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USING CLIL IN PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF FUTURE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN LEADING EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

ABSTRACT

The challenges of wartime have prompted Ukrainian researchers to seek the most effective methods for enhancing professional education, particularly professional training of future vocational education teachers. As a result, examining the leading European experience with content and language integrated learning (CLIL) in professional training programmes for future vocational education teachers is scientifically justified and necessary. It is found that the problem of using CLIL in professional training of future specialists is notably significant. In the context of globalization and European integration processes, future professionals must demonstrate high levels of foreign language competence and competitiveness in the international labour market. Leading European countries, including Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France and Spain, actively implement CLIL's conceptual aspects in their training programmes. However, the specific features of these implementations, such as sectorality, strategies and approaches, assessment characteristics and material support, may vary. The main advantages and challenges of using CLIL in professional training of future vocational education teachers are identified. Based on leading European experiences, the most effective methods to enhance professional training through CLIL are substantiated. These methods include the development of integrated educational programmes, effective use of resources, differentiated instruction, systematic assessment and feedback, as well as reflective practice. Accordingly, relevant recommendations are proposed to improve professional training of future vocational education teachers in Ukraine by integrating key aspects of CLIL into curricula. It is defined that, by adopting these practices, future vocational education teachers can effectively employ CLIL to enhance both language and vocational learning, better preparing their students for success in global and multicultural work environments.

Further research is aimed at analyzing the content of foreign language training for future vocational education teachers in developed countries.

Keywords: *foreign language competence, content and language integrated learning, vocational education teacher, teachers' training programme, and European countries.*

ВИКОРИСТАННЯ ПРЕДМЕТНО-МОВНОГО ІНТЕГРОВАНОГО НАВЧАННЯ (СЛІЛ) У ПРОФЕСІЙНІЙ ПІДГОТОВЦІ МАЙБУТНІХ ПЕДАГОГІВ ЗАКЛАДІВ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ОСВІТИ У ПРОВІДНИХ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКИХ КРАЇНАХ

АНОТАЦІЯ

Виклики воєнного часу спонукають вітчизняних науковців до пошуку найбільш ефективних шляхів удосконалення професійної освіти, зокрема професійної підготовки



майбутніх педагогів закладів професійної освіти. Вивчення провідного європейського досвіду щодо використання предметно-мовного інтегрованого навчання (далі – «CLIL») у професійній підготовці майбутніх педагогів закладів професійної освіти є науково виправданим і необхідним, адже у контексті глобалізаційних і, зокрема, євроінтеграційних процесів, майбутні фахівці повинні демонструвати високий рівень розвитку іноземної компетентності й конкурентоспроможність на міжнародному ринку праці. Зокрема, зазначено, що провідні європейські країни (Німеччина, Нідерланди, Бельгія, Франція, Іспанія) активно впроваджують концептуальні аспекти CLIL у програми підготовки майбутніх педагогів закладів професійної освіти, однак змістовно-практичні особливості, як-от секторальність, стратегії та підходи, особливості оцінювання, матеріальне забезпечення, можуть відрізнятися. Визначено основні переваги та виклики використання CLIL у професійній підготовці майбутніх педагогів закладів професійної освіти. На основі провідного європейського досвіду обґрунтовано найбільш ефективні шляхи удосконалення професійної підготовки майбутніх педагогів закладів професійної освіти завдяки предметно-мовному інтегрованому навчанню, а саме розроблення інтегрованих освітніх програм, ефективне використання ресурсів, диференційоване навчання, систематичне оцінювання та зворотний зв'язок, рефлексивна практика. Відповідно, запропоновано рекомендації щодо покращення процесу професійної підготовки майбутніх педагогів закладів професійної освіти в Україні завдяки імплементації основних аспектів CLIL у зміст освітніх програм. З'ясовано, що таким чином майбутні педагоги професійно-технічної освіти зможуть ефективно використовувати CLIL для покращення як мовного, так і професійного навчання, краще готуючи своїх учнів до успіху на глобальному і мультикультурному ринку праці. Перспективи подальших досліджень полягають в аналізі змісту іноземної підготовки майбутніх педагогів закладів професійної освіти у розвинених країнах.

Ключові слова: іноземна компетентність, предметно-мовне інтегроване навчання, педагог закладу професійної освіти, програма підготовки педагогів, європейські країни.

INTRODUCTION

In the evolving education landscape, integrating language learning into subject-specific instruction has garnered significant attention, particularly through the pedagogical approach known as content and language-integrated learning (CLIL). CLIL merges content and language objectives, enabling students to acquire new subject matter knowledge while enhancing their language proficiency. This dual-focused approach is particularly relevant in vocational education, where mastering professional skills and language competence is essential for future professionals to thrive in a globalized labour market.

Leading European countries have been at the forefront of adopting and implementing CLIL in their educational systems, recognizing its potential to enhance teaching and learning outcomes. In these countries, the integration of CLIL in professional training of future vocational education teachers has become a strategic priority, aimed at equipping educators with the necessary skills to deliver content in a foreign language effectively. This approach not only improves language proficiency but also prepares teachers to meet the diverse needs of students in multilingual and multicultural settings.

Ukraine, in its pursuit of educational reform and alignment with European standards, can greatly benefit from examining the experiences and practices of leading European countries in using CLIL in professional training of future vocational education



teachers. As Ukraine strives to modernize its vocational education system and enhance the language competencies of its workforce, understanding the successes and challenges other nations face can provide valuable insights and guide the development of effective strategies tailored to the Ukrainian context.

THE AIM OF THE STUDY

Therefore, this article aims to analyze the use of CLIL in professional training of future vocational education teachers in leading European countries and explore its relevance and applicability for Ukraine. By examining best practices, identifying key challenges and proposing recommendations, this study seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse on improving professional training of future vocational education teachers in Ukraine and enhancing their foreign language competence.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) is an educational approach where subjects are taught in a foreign language, merging content learning with language acquisition (Banegas & Zappa-Hollman, 2023). This approach enhances language proficiency, cognitive skills and academic performance by embedding language learning in specific subject content (Bentley, 2010). CLIL boosts student motivation and engagement, prepares them for global citizenship and encourages interdisciplinary learning (Fortanet-Gómez, 2013). As noted by Kováčiková (2020), it also supports professional development for teachers, fostering innovative teaching practices and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Integrating language learning into vocational training is crucial for enhancing workforce competitiveness (Lipková, 2019). It improves communication with clients and colleagues from diverse backgrounds, increases access to a wider range of information and resources and fosters cultural competence. Language skills also enable greater career mobility and flexibility, stimulate innovation and creativity and ensure compliance and safety in various fields (Wildeman et al., 2022).

The problem of using CLIL in professional training of future specialists is notably significant. Numerous researchers have focused their studies on specific aspects of the problem. They include the following: the concept of CLIL (Coyle et al., 2010); the roles of language in CLIL (Llinares et al., 2012); CLIL in teacher training (Lo, 2020); CLIL in vocational and higher education education (Mehisto et al., 2008;). It follows that much emphasis has been placed on the essence of CLIL as a concept, as well as its integration into the educational process in general. However, the problem of implementing CLIL in professional training of future vocational education teachers in leading European countries, especially with the focus on providing relevant recommendations for Ukraine, still requires an in-depth study. To achieve the article's aim, the following research methods were used: theoretical analysis, systematization and generalization.

RESULTS

To begin with, CLIL is increasingly incorporated into professional training of future vocational education teachers across Europe, though its use varies by country.

In Germany, CLIL is integrated into the curriculum for future vocational education teachers, particularly within institutions specializing in international and intercultural education. The primary aim is to equip prospective educators with the competencies to teach vocational subjects in a foreign language. Training programmes typically include modules on language proficiency, CLIL methodology and the development of bilingual instructional materials (EARLALL, 2021).



Similarly, in the Netherlands, CLIL is broadly adopted in both general and vocational education sectors. For future vocational education teachers, CLIL is a key component of their professional development. The emphasis is on embedding foreign languages into vocational subjects to prepare students for international work environments. Training programmes often feature practical workshops on CLIL strategies and classroom implementation (EARLALL, 2018).

In Belgium, CLIL is applied in both Flemish and French-speaking regions with a focus on bilingual education. Training programmes for future vocational education teachers incorporate CLIL methodologies to enhance their ability to deliver vocational content in a second language. Professional development usually includes language training, CLIL pedagogical approaches and curriculum design (EARLALL, 2019b).

France has gradually incorporated CLIL into vocational education, though its application is more prevalent in higher education contexts. Specialized training programmes for future vocational education teachers focus on CLIL techniques and foreign language integration into vocational curricula. These programmes aim to enhance future teachers' capabilities to teach vocational subjects in English or other foreign languages (EARLALL, 2021).

In Spain, CLIL is a fundamental aspect of vocational teacher training, with a strong emphasis on bilingual education. Training programmes for future vocational education teachers include CLIL methodology, language skills development and strategies for incorporating foreign languages into vocational training. There is also a focus on creating CLIL-compatible teaching materials and assessment methods (EARLALL, 2019a).

Thus, CLIL's main advantage is enhancing language proficiency by combining foreign language instruction with vocational content. This improves teaching in foreign languages, workplace interaction and career opportunities. CLIL also boosts teaching skills by integrating innovative pedagogical strategies, leading to more engaging lessons and holistic education. Additionally, CLIL prepares students for global work environments by developing bilingual or multilingual skills and promoting cultural awareness. At the same time, problems include complex implementation, the need for specialized training, difficulties in assessment and potential uneven language exposure among students.

A detailed theoretical analysis of relevant sources and materials reveals that the mentioned European countries have adopted the following practices to enhance the effectiveness of CLIL in professional training of future vocational education teachers:

- **Integrated Curriculum Design:** It is essential to develop a curriculum that seamlessly integrates language and vocational content. This approach ensures that these elements are interrelated and aligned with clear learning objectives. For instance, lesson plans should incorporate technical vocabulary within vocational tasks, allowing students to acquire subject-specific knowledge and language skills concurrently.

- **Effective Use of Resources:** Employing a diverse range of high-quality resources, such as bilingual materials, digital tools and authentic vocational content, supports both language and content learning. Using industry-specific texts, multimedia resources and interactive tools can enhance language acquisition within vocational contexts.

- **Differentiated Instruction:** Implementing differentiated instruction techniques is necessary to accommodate various levels of language proficiency and learning styles among students. Activities and assessments should be tailored to meet individual needs, employing diverse teaching methods such as visual aids, group work and scaffolded tasks.

- **Regular Assessment and Feedback:** Regular assessments are needed to evaluate language and vocational learning outcomes. Providing timely and constructive feedback



helps students improve their skills. Formative assessments, including quizzes and project-based tasks, are useful for monitoring progress and refining teaching strategies.

• **Reflective Practice:** Promoting reflective practice among future teachers is beneficial. Encouraging them to assess their teaching methods and student outcomes regularly allows ongoing improvement. Reflection sessions where teachers discuss their experiences and challenges in implementing CLIL can offer valuable insights for enhancing their practice (EARLALL, 2021).

Accordingly, by adopting these practices, future vocational education teachers can effectively employ CLIL to enhance both language and vocational learning, better preparing their students for success in global and multicultural work environments.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

Therefore, to effectively use CLIL in professional training of future vocational education teachers in Ukraine, it is crucial to adopt several key strategies.

Firstly, it is essential to design a curriculum that integrates language and vocational content. This entails embedding language instruction within vocational subjects, with specific objectives that align technical vocabulary with industry-relevant skills. Curriculum development should focus on creating lesson plans that enable students to practice terminology through practical vocational tasks, facilitating concurrent development of both language proficiency and technical knowledge. Additionally, the use of diverse and high-quality resources is imperative. This involves incorporating bilingual materials, digital tools and authentic vocational content. Integrating industry-specific texts, multimedia resources and interactive tools can significantly enhance language acquisition in vocational contexts. For example, employing videos, case studies and digital simulations can provide students with practical exposure to vocational subjects in a foreign language.

Differentiated instruction techniques should also be implemented to accommodate varying levels of language proficiency and learning styles among students. Tailoring activities and assessments to individual needs through using visual aids, group work, and scaffolded tasks is necessary. This may include developing tiered assignments with different levels of complexity to allow students to engage with content at their own pace. Regular assessments are critical to evaluate both language and vocational learning outcomes. Timely and constructive feedback should be provided to assist students in improving their skills. Formative assessments such as quizzes, projects and presentations can be effective for monitoring progress and refining teaching strategies. Assessment tools should be designed to measure language proficiency and vocational skills, providing detailed feedback to support student development. Finally, promoting reflective practice among future teachers is essential. Encouraging regular evaluation of teaching methods and student outcomes can foster continuous improvement. Organizing reflection sessions for educators to discuss their experiences and challenges in implementing CLIL can offer valuable insights. Peer observation and feedback sessions can be particularly useful for sharing insights and refining teaching approaches based on collective experiences.

By adopting these strategies, Ukraine can enhance the implementation of CLIL in vocational education, thereby improving students' language proficiency and vocational skills and better preparing them for success in global and multicultural work environments. Further research is aimed at analyzing the content of foreign language training for future vocational education teachers in developed countries.



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