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CLIL and ESP at tertiary education: Perspectives of Russia and Lithuania

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Abstract. Nowadays, ESP and CLIL are the two main players in the language teaching arena in global tertiary education. The aim of this paper is to evaluate the “strengths” and “weaknesses” of these two approaches and their methodologies. The data have been collected through interviews to trace: (a) factors that cause a university to adopt one language teaching methodology over the other; (b) advantages and disadvantages of each one; (c) level of teachers’ professional satisfaction in using CLIL or ESP, and (d) availability of didactic tools and materials.

Keywords: English for specific purposes (ESP); content-language integrated learning (CLIL); multidisciplinary language learning; language awareness; teachers’ job satisfaction

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Introduction

Numerous reforms in the field of higher education (HE), emerging in response to social change, make its participants face and deal with various challenges, which require quick and effective solutions. One of such challenges is integration to international educational, scientific and business communities ensuring the high level of technological and social development of a country. Integration means the transformation of the status of knowledge from national to international. This transformation, in its turn, requires a good command in English as a “lingua franca” and as a tool for communication. Therefore, one of the priority tasks for universities is to strengthen the language policy and improve language teaching technologies as the main instrument to implement the global goals.

Currently, the situation with the language awareness among all university stakeholders, inter alia students, is not very optimistic because the language competence is still low. This could be attributed to the fact that the traditional foreign language learning classroom is barely related to real communication, and, mainly, it is explained that learning input is extremely predictable because the learning context is embedded (Cummins 2000; Cummins 2008). In this regard, the idea pronounced by T. Ting seems very relative to the issue: “... if input is predictable and output not spontaneous, how can we expect learners to be effective communicators if real-life communication is, just that, real” [1. P. 5]. The aim of this research is to

sum up and analyze the authors’ experience of teaching English at the tertiary level where a special accent is made on ESP (English for Specific Purposes) and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), the two main methodologies which are now considered by some teachers as rivals and as collaborators by others.

ESP is viewed as being single-focused on the language (subject content), whereas CLIL is meant to teach both language and subject-content simultaneously. The central message of this paper is to evaluate “strengths” and “weaknesses” of ESP and CLIL as viewed by teachers. The data is collected through surveys and interviews in the context of two countries – Russia and Lithuania, who 40 years ago shared a common vision of how to teach foreign languages, but, since then, have developed their education policies separately. The main points are to be examined: (a) the strengths and weaknesses of the methodologies, (b) the advantages and disadvantages of each one, (c) the level of teachers’ professional satisfaction evaluated via professional motivation and aspiration to professional development, (d) the availability of didactic tools and materials.

The preliminary data have shown that due to the third-force factors (political, economic, geographical, cultural and social) the tendencies in these two countries in the language policies are different – Russia placed a bet on CLIL as quick and more effective for professional language development whereas Lithuania remained traditional and opted for ESP. Thus, the research data cannot be called comparable from the point of statistical

science but they might be interesting for pedagogical communities and university teachers (both subject and language) from the point of real “classroom data”.

The practical significance can be in the authors' conclusion that ESP principles should be interacted with CLIL ones but with some amendments, taking into consideration the specificity of each methodology. The work supports the belief that there are more areas of convergence than divergence between ESP and CLIL. In doing so, the authors do not claim to overview all the aspects of university language teaching and all possible technologies and methodologies that are currently in use, they only offer reflections based on personal teaching experience and relate them to some theoretical and practical issues of ESP and CLIL application.

Theoretical background

There is little left unsaid about the applications of ESP as one of the methodology used in teaching a foreign language for professional purposes. Although, much is still “behind the curtains” regarding a CLIL approach to be used at the tertiary level. For a long time, ESP has been recognized as the most popular approach to language teaching and learning at all levels of education. ESP terminologically is described as teaching English to students whose first language is not English but who need it for a particular job, activity, or purpose.

ESP is preceded by general English. As it has been argued, ESP is associated with mature learners by and large because it is bridged with professional field. Although ESP is a controversial issue, consequently, there is much misinterpretation concerning the exact definition of ESP. As an example, there is much talk whether or not English for Academic Purposes (EAP) could be considered as ESP. Some scholars (Mackay and Mountford (1978), Hutchinson and Waters (1987), Strevens (1988), Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) said “yes” because “specific purposes” are defined as specific needs of learners, and learners as a target group are becoming the peculiarity of ESP methodology. Primarily, the ESP target group is adult learners who are usually “highly conscious” of the reasons to achieve English proficiency in a field of their specialization. The likewise state that, “ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning” [2. P. 19].

Based on the ESP characteristics we can conclude that ESP as methodology combines three things – teaching specific English (*specialized discourse*) to learners (*adults*) who will use it in a particular setting (*business, engineering, medical field, science, etc.*) in order to achieve **a practical purpose**. Accordingly, ESP teachers should not concentrate on teaching general English, they have to satisfy the students' needs for the language used in different professional fields in order to apply the language linguistically correct verbally and on paper [3].

The CLIL methodology appeared later, approximately in the 1990s as a methodology of bilingual education. The first country to host this approach was Canada. The CLIL focus is learning a language whilst simultaneously

teaching content from a subject area such as humanistic or scientific area [4]. The CLIL methodology seems to be aimed at building bridges: between language and content; a learner and a new subject knowledge; if possible, a language teacher and a subject teacher. Among the main CLIL frameworks scholars use D. Coyle's 4 Cs and language triptych.

The 4Cs are the following: Content (the topic to study), Communication (the language in use to express the content, thoughts, intentions), Culture (background for all types of communication inter alia interpersonal one), Cognition (cognitive skills activated according to the Bloom taxonomy such as LOTs or HOTs) (<https://skyteach.ru/2019/10/10/lower-and-higher-order-thinking-skills-lots-and-hots/>).

The language triptych is usually described as a language for three purposes:

- *Language of Learning* (content) – essential vocabulary and grammar associated with the topic for a communicative approach. The language is used in authentic interactive contexts in order to develop communicative skills, rather than focusing exclusively on grammar;

- *Language for Learning* – (meta-cognition and grammar system) the kind of language needed to operate in a foreign language environment. Learners need skills for pair or team work, cooperative work in groups which requires the ability to ask questions, debate, evaluate, analyse, etc.

- *Language through Learning* (cognition) – new meanings will require new language. It needs to be captured during the learning process, then recycled and developed.

CLIL has substantially increased across Europe in recent years and it is also reflected in research. The earliest studies primarily examined the impact of CLIL on foreign-language performance; later, the focus was shifted to the content learning impact and different aspects which may influence the results of CLIL application on language and content learning. To identify the relevant studies, four databases from the Web of Science Core Collection were used as a source of high-quality peer-reviewed studies, namely (1) Science Citation Index Expanded, (2) Social Sciences Citation Index, (3) Arts & Humanities Citation Index, and (4) Emerging Sources Citation Index. The time was limited to the studies published in the period from 2010 till 2020. The basic search (looking for “CLIL research” studies) resulted in 395 studies [5].

As said above, CLIL is debated much but it has not been well-termed yet and lacks a practice base. All this is compounded by differences in cultural backgrounds and social-educational patterns, established in each country. Since 2000, the European Union gives to CLIL a status of one of the leading effective tools for multilingualism and international language policy development. This is evidenced by the following documents: Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity (European Commission) [6] and A Guide to Languages in EU [7]. Despite the extensive geography and popularity of the approach, there are different points of view on the frequency and prospects of its use, due to the national

characteristics of the educational systems and the level of academic mobility of the countries. The study of works on CLIL allowed us to conclude that the approach is highly popular in the university environment. However, fragmented and national context-driven knowledge that gives an insight into the specificity of the approach, based mostly on practice, remains evident. In this context the words of D. Marsh seem particularly sensible: "There is no single blueprint of content and language integration that could be applied in the same way in different countries – no model is for export" [8]. Further we consider how ESP and CLIL are developing at tertiary level in different countries and cultural and educational backgrounds.

CLIL and ESP at tertiary education: Rivals or collaborators?

At the outset it should be noted that in the part describing the relations between ESP and CLIL we will not provide any strict conclusions towards which approach is better. However, we believe the topic of ESP and CLIL and their interaction is worth studying, especially through practice, because only by using classroom data is one able to draw the true picture of the real situation.

After considering the essence of ESP and CLIL as methodological approaches and comparing their didactics and application peculiarities (presented briefly in this research), the paper will analyse the practice observed in two different countries and universities; this will be underpinned with the discussion of the reasons for choosing this or that approach. Both ESP and CLIL practitioners have to find a balance between the target language and professional subject matter in their instruction [9. P. 32]. Likewise, Liew and Khor [10] argue that CLIL and ESP are indeed two separate approaches, but university learners expect language courses to facilitate the learning of subject content, which moves ESP a step closer to CLIL.

At present, all ESP courses at universities are instructed by language teachers, including both native and non-native speakers. However, CLIL courses are mostly delivered by content teachers with the exception of a few language teachers who have sufficient content knowledge which they are certified to teach. Many universities define CLIL as an integrated ESP model. They believe that CLIL has the potential to overcome some shortcomings of traditional ESP. At the same time, numerous discussions end with the conclusion that a good CLIL is possible provided there is fruitful collaboration between subject and language teachers [11–13].

In addition, Cenoz, Genesee and Gorter [14] argue that due to a broader concept of CLIL, many different language learning approaches dealing with English as the medium of instruction, such as ESP, turn CLIL into a rather narrow vision. Thus, they argue that any attempt to distinguish CLIL from other language teaching approaches is often misleading. Jendrych [15] mainly discusses the complexity of ESP teaching today and attributes the emergence of CLIL to the development of

ESP. She underlines the fact that CLIL is the evolution of ESP that requires teachers' higher qualifications, such as content knowledge and transferable skills. These demands can cause difficulties, constraints and negative attitudes on the part of ESP teachers, which may prevent them from agreeing to teach CLIL courses [15. P. 48].

However, many researchers have a relatively more positive attitude towards the similarities between the two approaches. First of all, Fernández [16. P. 17] claims that CLIL can be a generic term, covering many similar notions, even including ESP. The interpretation of different tracks of CLIL mainly lies in the ontological and epistemological beliefs. Some researchers argue that ESP and CLIL share similar theoretical principles. As claimed by Tarnopolsky [17. P. 3], the most common feature of the two approaches is integrating language learning with content matter of non-linguistic disciplines, where CLIL has a broader scope and ESP is usually posited as a language course. Also, Jendrych [15] considers that in some cases teaching ESP is similar to teaching CLIL, as both approaches emphasize teaching language and professional skills.

Coyle specifies some aspects to distinguish CLIL from other approaches to foreign language teaching through content: "the distinctiveness lies in an integrated approach, where both language and content are conceptualized on a continuum without an implied preference for either" [18. P. 544]. Therefore, in pure "unadulterated" CLIL, language and content have an equal status regarding learning objectives. Although CLIL is a most widely used term at various educational levels, the practice at higher education institutions lacks the dual focus of a truly integrated approach [19, 20] and the term English Medium Instruction (EMI) is preferred. A different denomination is the distinction between "soft" CLIL (with more focus on language learning) and "hard" CLIL (with focus on content, where language is seen as a vehicle).

The redesigned curricula within the Bologna Process show an increase in CLIL programs to the detriment of ESP courses [21. P. 44]. Content subjects in English are being offered instead of ESP subjects, causing what Gonzalez Aredo describes as the "vulnerability of ESP in CLIL contexts". This, in consequence, produces an underestimation of the role of language instructors at university [22. P. 69]. Although ESP and CLIL currently coexist in courses at higher education, an increasing tendency towards CLIL is observed.

Given the "Englishization" of higher education [23, 24], it could be ventured that institutional decisions will continue to support CLIL in preference to ESP in the short and long term. However, in most cases CLIL at university lacks a true integration of content and language, and consequently EMI is a more suitable term for these contexts. This rapidly increasing trend has been described in a British Council report [25] which states explicitly that EMI is different from CLIL and from ESP. In EMI, students are expected to develop language proficiency by mere exposure to the English language. In this context, ESP courses would be of major assistance.

The collaboration between content and ESP lecturers, to address the language needs of both lecturers and

students, would provide coherence and robustness to a CLIL program [26, 27]. That is why we would like to affirm our belief that it seems useless to debate on the rivalry for supremacy of CLIL over ESP or vice versa. Opting for the common and shared aspects in both approaches may be a more viable alternative.

CLIL and ESP approaches converge in terms of the common goal, i.e. improving language fluency, but they diverge in focus. Table 1 recaps the attributes of both approaches through several descriptions, which attempt to demonstrate the differences between them [28–31]. The presented specific features of each approach can facilitate choosing a proper methodology [9. P. 31].

Table 1
ESP and CLIL Components

	ESP	CLIL
Aim	Focus on language: to meet specific linguistic needs of a particular discipline	Dual focus: learning subject-matter content through the medium of foreign language or learning a foreign language by studying subject-matter content
Content	Content comes from the students' field of study. Content is used to develop linguistic competences. Students are familiar with content	Specific content and the needed linguistic competence to communicate in a foreign language. Content determines the language to be learnt
Language	Vocabulary, grammar, register, genres, pragmatic and discursive features. Usage of the language in a specific context. Content is often adapted to the learners' proficiency level	Language is a tool for learning and communicating content. Content-led modalities. Language needed to convey content
Teacher	Language expert teachers	Content experts with an appropriate level of language proficiency
Students	Want to improve their English in a certain professional field of study; they may know content better than a teacher	Want to learn content and improve foreign language competence
Lesson	Foreign language classes	Not a language class in the traditional understanding; not a typical subject class (level of language fluency may have an impact on the scope of the content)

To sum up, the relations between ESP and CLIL require more research. We have provided just a brief overview as a tool for analyzing the reasons how and why these approaches gained ground in the current practices of universities, the success of their application and what needs to be overhauled. Being strong proponents of the synergy in didactics that implies the collaboration between ESP and CLIL teachers, we advocate the intensive incorporation with a view to using ESP principles in CLIL pedagogy, moving towards what Dalton-Puffer called "English for knowledge acquisition" [12. P. 203].

Languages at tertiary level: The Russian case

The major aim of the European Higher Education Area, created within the framework of the Bologna

Process, has been to encourage internationalization of higher education. This global aim has spurred Russia to overhaul the language policy at the university level, particularly in terms of raising language awareness among engineering (non-linguistic) students, who will play a leading role in the future technological progress. ESP has held the leading position in university practice for a long time and proved to be a successful approach. But in the context of recent global changes in universities the language policy at the tertiary level also needed to be reconstructed, with the timeframe being one of the issues to consider. The university needed "quick steps up" towards the internationalization status. It included some radical changes in the educational offer regarding the language of instruction. The challenge was to offer a greater number of programmes in English. The ambition to create a multilingual environment forced the authorities to transform ESP courses into CLIL courses. Thus, ESP as the leading approach gave way to the new methodology which had not been sufficiently documented and researched in the Russian context.

CLIL was viewed as an effective tool enabling to "kill two birds with one stone", namely: (a) to increase language awareness among students by extending the borders in professional knowledge fields and including more cognition-based activities into learning; (b) to improve language proficiency of subject teachers and thus to improve lecturing in English. In that way, CLIL emergence at Tomsk Polytechnic University (TPU) can be vividly illustrated with Charles Darwin's quotation: *"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but rather the most responsive to change"*. Let us analyse the CLIL case at TPU in detail.

Having the ambition to strengthen language competences among students and teachers, in 2008 TPU's administration made the decision to reorganize language teaching, mainly based on ESP, into tandem courses or courses of double-agent. The main purpose of such tandems was the collaboration between subject teachers and language teachers within one course. These tandems were unique by nature and, virtually, had no analogues in the Russian higher education system.

Responsibility was distributed in accordance with the competence of teachers so that language teachers were responsible for the language component, while subject teachers were in charge of the delivering of subject knowledge and skills development. Such training was specified by narrow professional themes of the courses, namely, a specific purpose was determined by a definite knowledge area, for example, not just Information Technology and Biomedicine, but "Databases" and "Nanocomposite Polymer Materials", etc.

Such a tandem arrangement lies within ESP and fully follows its methodology, but at the same time it has a more precise content, based on "special purpose". However, a question arises: What prompted the university to move on to a new level of interpreting this approach? The answer is rather simple. The university was triggered to make such a decision because of dissatisfaction with the learning outcomes. According to a preliminary hypothesis, the low learning outcomes were caused by

certain limitations of the proposed learning context and context-based language forms that were chosen by language teachers, who lacked engineering education. Moreover, the suggested content was confined to the formation of common professionally oriented skills and knowledge. In other words, the discussion what to study was reduced to a list of some job-related topics, without a focus on the skills needed to communicate in a language in order to solve professional tasks.

Although the effectiveness of the tandem courses was obvious, the introduction of such courses in the educational process required significant time for the development of training materials. In addition, this practice failed to provide the desired degree of sustainability as its effectiveness depended on a certain level (B2) of subject teachers' language proficiency.

Thus, the university had to abandon the "expensive" approach of tandem courses and make another attempt to optimize the resources and maximally improve performance by integrating subject and linguistic competencies. It was the start of CLIL history at the university. As one can see, by the time CLIL courses were introduced, the subject teachers of the university had already gained sufficient experience in delivering subjects in a foreign language. Besides, there was also a toolkit of methodological practices, including those suggested by linguists (language teachers).

Interdisciplinary tandems existed from 2008 to 2011. In 2011, the CLIL methodology, at that time popular in many European countries, came into the limelight. However, the implementation of the approach encountered some problems in Russia, due to a lack of a practice base. The process was going precisely as described by Wiesemes: "the political support for CLIL teaching is generally strong, concrete guidance and support for teachers implementing it are largely absent" [32. P. 54]. The process raised numerous questions, among them: (a) What language level should teachers have for CLIL courses? (b) Can this course repeat some content previously learned in the Russian language? (c) What sort of cooperation between language and content departments is needed? (d) What are the selection criteria for teaching learning materials; how to compensate for the low level of students' language proficiency? Unfortunately, many of these questions still remain open [33. P. 170].

The eight-year experience allows us to make some interim conclusions, to review the process retrospectively and, more importantly, to present the opinions and insights of the teachers who are dealing or have dealt with CLIL courses in practice.

Research data (Russia)

In 2018–2019 a team of researchers conducted a survey to investigate the situation with foreign languages at TPU. The survey comprised 35 subject teachers of TPU (CLIL teachers only, because there were no more ESP courses). The participants were lecturers of different academic rank and experience teaching different subjects: mechanical engineering, material science, computer

science, and electrical engineering. All of them had teaching experience in a CLIL context: 50% of the respondents had been teaching CLIL for less than 2 years and 50% for a period of 3 to 10 years.

The questions were divided into the following thematic sections:

- a) THREE things teachers enjoy in teaching CLIL and THREE biggest challenges they see in it;
- b) How teachers understand CLIL methodology, its goals and objectives;
- c) THREE most important professional qualities needed for teaching CLIL and THREE qualities they lack;
- d) CLIL teaching materials, their accessibility and availability, their validity to CLIL goals.

The collected data showed a wide range of responses regarding the overall attitude of the teachers towards CLIL in general and their practice in it. We will present the answers in the order of frequency:

1) things the teachers enjoy in CLIL – *good support through constant practice of English language skills, acquiring new professional knowledge through original sources, easy to teach and learn terminology; absence of control from the administration to CLIL teaching that gives more academic freedom to experiment; no restrictions in tools and materials; flexible teaching, we can change the content adjusting it to the needs of students today;*

2) biggest challenges for the teachers in CLIL – *level of students' English proficiency varies greatly, which complicates the preparation for teachers and can negatively influence students' motivation due to the extent of their involvement into exercising practical tasks; how to combine different teaching methods and approaches – Should I teach the language and if yes, how? What is the balance between the language and content and should I assess the language progress at the end of a course?; the need to improve English for teaching and lecturing.*

The figures describing the level of the CLIL methodology were not very optimistic: 50% of the respondents were more or less familiar with the concept of CLIL, 50% of them knew practically nothing about CLIL, viewing it simply as subject-teaching in English. As to the specific features of the CLIL methodology, particularly how teachers view their roles in it, the majority responded that they see their role as helping to prepare students for professional communication in English and making them aware of basic professional vocabulary and terminology.

As for addressing professional teaching skills to work with the CLIL methodology, the teachers pointed out high skills in English, wide professional outlook, and communication skills. The abilities the teachers need are: awareness of CLIL methodology and motivating students to study a subject-course in English.

In the section on teaching materials in CLIL, almost 100% of the respondents answered that they do not have any special CLIL textbooks: they use ESP (developed by language teachers) or authentic materials, including video and audio, from the Internet or other sources. The cooperation between subject and language teachers in terms of developing teaching materials was assessed as

very low: 25% of the respondents evaluated it positively and 75% were not satisfied with it.

The survey findings indicate that the current CLIL practice is ambiguous with regard to understanding what the CLIL methodology is and its place in the holistic educational process. All the suggested CLIL courses focused on the language. The teachers highlighted the language skills first, as can be seen in the following quotes: *I need to improve my English, students' English is not good or sufficient to use it as the language of instruction. I need refreshment courses to improve my English ...*

At first glance there is nothing wrong with the teachers' motivation to raise their language proficiency. On the other hand, is it reasonable to have a CLIL course if, in fact, it is an ESP course instructed by a subject teacher? In this case, the replacement of a language teacher by a subject specialist does not seem to be justified. Another question that might arise concerns the importance of studying terminology. Most respondents view terminology as number one in CLIL courses, the majority of them pointed out terms' acquisition as the CLIL goal.

Factually, learning terminology cannot be a goal. Terminology is just a vehicle through which a subject is learnt. In the same regard, *technical translation* was ranked by the teachers as the second or third among the most important things in the CLIL methodology. This rating raises certain doubts because *technical translation* is a special field of knowledge and its teaching requires certain competencies, different from the set of skills of subject teachers.

The fact that the teachers pointed out the heterogeneous level of students as a problem shows the low awareness of the CLIL methodology, in which the focus is dual, the language is not the only purpose; and CLIL is not a lecturing format because it is not EMI.

Additionally, in the framework of a special training workshop conducted for CLIL teachers we offered to write a free style essay "My CLIL Philosophy" and "My CLIL Story". This was done with the aim to increase our understanding of teachers' CLIL experience, reflections and competence. Here are some quotations from the essays:

"I understand the CLIL methodology as an extended way to professional knowledge and the format to learn terminology of study field."

"I understand the CLIL methodology as teaching academic concepts in English, including the academic language itself (style, discourse and vocabulary)."

"The CLIL advantages I see is learning in parallel the professional concepts that involves cognitive process of thinking, strengthening understanding of complex professional concepts."

"The difficulties I encounter in teaching a CLIL course is the low level of language awareness among students, and that the level is not homogenous, and the lack of special teaching resources engaged CLIL principles."

"The difficulties beyond my influence are the low amount of hours for preparation (a very time-consuming

activity), no time being given to check students' work", the absence in motivation among teachers and students to use a foreign language, no direct way of application and practice, the absence of a documented pool (statutory framework) of how to work with CLIL methodology, and having no opportunities to improve one's own language skills.

"CLIL courses are an unsustainable practice when all students are of the same nationality. It can be classified as unnatural setting when a lecturer and students belong to the same language, but the lecturing is held in English. This can bring about a fall in study motivation."

"The potential solution of problems that I have I see in increasing hours for preparation, not changing the "game rules" very often", collaboration work with language teachers, providing the opportunities for teachers to improve their language proficiency and skills.

"The ideal CLIL scenario I see in upholding continuity in language teaching along the entire period of university study."

Thus, on the basis of the research we can conclude the following:

1) CLIL courses at the university are organized according to the principle "I am involved in CLIL training because I know a foreign language";

2) The CLIL methodology is not properly used in practice;

3) CLIL teaching materials are developed with no regard to the principles of the approach, they are actually subject lectures translated into English.

Consequently, we became concerned with the requirements and conditions necessary for a successful implementation of CLIL courses. In this paper we have attempted to systematize the preliminary study outcomes determining the effectiveness of the approach for the tertiary education. We assume that CLIL pedagogy requires the following:

a) motivated teaching staff who would apply new teaching methods and tools without fear;

b) CLIL-teachers in the staff;

c) availability to get CLIL-competencies through special training programs;

d) motivated students who understand the importance of a foreign language for their future career;

e) peer-professional communities that will discuss current challenges and practices relating to CLIL-teaching;

f) availability of the university-wide CLIL-teaching conception with the introduction of the regulatory function of these processes.

It is becoming evident that more conceptual and empirical work, including the analysis of CLIL classrooms, is needed to be done across different contexts before CLIL concepts can be considered fully implemented. We suppose that the blind belief in CLIL efficacy is not enough to ensure desirable outcomes. The methodology as well as the pedagogical concept should be well reviewed; the process should be organized seeking to achieve the envisaged goals, both local and global, reasonably evaluating the resources that the university has.

Languages at tertiary level: The Lithuanian case

Over the past two decades ESP teaching in Lithuanian tertiary institutions has witnessed a shift from more EAP (English for Academic Purposes), with specific focus on social sciences, business, law, natural sciences or other special fields based on the students' academic needs, to seeing the language as a means of communication in a particular professional setting in order to fulfill a practical purpose. ESP is recognized as a medium, a tool of access to knowledge in different subject areas, studied at tertiary level in a specific context with specific aims.

On leaving high school in Lithuania, pupils are supposed to reach B2 level in their first foreign language (for the overwhelming majority of them it is English). According to the statistics, provided by the National Examination Centre (NEC), which is responsible for the organization of state-level examinations, 20 252 pupils completed the secondary education curriculum and took English for their first foreign language examination in 2017. The statistics show that 98.64% of them passed the B2 level exam successfully. Thus, at universities and other tertiary education institutions, students have sufficient language proficiency to take an ESP course, in accordance with their major subject. Moreover, the school foreign language programmes include the development of certain academic writing and reading skills; therefore, many school leavers, especially those who choose to study at universities abroad, feel quite confident in functioning within an academic context.

A brief look at "study programmes", published on the websites of several Lithuanian universities, reveals the presence of various degrees of language learning. A deeper search allows one to see some similarities and differences of the offered language courses and the university language policy per se. At present, language courses are offered by all Lithuanian universities, but the situation may change. The current revision of study programmes and cutting language programme hours for the sake of more professionally oriented subjects shows that languages are often becoming optional subjects. For these reasons Lithuanian universities do not transfer the educational process en masse to CLIL format, leaving the preference to ESP. CLIL has acquired a recognized position in Lithuanian schools, but its application is fragmentary. CLIL proves to be more easily introduced and carried out in the school setting than in universities [34. P. 137]. As to the tertiary level, CLIL is used more consistently in universities where most or all subjects are taught in the target language [35].

This trend may be justified in several ways, financial considerations being a most decisive factor. The accessibility of ICT-assisted, budget saving methods of language learning as well as their enormous potential for meeting learner's individual needs add to the success of autonomous mobile customized language learning, which seems to be in full compliance with the profile of today's students and their learning preferences. This process is not restricted to a particular university policy; a similar situation with curricula revision has been observed in other European universities.

The Lithuanian case section deals with one type of language courses, namely those offered to students with majors either in precise sciences or humanities. The length of the offered ESP courses varies from 5 credits to 24 credits; the ratio between class work and self-studies is, in most cases, 1 to 2. For example, at Vilnius University law students get 96 hours of class work and 174 hours of self-study.

Research data (Lithuania)

The research data were collected through the on-line questionnaire, which was addressed to language teachers (ESP), particularly those who teach non-philology students. The questionnaire was anonymous.

The participants were lecturers of differing academic ranks with different experiences teaching at various tertiary education institutions in Lithuania. The total number of respondents was 89; all of them were language teachers (ESP) with a teaching experience of 2 and more years. 13.79% of the respondents had been teaching ESP for less than 10 years, 86.21% for a period over 10 years. Most of them (82.76%) had had experience in teaching general English as well.

The questions were divided into the same sections as described in the Russian case presented above, with some modifications. We will limit ourselves to focusing on several issues: (a) how ESP teachers interpret the ESP methodology and understand "specific purpose"; (b) what strong and weak points (THREE challenges) teachers can name in their ESP practice at Lithuanian universities; (c) how well ESP teachers are equipped with good-quality, updated teaching materials.

Although the term ESP has been used for decades, scholars still differ in understanding the specificity of a language to be learnt [36], competences to master [37], and primacy of the language over the content [38. P. 320]. The collected data show a wide variety of responses. Approximately 40% of the respondents expressed their understanding of *purpose* using the words *professional* or *profession* as in *professional needs*, *professional life*, and *profession community*. The responses with the words *specific* and *specified*, as in *specific subject*, *specified area*, *specific discipline* could be viewed as a possible variation of the same idea.

Approximately 30% of the respondents associate the ESP *purpose* with the actions that learners will be able to perform: *to communicate (with colleagues, partners, and clients)*, *to work in a language environment: to talk to customers, to participate in business negotiations, and to write a formal letter etc.* A relatively smaller part of the respondents (about 15%) specified *the ESP purpose* as developing some general language skills (reading, speaking, listening and writing), in some cases adding direct objects. e.g. *to write reports, to read scientific articles etc.* Among other *purposes* mentioned by the respondents were: *increasing knowledge, versatility, a tool for communication.*

As to the ESP methodology, the collected responses suggested that the main focus should be placed on some *target skills* (writing, reading, and speaking) and the *target*

language aspects: vocabulary, terminology, and grammar. About 30% of the skills and language aspects are specified as related to *profession or professional environment*.

Commenting on the factors contributing to the professional satisfaction and success of ESP teachers, *lifelong learning was underlined*. This tendency could be traced in more than 30% of the responses (31.2%). In 20.8% of the answers, *student satisfaction* and *student motivation* are named as a key to the teachers' current successful teaching practice. The replies – *ability to motivate the learners or satisfy their needs, to reach mutual understanding, get student recognition* – are treated as an expression of satisfaction.

When asked about what they like in ESP, 13% of the teachers responded that they enjoy the diversity of the topics and materials. One of the most rewarding aspects mentioned by the respondents was *team work*. This aspect was implied in 10% of the answers and was expressed by words such as: *sharing with colleagues, cooperation with subject teachers, ability to involve students in shaping the programme etc.*

In 6.5% of the answers, *applicability* of the subject is implicitly stated as one of the ways to reach professional satisfaction. This is also reflected in such answers as *satisfaction in teaching practical English, work efficiency, students can use their linguistic competence in their studies etc.*

The ESP teachers also indicated that they enjoy *freedom in choosing teaching methods, designing tasks* and similar advantages that come under the umbrella of *creativity*. This was implied in 5.6% of the answers. A relatively small number (3.1%) of the respondents indicated: *clearly defined teaching subject, clearly formulated students' needs and purposes, precise goals etc.*

As for THREE biggest challenges, the respondents named:

- 1) lack of competence in the discipline (29.7%);
- 2) low motivation of students (21.2%);
- 3) different levels of students' foreign language proficiency within a group; big number of students within a group (12.7%);
- 4) students' insufficient knowledge in the discipline (10.6%);
- 5) lack of training in teaching ESP (8.48%);
- 6) insufficient or lack of cooperation with content teachers (6.36%);
- 7) others: lack of ready-to-use ESP materials; lack of single-field dictionaries; lack of ESP textbooks for some courses (10.6%).

Although 68.97% of the teachers consider themselves to be "*sufficiently qualified*" in the teaching area, 29.7% of the responses acknowledge the lack of expertise and confidence to teach subject-specific conventions. *Various levels of students' proficiency within one group and a big number of students within one group* are often viewed as interrelated challenges, recurring in the teachers' responses. Lithuania is not unique in this aspect. Knezovic (2016) comments on a similar situation stating that ESP classes, especially at the tertiary level, are not necessarily homogeneous, "... since most students do not have the same level of foreign language proficiency, owing

to their diverse secondary education background and foreign language exposure, which may result in students' lack of motivation or interest in learning" [29. P. 130].

Although the average number of students in groups usually does not exceed 20, some faculties tend to form groups of up to 30 students in order to cut spending on ESP teaching and encourage students' individual work. Moreover, for the same reasons some faculties reduce the number of contact hours or the ESP course length to one term, leaving the syllabus unchanged. Such changes hamper students' efforts to achieve their aims in ESP.

Summarizing the Lithuanian research data regarding foreign language teaching at tertiary level, we can say the following:

a) Although CLIL method is practiced at Lithuanian universities and colleges, language teachers readily respond to being addressed as ESP teachers. The opposite may not be true, i.e. not all language teachers would present themselves as CLIL specialists. That allows us to say that currently the ESP approach is dominant in the Lithuanian tertiary education.

b) The primary purpose of ESP is viewed as an ability to use the language for professional needs, which reflects the observed tendency of tertiary education towards applicability of the gained skills and knowledge.

c) Compared with the situation 15–20 years ago, there seems to be less demand for developing academic skills within the ESP context, as neither teachers nor students view them as a key component of ESP courses.

d) Although the respondents feel satisfied and sufficiently qualified in teaching a language for specific purposes, one third of them admit their lack of subject-related knowledge.

Results and Discussion

As stated at the beginning, the aim of this study is to analyze to what extent the real CLIL and/or ESP classroom situation (data) correlates with the methodologies' goals and objectives in the context of two countries, and what should be done to achieve better results.

Having analyzed the collected research data, we can point out common challenges faced by the teachers practicing CLIL or ESP:

- 1) low motivation of students;
- 2) non-homogenous groups;
- 3) not advanced training of teachers to work with ESP and CLIL methodologies;
- 4) low level of cooperation between subject and language teachers (CLIL teachers need to improve English, language teachers need additional content knowledge).

Comparing the results of the surveys, three factors contributing to the teachers' satisfaction in their activities can be distinguished:

- 1) lifelong learning, discoveries in the students' professional field, personal development (ESP); new professional knowledge acquisition from original sources (CLIL);
- 2) creativity; freedom in choosing teaching methods; more academic freedom to experiment (CLIL); flexible teaching, no restrictions on teaching tools, administrative support (CLIL);

Table 2a

CLIL and ESP strong points and challenges in Russia and Lithuania

	CLIL	ESP	CLIL	ESP
	Strong points		Challenges	
Russia	Professional knowledge from original sources; academic freedom in teaching – no restrictions in teaching tools and methods; quick progress in language		Different levels of students' language proficiency; low motivation among students to study a subject in English; poor knowledge in CLIL methodology and language to lecture; lack of materials	
Lithuania		Lifelong learning and professional development; applicability; creativity/variety of teaching methods		Lack of teachers' competence in subject fields; low motivation of students to study; large number of students in groups; lack of textbooks and inertia cooperation with subject teachers

Table 2b

CLIL and ESP teaching materials

	CLIL	ESP	CLIL	ESP
	Teaching materials		Factors to professional satisfaction of teachers	
Russia	Lack of special (CLIL) textbooks and teaching materials		Support from administration, extended hours for lecture preparation, flexible teaching	
Lithuania		Lack of specialised textbooks, covering the current state of developments in the subject field		Lifelong learning, ability to motivate the learners and satisfy their needs, students' recognition

3) diversity of topics, variety of the topics covered (ESP); no restrictions on materials used (CLIL).

The data presented in the research can be summarized in two tables (2a and 2b) according to the questions' categories.

As a discussion we would like to draw attention to the fact that no matter what methodology is used, it should be used in line with its settings (variables) and university goals and ambitions. There is no single established model to import and use and hardly we can speak about copying this or that methodology without prior adaptation to the realities of a country (cultural, social, geographical). Each university develops its own educational trajectory, again based on its own resources, settings, and ambitions. In order to streamline CLIL or ESP didactic settings, it is necessary to conduct the needs' analysis and the analysis of the conditions, inter alia resources, in which the methodology is going to be implemented and, primarily, for what purpose. To use the methodology for the sake of the methodology itself is a utopia leading nowhere, and expecting good results is a time waste.

Each methodology has its own rules of the game and only following these rules will facilitate us to achieve success. If ESP is a language-led approach (with the focus on the language needed for professional purposes), it should not go deeply into subject concepts; if CLIL is a dual-focused one, it should make language learning dominant, particularly in case when it is provided by subject teachers. Cooperation will be a good factor for the both methodologies, as many respondents noted, at least,

in terms of learning and teaching materials' design, but it is a very complicated process requiring coordination from the university authority. However, as the respondents say, teaching materials in fact is not such a big problem, this task is quite solvable due to the modern Internet-world: the methods teachers choose matter much more. Student-centred methods have clear advantages over teacher-focused ones. The methods are to be active, implying students' involvement with the focus on cognitive and conscious studying through solving practical tasks. In order to make tasks interesting, they are to be solvable with a clear input and only in this case we can expect to get a reasonable output.

Conclusion

The research conducted by the two universities has revealed that, while pursuing similar goals, the two countries face similar problems. In this paper we attempted to analyse the teaching practice involving two different methodologies – CLIL and ESP. We have not set as goal to compare which one is better or what country has better practices and results. The choice is an individual thing. The methodology will be "right" if it is in line with university goals and resources, as well as students' needs and ambitions. There is no need to start CLIL without a good reason and without well-developed facilities for it. Thus, if a well established practice of ESP proves to be effective and satisfies all the parties, there is little sense in trying to replace it with something more innovative.

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