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# CLIL Interdisciplinary projects in technological and cultural spheres

Comparative Analysis

## 1. Introduction

Enhancing English language learning is an important objective of the St. Petersburg State Polytechnic University to help advance its position in world university rankings. One of the ways of realizing this goal is to develop new CLIL courses in which mainstream curriculum content, e.g. computer engineering, is taught through the medium of the English language. The CLIL course is developed through the collaboration of foreign language (FL) and technical departments, and due to that the degree of its professional orientation is higher than that in ordinary foreign language course books. The CLIL course is focused on two technical disciplines of the mainstream curriculum, and is aimed at preparing second-year students for specialized lectures in English in their third year. In view of these obvious interdisciplinary links between theory and practice, listening comprehension is the most significant aspect of the course. A similar project is being developed in the Saint-Petersburg University of Culture, in which FL teachers are collaborating with their colleagues from the choreography department in terms of text and multimedia resource selection for their students. Comparison of the two projects, both from the point of view of structuring, linguistic vs mainstream contents and peculiarities of their Learning Management Systems (LMS) like Moodle or Sakai versions can help to improve the regular courses and make them more efficient in practice. Benefits derived from sharing the experience are considered as well.

*2. Prospects of CLIL course design in Peter the Great St. Petersburg State Polytechnic University*

Measures to optimize learning a FL in higher schools become particularly urgent when an institution is chosen for a special program. On the basis of competitive selection Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University (SPbPU) became a member of the "5-100-2020" program in which numerous activities are planned for the development of international relations, increase of students' academic mobility and publication activity of research staff (Rudskoy 2013). The university has received grants for the implementation of activities that contribute to the promotion of the university in the international rankings, and for its entry in 2020, among the top five Russian universities, into the first one hundred best universities in the world according to the criteria of the QS agency.

Since the basis of all these activities for the internationalization of the University is, above all, the knowledge of a FL, the professors were tasked with improving the quality of teaching English as the main language of international communication. Key measures to achieve the stated objectives include a significant increase in the number of foreign language classroom hours at the basic level for all the students, an increase in the professional FL learning period from two to four years for a bachelor degree, and the introduction of the elective course "Preparation for IELTS international exams" in the fourth year (Akopova/Popova 2013). In order to ensure the continuity of FL training for all university students, the university administration has approved the decision to provide specialized lectures in English for third year students. Each SPbPU institute identified specific professional disciplines and lecturers capable of delivering courses in English, at least two or four hours a week.

In preparation for the delivering of professionally-oriented lectures in English, many professors began to doubt whether students' linguistic competence was enough for them to understand their content. For students, we believe, it will be definitely hard to understand an academic discourse, for example, on the subject of "Databases", which for them is a symbiosis of linguistic and professional difficulties. If students do not prepare properly, for some of them, these difficulties will be insurmountable. Thus, there was an understanding of the need to create an advanced professionally-oriented course tailored for the second-year students, integrating the basic aspects of the content of the disciplines which will be offered to students in English in their third year at the university.

assignments with the use of both language and choreography oriented re-sources, e.g. web-sites of opera and ballet theatres, of ballet dancers, You Tube recordings of the best performances, and at least some dictionaries, grammars, etc. (E-CLIL 2015). All included self-access materials (e.g. Ma-cias 2012; Haegeman 2015; Devel/Smirnov 2014) on the program will be placed in LMS Sakai.

## 6. Conclusion

Teaching English as a FL at a non-linguistic University is always a chal-lenge because professors are expected to teach the language but are allocat-ed an insufficient number of classroom hours to do so. In view of this they should be very careful about using the time intended for teaching most effi-ciently. Our idea of course design is the use of content and language inte-grated learning (CLIL) in order to realize the interdisciplinary links prin-ciple. CLIL as a didactic instrument of course arrangement enables us to draw on basic professional discipline content, which can be partially intro-duced into the content of the foreign language syllabi.

We have compared two possible variants of CLIL course implementation, those at St. Petersburg Polytechnic University and St. Petersburg University of Culture. Even though the polytechnic CLIL is narrowly focused on future lecture courses to be presented in English, and the University of Culture CLIL is more widely focused on the further disciplines of advanced courses, both of them implement the same interdisciplinary idea of optimizing prepa-ration of students for professional disciplines while learning English during their undergraduate studies. Both CLIL courses have been developed to meet the existing challenges of contemporary education and are to be tested in 2016. Only then, after thorough testing, can their effectiveness in English language teaching and their simultaneous introduction into subject-specific disciplines be evaluated.

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