



THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING STUDENTS' BILINGUAL COMPETENCE BASED ON CLIL TECHNOLOGIES

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Abstract

This article analyzes the theoretical and pedagogical foundations for developing the bilingual competence of higher education students based on CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) technologies. The study examines the essence and structural components of bilingual competence, as well as its communicative, linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural aspects. It analyzes the potential of CLIL technology for the integrated teaching of content and language and substantiates its pedagogical value in developing students' academic and professional communication skills in two languages. Furthermore, the CLIL components—Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture—are examined in relation to the components of bilingual competence. As a result of the study, a conceptual model and pedagogical conditions for developing bilingual competence based on CLIL are proposed.

Keywords: Bilingual competence, CLIL, integrative education, foreign language, communicative competence, cognitive activity, academic communication, professional competence, sociocultural competence, higher education.



TALABALARNING BILINGVISTIK KOMPETENTLIGINI CLIL TEKNOLOGIYALARI ASOSIDA RIVOJLANTIRISHNING NAZARIY ASOSLARI

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Annotatsiya:

Mazkur maqolada oliy ta'lim muassasalari talabalarining bilingvistik kompetentligini CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) texnologiyalari asosida rivojlantirishning nazariy-pedagogik asoslari tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda bilingvistik kompetentlikning mazmun-mohiyati, tarkibiy komponentlari hamda uning kommunikativ, lingvistik, kognitiv va sotsiomadaniy jihatlari yoritilgan. CLIL texnologiyasining mazmun va tilni integratsiyalashgan holda o'qitish imkoniyatlari tahlil qilinib, uning talabalarning ikki tilda akademik va kasbiy kommunikatsiya ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishdagi pedagogik salohiyati asoslab berilgan. Shuningdek, CLILning Content, Communication, Cognition va Culture komponentlari bilingvistik kompetentlik komponentlari bilan o'zaro bog'liqlikda ko'rib chiqilgan. Tadqiqot natijasida bilingvistik kompetentlikni CLIL asosida rivojlantirishning konseptual modeli hamda pedagogik shartlari taklif etilgan.

Kalit so'zlar: bilingvistik kompetentlik, CLIL, integrativ ta'lim, chet tili, kommunikativ kompetensiya, kognitiv faoliyat, akademik kommunikatsiya, kasbiy kompetensiya, sotsiomadaniy kompetensiya, oliy ta'lim.

Introduction

Globalization, international academic mobility, and the transformation of the labor market are intensifying the need for students in higher education to master foreign languages—not merely for general communication, but as tools for academic and professional activity. Modern professionals are expected to seek knowledge relevant to their fields within the international information space, analyze scientific sources in foreign languages, discuss professional issues in two



or more languages, and operate effectively in international communicative environments. In this context, bilingual competence—representing a student's ability to use two languages functionally and purposefully—is of particular importance. While the development of bilingual competence has traditionally been associated with teaching foreign languages as separate subjects, modern pedagogical approaches highlight the necessity of integrating language learning with actual academic and professional practice.

From this perspective, CLIL technology emerges as a significant methodological framework. The CLIL approach integrates language learning and the mastery of subject matter into a unified pedagogical process. This enables students to use foreign languages in real-life communicative situations while simultaneously acquiring professional and academic knowledge. Current State of Research

Issues surrounding bilingualism have been studied at the intersection of psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, linguodidactics, and pedagogy. Various academic schools have investigated the individual and social aspects of bilingualism, the interaction between languages, the processes of second-language acquisition, and the communicative characteristics of bilingual individuals.

Examining the concept of bilingual competence through the lens of the competence-based approach highlights the necessity of linking linguistic knowledge with practical application. In this context, mere knowledge of a language is insufficient; the ability to utilize existing linguistic resources to accomplish specific communicative, academic, or professional tasks becomes the primary criterion.

The works of researchers such as D. Marsh, D. Coyle, P. Hood, O. Meyer, and Y. Dale play a significant role in the development of CLIL theory. Notably, the "4C model" proposed by Coyle, Hood, and Marsh is based on the integration of CLIL's core components: Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture. When applied to the development of bilingual competence, CLIL emerges as a comprehensive pedagogical technology that fosters not only language competence but also the student's cognitive and sociocultural development. Research Objective



The primary objective of the research is to determine the theoretical-pedagogical foundations for developing students' bilingual competence based on CLIL technologies and to develop a conceptual model for this process.

To achieve this goal, the following tasks were defined:

- o defining the pedagogical essence of the concept of bilingual competence;
- o systematizing the structural components of bilingual competence;
- o analyzing the theoretical nature of CLIL technology;
- o identifying the relationship between the components of CLIL and the components of bilingual competence;
- o substantiating the pedagogical conditions for developing students' bilingual competence;
- o proposing a conceptual model for developing bilingual competence based on CLIL.

Research Methodology

The methodological basis of the research consists of competence-based, communicative, activity-oriented, integrative, and person-centered approaches. The study employed methods such as theoretical analysis, comparative analysis, the review of scientific literature, generalization, systematization, and pedagogical modeling.

The Theoretical Essence of Bilingual Competence

The concept of "bilingual competence" can be interpreted as the interplay of two fundamental components: "bilingualism" and "competence." While bilingualism refers to an individual's state of using two languages, competence signifies the ability to utilize these languages effectively to perform specific communicative and activity-related tasks. Thus, bilingual competence is not merely knowledge of two languages, but the ability to use them appropriately in various communicative situations. Bilingual competence can be characterized as a set of the following interconnected components:



Component	Content
Linguistic component	Mastering the phonetic, lexical, grammatical, and syntactic units of two languages
Communicative component	Engaging in effective oral and written communication in two languages
Cognitive component	Receiving, analyzing, comparing, and synthesizing information in two languages
Sociocultural component	Understanding and adapting to the communicative norms of different cultures
Strategic component	Employing strategies to independently overcome communicative challenges
Academic-professional component	Using two languages in educational and professional activities

The integration of these components ensures the integrity of bilingual competence.

Theoretical foundations of CLIL technology

CLIL is a technology for the integrated teaching of content and language; its core essence lies in mastering the content of a subject through a foreign language while simultaneously developing language competence. CLIL differs from traditional language education in that the language serves not only as the object of study but also as a medium for acquiring other knowledge. Through the use of the language, the student acquires new knowledge, substantiates their ideas, analyzes problematic situations, and communicates the results to others.

The "4Cs" concept, which represents the theoretical model of CLIL, encompasses the following components:

Content — Communication — Cognition — Culture.

Content serves to build the student's knowledge in a specific academic subject or professional field.

Communication entails using the target language as a tool for real-life interaction. Cognition fosters higher-order thinking processes—such as analysis, synthesis, evaluation, problem-solving, and critical thinking. The "Culture" component focuses on understanding the interconnection between language and culture,



embracing diverse cultural perspectives, and developing intercultural communication competence.

An integrative model of CLIL and bilingual competence

The development of bilingual competence based on CLIL methodology can be represented by the following system:

Professional/academic content → foreign language-based activity → communicative and cognitive tasks → practical communication in two languages → reflection and assessment → bilingual competence.

In this model, content serves as the initial component structuring the student's activity, while communication acts as the mechanism for mastering that content and exchanging ideas. Cognitive activity ensures a deep understanding of the learning material, and reflection enables the student to evaluate their own language and subject-specific knowledge. Consequently, the student begins to use the foreign language not merely as a separate academic subject, but as a natural medium for professional and academic activity.

Pedagogical conditions for developing bilingual competence through CLIL

Based on theoretical analysis, the following pedagogical conditions can be identified for developing students' bilingual competence using CLIL methodologies.

First, the methodological integration of language and subject matter must be ensured. Instructional materials should be selected to align with the students' language proficiency and professional background.

Second, a communicative environment must be created. Students should actively use the foreign language through activities such as pair and small-group discussions, debates, presentations, projects, and problem-solving tasks.

Third, a balance between cognitive complexity and linguistic complexity must be maintained. Explaining complex content using relatively simple language, utilizing visual aids, and employing scaffolding strategies supports the students' learning process.

Fourth, the use of authentic materials is essential. Scientific articles, professional documents, graphs, videos, data tables, and tasks based on real-life communicative situations expand opportunities for the practical application of the language.



Fifth, a formative assessment system should be implemented. This approach evaluates not only linguistic errors but also comprehension of content, the ability to substantiate ideas, the use of communicative strategies, and the successful execution of professional tasks. Criteria for the effectiveness of developing bilingual competence based on CLIL

The following criteria can be used to assess students' bilingual competence:

High level

The student can independently master academic and professional content in two languages, express thoughts fluently and logically, use professional terminology correctly, and independently select communicative strategies in problematic situations.

Intermediate level

The student can perform basic academic and professional communicative tasks in two languages but requires assistance from the teacher or additional linguistic support in complex situations.

Low level

The student possesses limited communicative resources in two languages and requires constant assistance to express academic and professional content. These criteria can serve as a basis for diagnostic assessment at the initial and final stages of CLIL sessions.

Scientific novelty of the research

The scientific novelty of the research is demonstrated by the following:

An integrative structure of bilingual competence—comprising linguistic, communicative, cognitive, sociocultural, strategic, and academic-professional components—was substantiated.

The 4C model of CLIL technology was linked to the mechanism for developing bilingual competence. A conceptual model for developing students' bilingual competence, based on the "content – communication – cognition – culture – reflection" sequence, has been proposed.



The key pedagogical conditions for developing bilingual competence based on CLIL have been systematized.

It has been established that assessing bilingual competence requires taking into account not only linguistic knowledge but also academic-professional activities and communicative strategies.

Discussion

Theoretical analysis indicates that interpreting bilingual competence solely as the result of mastering linguistic units does not fully reflect the needs of modern higher education. Today, students must not only comprehend information in a foreign language but also process and evaluate it within their professional activities and create new communicative products. The advantage of CLIL lies precisely in the fact that it does not artificially separate language from content; students acquire the language while performing authentic, content-based tasks. This reinforces the functional nature of linguistic knowledge. Furthermore, CLIL stimulates students' cognitive activity. For instance, comparing information, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, drawing conclusions based on evidence, or proposing solutions to problems—as opposed to simple rote memorization—requires higher-order linguistic and cognitive engagement. Consequently, the CLIL approach can be viewed not merely as a tool for linguodidactic instruction, but also as a means of fostering cognitive and professional development in the context of bilingual competence.

Conclusion

Developing students' bilingual competence is a key objective of modern higher education. This competence is not merely the simple sum of knowing two languages but an integrative system comprising linguistic, communicative, cognitive, sociocultural, strategic, and academic-professional components. CLIL technology creates the methodological and didactic opportunities necessary for the comprehensive development of these components. The integration of content and language enables students to use a foreign language in real-world academic and professional contexts. Research findings indicate that the CLIL components—Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture—are



intrinsically linked to the content-related, communicative, cognitive, and sociocultural aspects of bilingual competence, respectively. Furthermore, the effectiveness of developing bilingual competence through CLIL depends on the alignment of educational content with the student's language proficiency, the creation of a communicative environment, the use of authentic materials, the inclusion of cognitive tasks, the application of scaffolding strategies, and the implementation of a formative assessment system. Thus, the systematic and methodologically grounded use of CLIL technology can be regarded as a promising pedagogical mechanism for fostering students' ability to engage in academic and professional activities in two languages.

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