



# Integration of Content and Language Learning in Albanian Higher Education Institution, the course instructors's perspective

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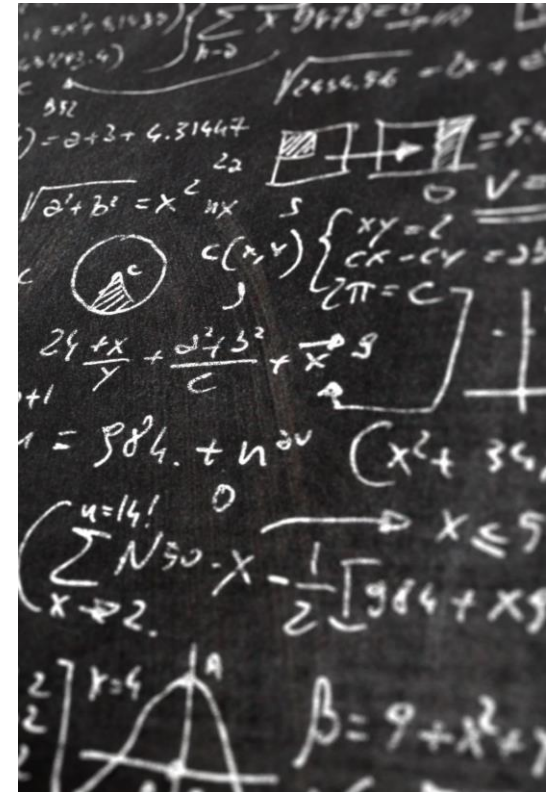
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# Introduction to the study and CLIL definition

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- ❖ David Marsh coined the term “Content and Language Integrated Learning” (CLIL) in 1994) to describe the situation when a foreign language is used to teach parts of subjects or subject with a dual aim, meaning learning the content as well as the foreign language at the same time.
- ❖ CLIL defines any dual focused type of provision in which a second language, foreign or other, is used for the teaching and learning of a non-language subject matter, with language and content having a joint and mutually beneficial role.
- ❖ Still considered an innovative teaching approach in Albanian institutions, thus facing challenges in implementation.





# Types of CLIL

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❖ CLIL aims at developing competency in both elements by teaching the content through the foreign language. (Eurydice 2005: 7), The other distinctive feature of CLIL is its flexibility to cater for the wide range of socio-political and cultural realities.

❖ Two types of CLIL: hard CLIL and soft CLIL methods

**Hard CLIL-** the subject or subject curriculum is taught in a foreign language

(teaching marketing, microeconomy, banking in English) main lesson objective is the content objective, not the language

**Soft CLIL-** the content of the subject is subordinate to the language goal. A higher emphasis is put on learning the language (BE and other ESP courses)

# Benefits of CLIL in students' education and language learning



Comparisons of CLIL and non-CLIL learners' pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and content have shown that CLIL learners tend to outperform their non-CLIL counterparts (Ruiz de Zarobe, 2008)



CLIL has also been found to provide non-linguistic benefits. For instance, Dupuy (2000: 219) found that CLIL learners "show increased self-confidence in their ability to use the target language and express an interest in pursuing its study



CLIL is regarded as a change agent for improving learners' real-life communication skills, helping them to operate efficiently in intercultural interaction situations.

# Key Principles of CLIL

**Coyle (2005)** devised a useful conceptual framework of four descriptors under the heading of the 4 Cs, to support the inclusion of CLIL within the curriculum;

***Content and Language Integrated***: highlights the correlation of content and language learning, vocabulary and grammatical structures are contextualized within practical business scenarios and communication situations

***Cognitive Demand***: CLIL approach encourages higher order thinking and understanding, accepting challenges and reflecting on them, through tasks that encourage critical thinking, problem-solving, in depth analysis, and creativity, all these regarded as essential skills in the business world.

***Cultural Awareness***: aims to develop “self” and “other” awareness and pluricultural understanding and to extend content. Learning content through a foreign language fosters cultural insight and understanding, which are deemed essential for success in international business setting.

***Communication***: language must be appropriate and serving to the learning context, students use BE in the communicative situations in which the language is presented which focuses on communication needs and learning demands

# Research questions and Methodology of the study



## Research questions



1. What is the attitude of teachers toward CLIL implementation in ESP courses?



2. What are the perceived challenges with CLIL teaching, according to teachers who use the approach?



3. What are the perceived challenges with CLIL teaching, concerning learner confidence in language use according to teachers that use the approach?



**Participants in the research:** 2 lecturers (Asc. Prof); 4 lecturers (PhD); 1 assistant lecturer (MSC)---Total 7 lecturers from the Department of Foreign Languages, AUT

# Research questions and Methodology of the study

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**Instrument of the research** - semi-structured questionnaire; qualitative data



A qualitative study is required to understand the teaching approaches in the selected classrooms. David Nunan (1992) discusses how to define and divide different types of research. He writes that “qualitative research assumes that all knowledge is relative and that there is a subjective element to all knowledge and research, and that holistic, ungeneralizable studies are justifiable [...]” (p 3).



Interviews were conducted in English and Albanian (as needed) and audio-recorded with informed consent. Data were transcribed verbatim and analyzed thematically using qualitative data analysis software ( NVivo). Document analysis of curricula, syllabi, and teaching materials was also conducted to supplement interview data.



# Key findings and discussions

➤ *BE suitable for language and content integration- Positive attitude and motivated learners*

## **Challenges in CLIL Application:**

### *Teacher Training and Development:*

inadequate training of lecturers in CLIL methodology, lack of pedagogical expertise to design and deliver CLIL lessons effectively, a need for professional development opportunities focusing on CLIL principles, materials development, and assessment strategies specific to BE

### **Curriculum Design and Resource Availability:**

The lack of well-defined curriculum frameworks and readily available CLIL materials specifically designed for Business English presented another major hurdle. Many lecturers reported adapting existing materials, leading to inconsistencies in approach and potentially compromising the effectiveness of the CLIL approach. Access to authentic Business English materials and technology for interactive learning was also limited.

# Key findings and discussions

## **Assessment and Evaluation:**

Assessing students' learning within a CLIL context proved challenging. Many lecturers expressed difficulty in fairly assessing both language skills and content knowledge, leading to concerns about the validity and reliability of assessment methods. They lacked clear guidelines on how to integrate language and content assessment within a single grading framework

## **Teacher perceptions on Student Perceptions and Engagement:**

Student feedback revealed mixed perceptions regarding the CLIL approach. While some students value the integrated learning experience and improved language acquisition, others express challenges in keeping up with the content and language demands simultaneously. Concerns were raised about the pacing of lessons and the need for more individualized support.

# Key findings and discussions

**Cultural factors:** Attitudes towards language learning and the integration of CLIL within the existing educational system may pose additional challenges.

➤ *Perceptions of Learning Methods:* Traditional educational systems might emphasize memorization and rote learning, making it challenging to integrate CLIL, which focuses on using language for meaningful communication and learning content. Resistance to changing established teaching methods can hinder successful implementation

**Limited exposure to English:** Albanian students may have varying levels of English proficiency prior to entering university, potentially impacting their ability to engage with CLIL content

# Conclusions and recommendations

The findings highlight the complex interplay of factors influencing the success of CLIL implementation in Albanian universities. The lack of adequately trained teachers, coupled with limited resources and a lack of institutional support, creates a significant barrier to the effective adoption of CLIL. The course instructors's perceptions underscore the need for careful curriculum design, differentiated instruction, and appropriate assessment methods to address varying learning needs and styles.

## **Recommendations:**

To overcome these challenges, the following recommendations are proposed:

**Invest in comprehensive teacher training programs:** Focus should be on CLIL methodology, Business English specialized vocabulary, and assessment strategies.

**Develop locally relevant CLIL materials:** Create authentic and engaging materials tailored to the Albanian context and Business English needs.

## Conclusions and recommendations

**Establish clear curriculum frameworks:** Develop detailed guidelines for CLIL implementation in Business English programs, including learning objectives, assessment criteria, and resource recommendations.

**Promote collaboration among stakeholders:** Foster partnerships between universities, businesses, and international organizations to share best practices and access resources.

**Implement effective assessment strategies:** Develop assessment methods that accurately measure both language proficiency and content knowledge, ensuring fairness and validity.

**Provide ongoing professional development opportunities:** Regular workshops, conferences, and online resources should be provided to support lecturers in adapting and refining their CLIL teaching practices.



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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