INTERNATIONALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION- THE CASE OF CLIL METHOD

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Abstract: Contemporary society is characterized by an obvious phenomenon of transforming the world into a unity that manifests itself on the scale of the whole globe, known by the term globalization. Under these circumstances, knowing different languages by people of different ages have become mandatory. Most school curricula include studying at least one foreign language. Language learning is conceived in different countries differently: in most countries, the curriculum provides for the first foreign language to be taught from primary or secondary school, in some countries language lessons begin with primary education at the age of 6 . However, practice shows that although foreign languages are studied over the course of many years, and the number of those studying these languages in school is very high, there are relatively few people who can communicate at a sufficient level in these languages. A new approach to studying a foreign language, widely spread in European countries, consists in teaching and learning a language through the perspective of integrated educational concepts, i.e. through integrated content learning and one language - the CLIL method.

Keywords: learning, language, context, content, CLIL

The term "Content-and-Language-Integrated Learning (CLIL)" refers generally to the context in which a non-linguistic subject (s) is taught through a secondary language, or a foreign language. The term CLIL was first used by David Marsh, a professor at Jyväskylä University, Finland, in 1994. Although the term has relatively recently developed, integrated learning has a rich history of bilingual learning spread over the last few years throughout world. In Europe, CLIL has been adopted in mass education in most countries. However, this does not mean that it is widespread or accessible to all, regardless of age and educational context [5]. (Eurydice 2006). The European Union has endeavoured to popularize CLIL through the funding of numerous projects, particularly on methodology and pedagogy.

In 32 European countries, including Turkey, some schools offer students the opportunity to learn non-linguistic subjects in two different languages (CLIL models). Belgium (the German Community), Luxembourg and Malta are the only states or regions in countries where CLIL exists in all schools throughout the education system. In Cyprus, the CLIL method has been foreseen in schools for many years under a pilot program, but since September 2011 it has now generally been transposed.

1.1. What is CLIL?

CLIL (Content Integrated Learning and Language Pedagogy) is an educational approach that involves learning a foreign language and content at the same time. This duality brings opportunities in terms of balancing language and content into a CLIL lesson. This may vary between content that is mainly focused on a content (hard approach) and the other extreme where the emphasis is on the language (easy approach). However, the essence lies not in emphasizing either content or language, but combining them. As far as the language in which they teach, CLIL teachers have to form subjects from which students can access ideas, notions, concepts, and procedures to develop their knowledge and use the vocabulary specific

to the subject being taught. So, how CLIL is seen has gone from Content and Language to Integrated Learning.

1.2. Learning is an active process of understanding

Learning is an active mental activity to understand the world. This process is constantly evolving and unfolds as we learn, in order to understand and give meaning to the experiences. It can resemble building a home where we need different components to build it, combining them in a functional way. Moreover, during the process we can restart and repeat methods, and the experience will tell us what steps to take. If we were to go back to the metaphor of the house, we will learn that the foundation comes before the first floor, then the second, and the roof is the last to be built.

In this process, learners must be involved because assimilation will take place during interaction with others. So the role of CLIL teachers is to provide pupils with ways to interact in a foreign language on subjects in the curriculum.

1.3. The basic principles of CLIL

There are some basic principles of CLIL. Coyle (2010) presented a four key component of CLIL: content, communication, intercultural understanding and cognition process.

These four elements are interconnected and occur in specific contexts. Content learning develops language (Gajo, 2007), but if language is not known and difficult, the influence will be negative. Learning content develops mental processes, both high and low (Krathwohl, 2002). CLIL also develops the social and cultural side by using specific topics. This should be followed in every lesson.

In terms of communication, we can differentiate three types of language that combine when developing a CLIL lesson. The language in which learning is conducted is the type of language learners need to learn to access content. The language to be taught is the language used by students during lessons to be able to carry out activities effectively. Language through learning is the new language we learn through the new knowledge we accumulate (Mohan and van Naerssen, 1997).

CLIL teachers need to balance cognitive and language requirements so that both language and content learning is effective. Students must be challenged cognitively and linguistically, and for this teachers will use a framework to support learning. This framework must provide support for students to succeed in the task they received without which they would not have been successful. Frames should be used when students are ready for a new challenge but do not stand alone. When providing a framework, teachers leave the task of solving a task to students as the skills to solve their problems grow. Essentially CLIL teachers are engaging pupils in actions in a pleasant way, through a language that students do not fully master. So, we need to offer frameworks on three areas: language, content and interaction (Bonnet, 2007). Student interaction skills must be considered in the CLIL approach.

Cognition is achieved through the process of learning by learning to learn, doing things, making decisions, and sustaining their point of view. The culture principle aims at appreciating cultural diversity, developing cultural and intercultural competences, showing interest in intercultural communication, understanding of one's own culture and identity, and feeling of citizenship.

CLIL can improve plurilingualism and can offer varied ways to develop students' knowledge and skills. However, teaching through CLIL requires knowledge of a specific methodology and an appropriate teacher training program.

The problem of special bilingual teacher training is current. The lack of training in the field and the insufficiency of specialized teachers are often fatal to the idea of bilingual education.

Integrated teaching requires the observance of some components. The teachers involved in the integrated learning process must first of all have a good command of the foreign language, secondly, demonstrate competence in teaching the second / foreign language and thirdly they need to know very well good content of the subjects taught in this language. This requires additional activities for the preparation of hours, but also continuous professional development.

The bilingual teacher should have or will be able to form certain abilities and competencies for the activity required, including: knowledge of the psychological aspects of bilingualism; knowledge of a large number of methods to teach the subject of discipline and a foreign language; the ability of the teacher to present the material clearly enough, not too quickly, and so expressively that the student does not even know what language he / she is doing, the ability to become aware of the learner's "silent period" and to help him overcome this barrier, not to interrupt the pupil's response due to communication errors, the ability not to publicize the language mistakes of certain pupils but to generalize and explain at the end of the lesson, etc.

Studying the foreign language in other disciplines is important in several aspects:

a) social integration (at the usual level);

b) practicing the future profession;

c) developing student's intellectual abilities;

d) enriching pupil's personal culture;

e) Enhance the ability to understand how language works;

f) the ability to make the student understand and love the culture and traditions of the people, the language they learn;

g) training students to communicate orally and in write in the foreign language, etc.

Acquiring the foreign language through other disciplines presents a new spectrum of achievements of the student's personality. It is he who builds the strong argument in cultivating the interest in language as a language:

•of communication;

• informative source;

• means of professional achievement;

• means of affirmation as personality, etc.

Also, the acquisition of the foreign language through other subjects gives him new possibilities of affirmation in the socio-cultural environment. The subjects taught at other disciplines will help them acquire new terms, form an appropriate, honourable language. If the student has an adequate language, he will certainly be able to expose his thoughts clearly, will be able to formulate and address various questions (clarification, concretisation, etc.). Through the linguistic baggage acquired, he accumulates knowledge from various fields, learns to use them appropriately in different situations, can relate to others, and last but not least, he can integrate successfully in different social groups.

Knowing from the mother tongue some facts, facts about the environment, science, culture, etc., entering into linguistic relations in the foreign language with other subjects, the student exercises his / her language, develops his / her vocabulary and accumulates new experiences of efficient, spontaneous communication, forming real communication skills too.

This competence, the correct use of words in a language other than the mother tongue also develop in the student some mental processes: analytical thinking, comparison, classification, generalization, etc. Due to the developed language, the student discovers and appreciates the beauty created by man and nature, which also contributes to his aesthetic education.

The formation / development of communicative-linguistic competence gives the student the possibility to:

• communicate in the foreign language (the official language of the state, possibly even in the second mother tongue);
• express their thoughts, ideas, etc.
• formulate questions;
• build responses;
• establish communication with others;
• develop their vocabulary;
• integrate into different groups, society;
• apply his / her knowledge, skills in various situations;
• express their feelings;
• argue and support their opinions, etc.

1.4.What are the advantages of studying disciplines in a non-native language?

We believe that the first advantage is to individualize the teaching-learning process. Topics proposed for study in various disciplines are the same for all students, but the process and results will be different. Another advantage would be the opportunity to remove some existing barriers between disciplines and to "debate" students' opinions that one discipline or another has nothing to do with each other. Studying some subjects in a non-native language enhances students' ability to apply their knowledge, ability to study different school subjects, and in social activity. This will awaken their interest in the subject, increase their learning motivation so difficult to achieve today during lessons.

It is not by accident that writer-pedagogue J. Molfetti said: "The strongest argument to study a discipline in a language other than the mother tongue is that life is not divided into disciplines."

1.4. Conclusions

The modern society in which we live and in which the students we are preparing to live in needs people to think in several languages that easily move from one domain to another and successfully fulfil the chosen social roles .

Studying disciplines in a non-native language is widely applied in several European countries. Researchers consider it efficient to work with students at all stages of study, starting from kindergarten and ending with higher education and adult education. They also argue that the method of teaching subjects in a language other than mother tongue has been very successful in recent years in Eastern European countries.

Thus, due to the efficiency and ability to motivate students, learning based on the content of a foreign language is a priority area for the European Union for the Action Plan to promote language learning (language targeting) and linguistic diversity . In European countries such as England, Italy, France, Spain, Slovenia, Romania and others, the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning in Romanian - Integrated Language and Content Approach) is highly used.

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