



## Implementing Content And Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) In Secondary Schools

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Journal Website:

<http://usajournalshub.com/index.php/tajssei>

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### ABSTRACT

This paper aims to give information about the benefits and stages of implementation of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in secondary schools. It focuses on the objectives and implementation stages of the CLIL, target language skills, assessment, feedback, and dual-subject knowledge in this approach. It further states the benefits of applying CLIL in preparing students for 21- century skills (Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision making, Creativity, Collaboration, Communication), international standardized exams such as IELTS, TOEFL, and large-scale international assessments (PISA, and TIMSS).

### KEYWORDS

Content, integrated, language skills, higher-order thinking, assessment, feedback

### INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, the majority of school graduates trying to be proficient enough in English to win their places in top English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) universities in the world. This puts new pressures and demands on educational systems, contributing to the need to develop new approaches and methods for teaching.

According to Hasanova (2007), the implementation of English in Uzbekistan in

both schools and other educational institutions' curriculum started after the Soviet government released the decree in 1932 in the need for promoting foreign language knowledge in all secondary education system.

At this time teaching English at schools started after finishing primary years to be exact from the beginning of fifth grade.

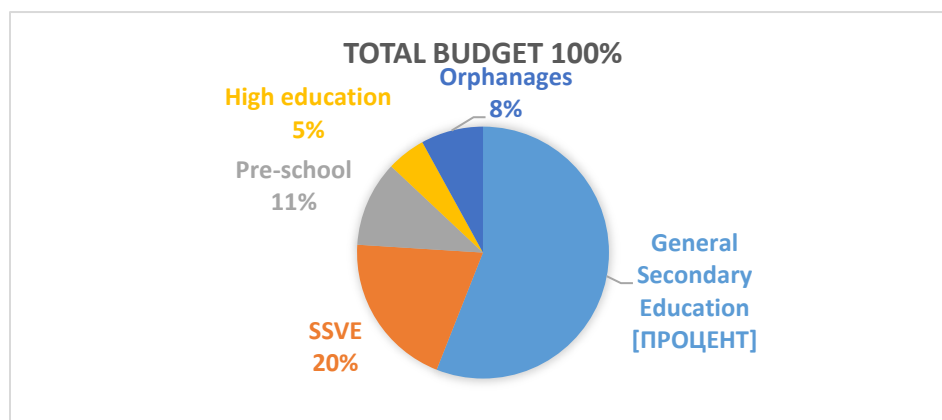
After independence, in Uzbekistan, there have been many modifications and improvements in the education system in teaching foreign languages in both secondary schools and higher educational institutions.

According to Hasanova (2008), in 1990 there was major educational reformation mainly in the sphere of revision curricular standards for teaching foreign languages. In order to accomplish this project, the Ministry of Public Education developed the State Educational Standards in 1998. The main purpose of the State Educational Standards was to promote a curriculum that facilitates improving the quality of education via developing knowledge and critical thinking skills in student-centered classrooms. The fundamental objective of the amended curriculum is to equip, empower students with enough, appropriate knowledge to meet the requirements of international education. The main purpose of these changes was to transmit smoothly from conventional grammar translation and audiolingual methods to new communicative language teaching (CLT) in order to improve students not only linguistic expertise, but also communicative fluency.

There was another modification in making improvements in teaching English in Uzbekistan. On 10 December 2012, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan issued Decree “On further enhancement of measures on foreign language learning system”. It is indicated in the Decree, that learning English should begin from the first classes in a play form, alphabet, grammar and reading should be commenced from the second year. Public educational organizations such as secondary schools, vocational colleges, academic lyceums should be provided with teaching materials and textbooks and these teaching materials should be funded by the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Furthermore, it states that some stem subjects, in technical or specific universities they should be taught in a foreign language (in English) (Azizova, 2014, p.27).

According to World Bank analyses (2018), Uzbekistan spends a large amount of money on education, especially this fund goes to General Secondary Education. In 2017, for example, of the total budget of \$ 2.94 billion (around 15,979.6 billion Sum) spent on education, the Government of Uzbekistan contributed the most to General Secondary Education and other sub-sectors of education.

### ALLOCATED MONEY FOR EDUCATION SECTOR (2017)



According to the National Educational Standard of General Secondary Education, primary level graduates should be at the A1 level, 9th-grade graduates reach the A2 level in CEFR. Secondary specialized and vocational education graduates and general secondary education 11th grades should reach at the B1 level in CEFR before leaving secondary school.

So far, there have been several transformations in teaching English in secondary school students however, it seems the system still needs more modern, effective, and flexible approach to teaching foreign languages. Therefore, this article suggests implementing Content and Language Integrated Learning approach.

#### What is CLIL?

“CLIL refers to situations where subjects, or parts of subjects are taught through a foreign language with dual-focused aims, namely the learning of content, and the simultaneous learning of a foreign language” (Marsh, 1994).

According to Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2000), Content and Language Integrated Learning is a dual-focused educational approach. In this approach, both content and language are taught equally.

According to Dale (2012), CLIL teachers who teach any subject have to use another language in their classes and CLIL language teachers should content, subject in their classes.

#### Objectives:

##### Objectives of the CLIL approach:

- To develop students both linguistic and academic knowledge
- To prepare students for standardized tests (IELTS, TOEFL)
- To prepare any large-scale international assessments (PISA, TIMSS)
- To prepare school graduates for EMI Universities (English Medium Instruction)

- To develop intercultural understanding
- To prepare students for 21st-century skills (Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision making, Creativity, Collaboration, Communication).

### **Recommendations to implement the CLIL approach**

Hard CLIL- teaching any subjects through English

Soft CLIL- using content knowledge (any subject related topic) in English classes

Here some list of recommendations for implementing a new approach:

- Inform parents about the changes which are happening in the teaching process
- Prepare students explaining the transition to the CLIL program
- Get support from the teacher trainers who know CLIL methodology
- Make a CLIL teachers team who are passionate about teaching
- Engage subject teachers who know English
- Apply soft CLIL first (Use content, subject knowledge in English classes)
- Hard CLIL then (Teach any subject through English)
- Provide access to CLIL materials and visual aids
- Organize regular meetings with the teaching staff to analyze outcomes
- Use Cummins' Matrix and Bloom's Taxonomy
- Use Verbal Scaffolding Techniques
- Use Content Scaffolding Techniques
- Use Learning Process Scaffolding

Vygotsky (1978), found the importance of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). It shows how different learners perform differently individually, and under teacher supervision in doing some tasks.

- Apply Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory

According to the Multiple Intelligence Theory from SLA course, students learn differently because they have various learning styles. Good CLIL should consider multiple intelligences in the learning process.

According to Dale and Tanner (2012), implementing multiple intelligence theory give learners a chance to get knowledge in different ways that are suitable for their style. They can enrich their expertise in both content and language because they have an opportunity to practice, revise and review the content and language several times in different ways. In this way, learners gain and keep the content information and language knowledge in their long term memory effectively.

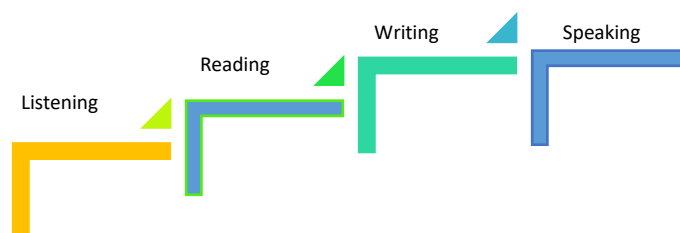
### **CLIL implementation stages**

Implementing CLIL requires time so it should be implemented step by step during at least half an academic year. I would suggest starting with teaching two classes and compare their results to ordinary classes through half an academic year. In the initial organizational stage, authorities should provide needed funds for the school, and parents and students should be familiarized with changes and organize expert CLIL team. In the main stage, CLIL should be implemented in two ways: in the form of soft CLIL and hard CLIL.

In the soft CLIL, content or subject knowledge is taught in English classes while hard CLIL requires teaching any subjects through English. In both stages, teachers should carefully use second language acquisition theories (SLA) because CLIL closely related to these theories.

### Target Language Skills

The uniqueness of the CLIL is that it covers, teaches all language skills simultaneously especially aim at improving productive skills: writing and speaking.



Coyle's Content, Communication, Cognition, Culture framework for CLIL starts with integrating all content (subject) and communication (language), cognition (thinking), and culture (awareness of self and others). It brings together learning theories, language learning theories and intercultural understanding.

According to Vygotsky (1978), content is not only about getting subject knowledge, and acquiring skills but also about students' reformulation of their own expertise, understanding and developing skills. Students get subject expertise as well as reconstruct their own understanding of knowledge and boost their skills.

According to Krashen (1985), learning language needs to be in the context and it should be related to cognition.

The CLIL improves students' both linguistic and academic knowledge. Learning a subject via another language can also give extra

motivation for the subject and a subject taught in another language may be more interesting to students simply because they feel they are enhancing all language skills along with the subject. They feel more confident and may proud of themselves because of their rapid progress and achievement in both a subject and language. In CLIL meaningful interaction helps students to improve their language skills and ability to communicate effectively. In the classroom, CLIL students develop an ability to understand different types of spoken and written language in both general and more specialized topics which are the key criteria for preparing for standardized international exams.

According to Coyle (2006), cognitive learning theories have great importance in the learning process. According to this theory, people remember things more effectively and easily in the case their brains work harder to complete an assignment. If people learn any subject through another language it broadens

and deepens CLIL learners' understanding of subject knowledge and concepts, critical thinking skills, creativity, and their brains engage more when they learn a subject with the help of another language.

It also works effectively in preparing students to become globally competent individuals.

CLIL demands using Bloom's Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOT) in the learning process as it helps to develop students analyzing, problem-solving, and decision-making skills, develop creativity.



### Bloom's Taxonomy

Furthermore, CLIL requires students to produce language, in other words, students have to speak and write in order to become proficient users of the target language.

### Culture

Today Uzbekistan is a multinational country with more than 130 nationalities. In each school, there are students from different nationalities. In one Russian Instruction classes, you can encounter at least 5 nationality students which are also quite distinct with their culture, religion, customs, and traditions, music, art, food, L1, history, beliefs, holidays, citizenship, and community. In the city schools, cultural issues have always

been a frequently addressed topic among students because of the discrepancy of students thinking, background, view of point and interests.

Through implementing CLIL, teachers help students to develop intercultural awareness, they learn each other, and communicate with students from other cultures to become tolerant, and learn to work in collaboration. Students are fortunate as they can develop and explore different, global perspectives on the subjects they are learning. As we know from sociocultural theories of learning language, thinking, and culture are learned through social interaction, communication and that all of them are



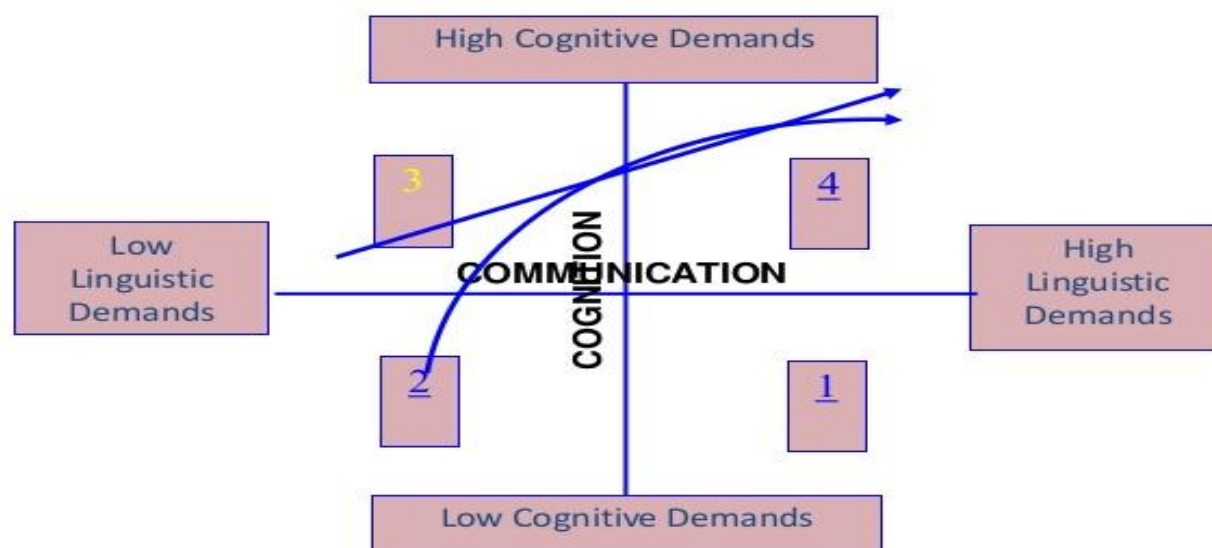
interconnected and interrelated (Dale and Tanner, 2012, p.13).

### Assessment and Feedback in CLIL

Assessment and feedback are crucial to any learning and teaching process. CLIL teachers assess their students' achievement and give them feedback because thereby, they know their strengths and weaknesses and try to perform better in the future. The main purpose of CLIL teachers' assessment and feedback to encourage and motivate students to work on enhancing the subject content. Furthermore, through assessing and providing feedback teachers also help students to focus on using language appropriately and accurately (Dale and Tanner, 2011, p.171).

Assessment for learning – formative assessment mainly focuses on improving the students' learning, gives them a clear understanding of their learning, provides feedback which helps students to improve their weaknesses of the learning process.

Content and language alignment is a particularly important factor in CLIL because it focuses on teaching and improving both subject content and language equally. CLIL should not lose content-language alignment in teaching and assessing students' knowledge. In order to keep this balance between content and language, this proposal suggests using Cummins' Matrix.



**Cummins' Matrix**

## CONCLUSION

CLIL is effective in many ways because it develops students both linguistic and academic skills equally as it uses authentic materials through content, cognition, collaboration, and communication. CLIL exactly prepares school graduates for standardized, international exams such as PISA, IELTS, TOEFL and CEFR.

After finishing school, CLIL learners become confident and fluent in English and knowledgeable individuals in all subjects and completely ready for English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) and to get desired scores from international standardized exams.

So far, CLIL is being successfully implemented in many European countries and beyond. According to Dale and Tanner (2011), CLIL is being implemented and considered the most innovative and successful development in a secondary school system in many European countries, it got fund and support from the European Union. Educators, teachers, principals, policymakers, and parents consider CLIL is the best way of preparing students for their future life in a globalized world.

I believe implementing CLIL in Uzbekistan also gives productive results if necessary conditions are provided.

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