

## THE ROLE OF INTEGRATION OF SUBJECT CONTENT AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN THE FORMATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

*Tashmatova Gulnara Rafailovna*  
*Fergana state university*

### Annotation

This article examines the integration of subject content and foreign language instruction in higher educational institutions, emphasizing its role in developing foreign language communicative competence among students. The study highlights the benefits of content and language integrated learning (CLIL) approaches and their impact on language proficiency and subject matter understanding.

### Keywords

Foreign language communicative competence, higher education, content and language integrated learning (CLIL), subject content integration, language proficiency.

### INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, proficiency in foreign languages is essential for academic and professional success. Higher educational institutions are increasingly adopting integrated approaches to language teaching, such as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), to enhance students' communicative competence. This approach combines the learning of a subject with the acquisition of a foreign language, offering a more holistic and practical method of language education. This article explores the significance of integrating subject content with foreign language instruction in developing communicative competence in higher education students.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Communicative competence in a foreign language has been a topic of interest for many researchers in the field of foreign language learning. This is due to the need to communicate effectively and accurately in a foreign language, taking into account the sociocultural context in which communication occurs (Canale & Swain, 1980; Bachman, 1990; Hymes, 1972). In this literature review, we will look at how scholars define foreign language communicative competence and what components it includes.

In his seminal work, Hymes (1972) first introduced the concept of communicative competence and proposed its concept as a basis for understanding language use in social contexts. He argued that communicative competence involves not only knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, but also an understanding of the social and cultural context in which language is used. Hymes identified four components of communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. The author argues that communicative competence cannot be understood solely in terms of an individual's linguistic abilities, but must also take into account social factors such as race, class and gender.

Canale and Swain (1980) developed a widely used "Model of Communicative Competence" in the field of language teaching and learning, which includes four components: grammatical,

sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence. They also argued that communicative competence is not limited to knowledge of grammatical rules, but includes the ability to use language appropriately in various social contexts.

Bachman (1990) expanded the definition of communicative competence by introducing the concept of language proficiency, which includes linguistic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and discourse competence. Linguistic competence refers to knowledge of grammatical rules, vocabulary, and syntax. Pragmatic competence involves the ability to use language appropriately in different contexts, taking into account the social and cultural norms of the language community. Sociolinguistic competence refers to knowledge of the sociocultural conventions and norms that influence language use. Discourse competence involves the ability to use language to effectively and coherently convey meaning in extended discourse.

Canale (1983) refined the definition of communicative competence by introducing the concept of communicative language ability, which is the ability to use language to achieve communicative goals in specific contexts.

Savignon (1997) defined communicative competence as the ability to use language to accomplish real-world tasks and to interpret and negotiate meaning in context. She argued that communicative competence involves the integration of linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursive and strategic competence.

The concept of foreign language communicative competence has evolved over time from the original definition by Canale and Swain (1980) to more precise definitions by Bachman (1990), Canale (1983) and Savignon (1997). All scholars agree that communicative competence involves the ability to use language effectively in a variety of contexts, taking into account the social and cultural norms of the language community. Components of communicative competence include linguistic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and discourse competence, with strategic competence being an additional sub-competence introduced by Canale.

The concept of integrating subject content and foreign language instruction, particularly through CLIL, has gained considerable attention in recent years. According to Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010), CLIL provides a dual-focused educational approach where an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language. This method aims to enhance cognitive skills, intercultural understanding, and language proficiency simultaneously.

Dalton-Puffer (2011) emphasizes that CLIL encourages deeper cognitive engagement by allowing students to apply language skills in meaningful contexts. Moreover, research by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2009) indicates that students in CLIL programs generally achieve higher levels of language competence compared to those in traditional language classes.

Furthermore, Marsh (2002) suggests that CLIL not only supports language learning but also improves overall academic performance by fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The integration of language and content helps students to see the practical application of language skills, thereby increasing motivation and engagement.

## METHODS

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. A survey was administered to 200 students from various higher educational

institutions implementing CLIL programs to assess their language proficiency and communicative competence. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 educators to gather insights into the effectiveness of integrating subject content with language instruction.

Quantitative data from the surveys were analyzed using statistical methods to determine correlations between CLIL participation and language proficiency levels. Qualitative data from the interviews were coded and analyzed thematically to identify common perceptions and experiences of educators regarding the impact of CLIL on students' communicative competence.

## RESULTS

The survey results indicated that students participating in CLIL programs demonstrated significantly higher levels of foreign language proficiency and communicative competence compared to their peers in traditional language courses. Specifically, 85% of CLIL students reported improved language skills and greater confidence in using the foreign language in academic and social contexts.

The interviews with educators revealed several key benefits of the CLIL approach. Educators noted that students were more engaged and motivated when learning language through subject content, leading to better retention and application of language skills. Additionally, educators observed that students developed stronger critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, as they were required to understand and discuss complex subject matter in a foreign language.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study corroborate existing literature on the benefits of integrating subject content with foreign language instruction. The CLIL approach not only enhances language proficiency but also fosters a deeper understanding of subject matter, making learning more relevant and engaging for students. This dual-focus educational strategy helps students to develop essential communicative competence, which is crucial for their academic and professional success in a globalized world.

## CONCLUSION

Integrating subject content and foreign language instruction through approaches like CLIL significantly contributes to the formation of foreign language communicative competence in higher education students. This method provides a holistic learning experience that enhances both language skills and subject knowledge, preparing students for the demands of a globalized society. Higher educational institutions should consider adopting and expanding CLIL programs to maximize the benefits of language education.

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