English. In our country English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is successfully taught in many Universities. For example, at the Faculty of Economics and Business our students are taught Business using a special English textbook to learn some issues of economics and business. Teaching any curricular subject using CLIL will be twice as effective and convenient for both the student and the university than teaching English and this particular subject separately. CLIL ensures a comprehensive study of a specific subject and a high level of English language proficiency. CLIL has a significant positive impact on the growth of the students' language competence. It helps them to achieve significant success in terms of various linguistic aspects, such as: vocabulary, terminology, academic English, etc. However, the assessment is made not in terms of language competence, but in terms of subject matter proficiency. Indeed, CLIL does not only mean language teaching - it is a complex method of using a foreign language to study a major subject. Consequently, knowledge is assessed within the competence of the main subject and thereby the language proficiency as well. With no database of textbooks for CLIL, everything is upon the teacher training, as a result of which the teacher must be able to compile a lesson plan based on different subject materials. We propose to use CLIL to teach different curricular subjects to the students of the Faculty of Economics and Business. To begin with economics, famous economists, e.g., Marshall, Robbins, Sandmo, etc. have different answers to the question "What is economics?" Therefore, the goal of the lecture course we suggest within CLIL will be to find the answer to this question.

**Keywords:** *CLIL, economics, English language, HEI's.*

In today's world, it is no longer a question of the need of knowing two or more languages. Over the years, scientists, linguists, professors, and finally programmers have created and developed numerous methods of teaching a foreign language. At the end of the twentieth century, another new method of teaching a foreign language emerged - CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). This method has been used successfully for several decades in various schools and colleges around the world. In the present thesis, based on the study of the existing literature and practical experience

of different countries, the possibility of using the method of language-content teaching in higher education institutions and the expected results are analyzed.

CLIL is a complex method, which combines teaching foreign language through the content of the subject and teaching the content of the subject through a foreign language. It is interesting to note that CLIL, where it has been introduced, is beginning to influence institutionalised education in a positive way. The approach seems to confirm innovative methodological claims and to lead to new pedagogical insights. Practicing CLIL teachers have pointed, for example, to a number of exciting methodological options which can be realised more easily in a CLIL environment: task-based learning, project work, learner orientation and autonomy, to name just a few. In recent academic research it could be shown that this assumption is correct: it is not only the learner's language competence but also his content subject competence which benefits from this approach (Wolff, 2012, pp. 105-116).

The name CLIL was coined by David Marsh and Anne Maliers in 1994, but in practice its use began much earlier. As Marsh and Frigols point out, "CLIL emerged in contexts where educational provision required upgrading; language learning levels needed to be improved; and content-related educational outcomes were not being achieved" (Marsh, Frigols, 2012, 2).

Since the 1950s, the European Union began to intensively focus on the study and teaching of European languages. Since 1976, serious steps were taken in that direction. In the following years, the European Parliament adopted a number of resolutions to promote language learning / teaching. The innovative method of content and language integrated learning (CLIL) has been highly praised by the European Commission.

What is CLIL what is its objective and what is the subject matter of teaching in general?

"An outsider might imagine that the content would comprise two major elements, namely knowledge of the language's grammar and knowledge of lots of vocabulary. Of course, these do form an important part of what is taught/learned, but it's important to realise that someone learning a language needs far more than 'in-the-head' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary to be able to use language successfully." (Scriveener, 2005, 27).

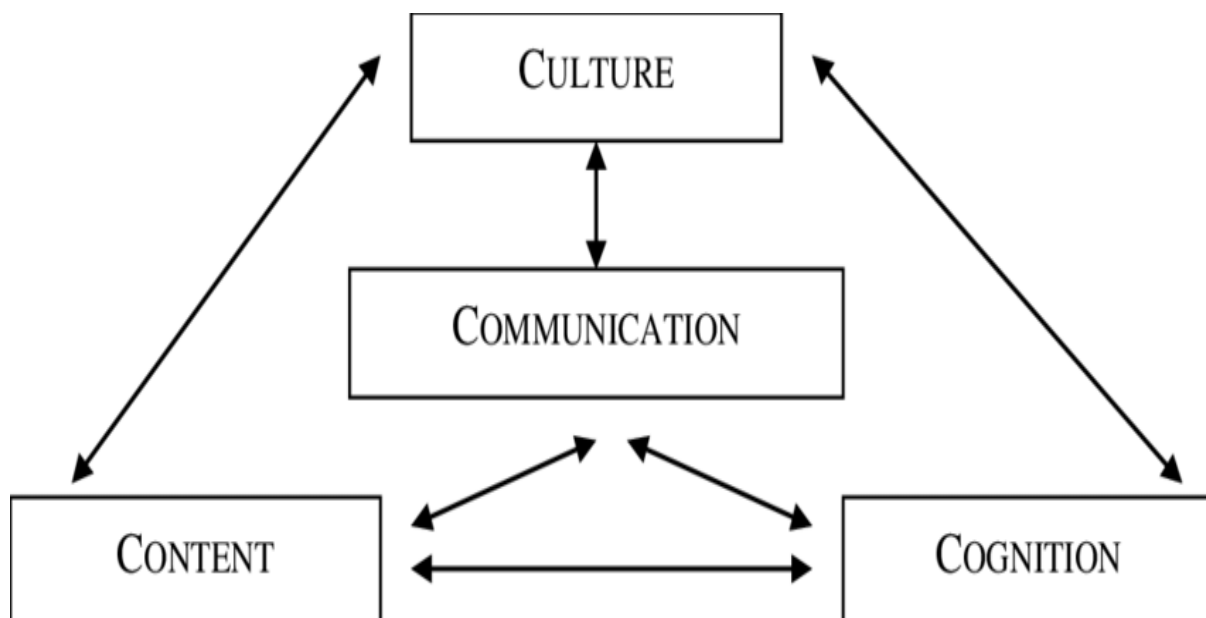
The ultimate goal of CLIL can be different. „The reasons for CLIL implementation include: diversifying methods and forms of classroom practice; building intercultural knowledge and understanding; enabling students to access international certification; increasing learner motivation and building self-confidence towards learning English; giving added value to the learning of content; preparing for future studies and working life; and, enhancing school and region profiles“ (Marsh, Frigols, 2012, p. 5).

Although a lot of time and effort is spent on learning / teaching a foreign language, specifically English, the overall level of language knowledge of students and pupils is quite low. Therefore,

some initiatives of CLIL are driven by the need to make changes in English language teaching practice.

The essence of CLIL is in integration. The methods used in the classroom depend on a set of core variables. These are interwoven into the curriculum and realized through classroom practice. They revolve around the type of subject learnt, the cognitive demands involved, and the pupils' linguistic competence and learning load (Marsh, Frigols, 2012, p. 3).

Dalton-Puffer provides the curricular model (Fig.1) with its four areas content, communication, culture and cognition adapted by Zydatið where communication, and hence language does not hold the centre-place.



*Figure 1. A curricular framework for CLIL (adapted by Zydatið)*

It is true that CLIL does not give priority to the study of language, but it has many opportunities to improve language skills. It helps students to achieve significant success in terms of various linguistic aspects, such as: vocabulary, terminology, academic English, etc. However, the assessment is made not in terms of language competence, but in terms of subject matter proficiency. Indeed, CLIL does not only mean language teaching - it is a complex method of using a foreign language to study a major subject. Consequently, knowledge is assessed within the competence of the main subject and thereby the language proficiency as

well. The level of language knowledge is revealed through the test carried out for checking the knowledge of the main subject.

The experience of different countries proves that children under this program achieve significant success in terms of different linguistic aspects. Based on the analysis of existing studies, it can be said that CLIL has a significant positive impact on the growth of students' language competence. It provides a much higher level of foreign language than foreign language lessons in general (Dalton-Puffer, 2007, 5), including higher in some respects and relatively lower in some respects. (Table 1). Generally, CLIL has positive impacts on children's language competences.

**Table 1. Language competencies favourably affected or unaffected by CLIL**

<i>Favorably affected</i>	<i>Unaffected or Indefinite</i>
Receptive skills	Syntax
Vocabulary	Writing Informal/non-technical language
Morphology	Pronunciation
Creativity, risk-taking, fluency, quantity	Pragmatics
Emotive/affective outcomes	

The table contrasts areas where clear gains are observable with areas where there are not. It has a good effect on the development receptive skills, vocabulary, morphology, creativity, risk-taking, fluency, quantity, emotive/affective outcomes. On the other hand, it has little or no effect on syntax, writing informal/non-technical language, pronunciation and pragmatics.

CLIL encourages students to learn languages, as the motivation to learn a language increases along with the interest in a particular subject. One of the frequently observed positive effects of CLIL is that “after a certain amount of time spent in CLIL lessons the learners seem to lose their inhibitions to use the foreign language spontaneously for face-to-face interaction” (Dalton-Puffer, 2007, p. 6). But it should be noted that “the greatest gain in terms of the language system, however, is undoubtedly produced in the lexicon: through studying content subjects in the foreign language CLIL learners possess larger vocabularies of technical and semi-technical terms and possibly also of general academic language which gives them a clear advantage over their EFL-peers. (Dalton-Puffer, 2007, p. 6).

The 2014 report of the European Commission, based on the data of experienced teachers and researchers reflects the positive moments of CLIL. The research and observation is still

ongoing to confirm the pros and cons of this method. The International Research Journal systematically publishes papers on CLIL. Andreas Bonnet, the professor of Hamburg University considers that further empirical research is needed, and a brief methodological analysis of what evidence base is there might point the way (Bonnet, 2012, pp. 66-77).

Initially, the CLIL was introduced at a lower level of teaching, at primary and secondary schools. However, recently universities have also become interested, especially in Europe. Using this method in higher educational institutions will give students more motivation to learn a foreign language better allowing them to learn a specific subject in that language, to read a wide range of foreign books and papers in that particular field and to learn great number of technical terms.

The nature of CLIL is interdisciplinary. It is not based on a single evidence, single theory or single textbook. According to Marsh and Frigols Martín (2012, p. 294), “applications of CLIL are multifarious depending on educational level, environment and the specific approach adopted. The learning outcomes tend to focus on achieving higher levels of awareness and skill in using language in real-life situations, alongside the learning of subject matter. This approach can be viewed as being neither language learning, nor subject learning, but rather an amalgam of both. Successful application involves utilising and developing a broad range of language awareness capacities.”

Consider, for example, the curriculum in science designed for fourth grade students for one of Spanish school– the topic of is “watercycle” planned for 5 lessons (www.cicloagua-mariamoliner):

### **Lesson plan**

**Content** 1. What is water; 2. What does water circulation mean; 3. How is water recycled and what is pollution, etc.?

**Language.** To learn basic vocabulary; Semantic groups of new words related to the water cycle: River, sea, lake, etc. Condition: liquid, solid, vapor, gas; Temperature and size adjectives: hot, cool, freezing, Warm, cold, big, small ...

**Grammar.** Use of present simple/present continuous to describe, characterize and explain water cycle processes, etc.

**Mathematics:** Practical to measure the water volume.

**Poetry and Literature.** Various poems on this topic, for example:

**Rain** -*Water, water everywhere, water all around, Water in the ocean, water in the ground.*

*Water in a river, water in a creek, Water in a faucet with a drip-drip leak!*

**Water** -*I think, think think the water comes from the kitchen sink.*

*But no, no, no*

*and now I know that water comes from rain and snow , etc.*

All the subjects such as music, art, poetry and literature are involved.

In terms of CLIL implementation, our country is significantly behind the European countries, especially at the university level. But it should be noted that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is successfully taught in many Universities. For example, at the Faculty of Economics and Business our students are taught Business using a special English textbook to learn some issues of economics and business, while CLIL implies comprehensive study of a curricular subject using a wide range of English language resources. Some schools have a practice of teaching certain subjects in English, which is confined to the English textbook that is far from the resources provided by CLIL. Teaching any curricular subject using CLIL is twice as effective and convenient than teaching English and that particular subject as separate disciplines. As practice shows, high school students show more interest in learning professional English rather than general English. This is probably due to the fact that general English is taught in school for several years, while professional English is something new and a kind of challenge for them. CLIL ensures a comprehensive study of a specific subject and a high level of English language proficiency. We propose application of CLIL at the Faculty of Economics and Business. For example, “The history of Economic Thought” has long been taught at the Faculty of Business Economics at various universities around the world. It is a curricular subject at our universities. However, it is mainly confined to the native language textbook consisting of limited information on global business and economic issues translated from foreign languages, While CLIL allows students to study economic analysis and economic doctrines in detail based on a wide range of English-language sources. Also, it allows teaching two subjects at the expense of one in terms of time and money. The integrated teaching of the English language and The History of Economic Thought should be carried out at the interdisciplinary level like any other CLIL subject. CLIL will allow to teach the history of economic analysis and economic doctrines in close connection with Ancient economic theories with their similarities and differences with modern economic theories, economic policy and

political economy, philosophy, sociology, statistics, demography, banking policy, agriculture and urbanism, history of Georgia, etc. Language learning will be provided by classroom discussions, written exercises and assignments. The subject itself will be taught through a variety of English-language economic resources, both classic and modern, such as: A. Sandmo, *Economics Evolving: A History of Economic Thought*; L. Robins, *A History of Economic Thought – the LSE Lectures*; C. Menger, *Principles of Economics*; B. Gordon, *Aristotle and the Development of Value Theory*; S. Lowry, *Recent Literature on Ancient Greek Economic Thought*, etc.

For implementation of CLIL the role of the teacher is especially important. In its resolutions on multilingualism strategies The Council of Europe devotes particular attention to the further training of language teachers and to enhancing the language competences of teachers, in general, in order to promote the teaching of non-linguistic subjects in foreign languages.

As for the trainings, language teachers should do a certificate or credit course in relevant subject abroad. In conditions of modern globalization and computerization, teachers can remotely do such courses at any university of the world. Also, the students can easily search for relevant foreign sources in any subject on the Internet.

In conclusion, CLIL is a new effective method that combines two subjects under one umbrella. Its intensive implementation in higher educational institutions will help students to learn a foreign language at a high level through the content of the subject and to study the content of a nonlinguistic subject in depth through a foreign language.

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