

University of Cyprus
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Integrating Task-based and Content and Language Integrated Learning

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www.ucy.ac.cy



<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/events/tblt2009/>

Summary

- ***The present paper will describe how TBL (Task-Based Learning) and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) were combined in the development of three English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses designed for students majoring in Architecture, Biology and Law at the University of Cyprus.***

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Presentation Outline

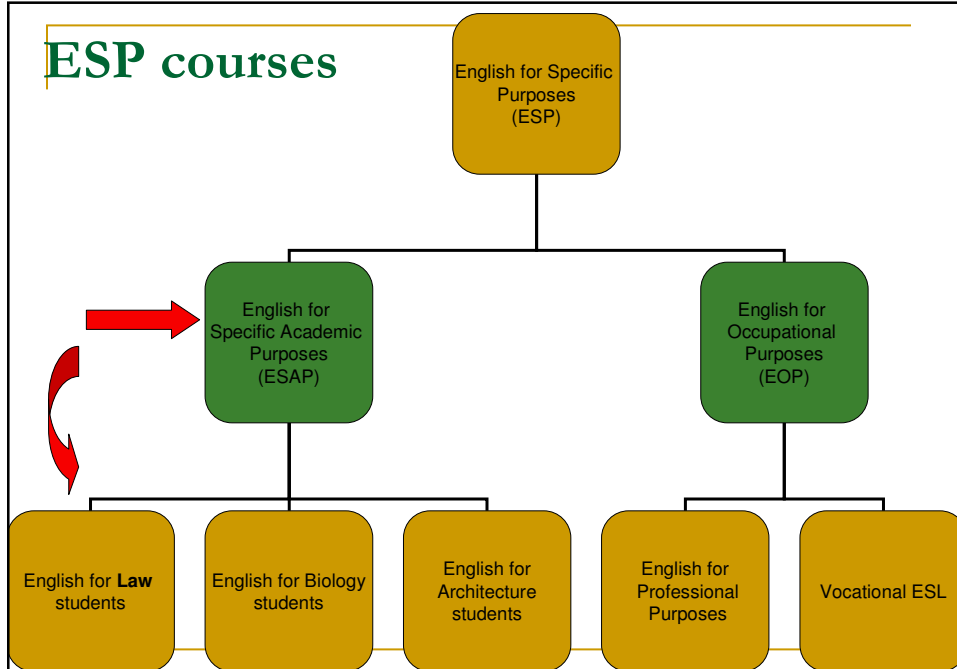


- Background
 - SLA – (Second Language Acquisition) learning theories that motivated the course
 - TBL - Task-Based Learning & setting parameters
 - CLIL – Content & Language Integrated Learning

- Description of the current study
 - How TBL and CLIL were combined in the development of three English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses
 - English for Law
 - English for Biology
 - English for Architecture

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ESP courses



Adapted from Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998), Johns & Price-Machado (2001).

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Academic Vs Occupational ESP courses

- **Academic courses:** more difficult to teach something that is not going to be used immediately – not easy to determine sociolinguistic course context
- **Occupational courses:** very task based, contextually situated, very specific, sociolinguistic context easily determined
- **Our courses:** English for Law, Biology, Architecture
  **ACADEMIC**

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Theoretical motivation of courses

- **Task-based Learning (TBL)**
 - Its effectiveness derives from language usage in **meaningful contexts**
- **Tasks:** Authentic, collaborative, student-centered
- TBL - a development of **cognitive theories** – **Situated Learning**

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Learning theories

Constructivism, Social Learning theories

- **Social Development theory – Vygotsky**
- **Situated Learning – Lave**
 - **learner centered theories**
 - collaborative learning
 - unintentional learning
 - authentic context
 - social interaction-collaboration

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Tasks identification - Parameters

- **Linguistic Needs**
 - Present – target language competence
- **Sociolinguistic Needs**
 - Occupational aspect
- **Discipline Knowledge Needs**
 - Academic aspect

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Need to identify Tasks...

- Through **Needs Analysis** - Collect information on:

Authentic tasks

- Occupational
- Academic
- Linguistic level

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Consulting process: Collaborative - Continuous

- Key: **Collaboration** between **content specialists** with high level of L2 competence and **language specialists** through
 - Questionnaires
 - E-mails
 - Interviews
 - Frequent meetings – telephone conversations.



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Challenges...

- Students do not see these courses as primary, need to avoid repetition
- Not an easy task to get the faculty to work with us
- Faculty input may be incomplete
- Important: Make faculty realise the need to **integrate skills, collaborative learning assignments.**

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In defining tasks

- **CLIL**
- Pupils learn a subject (**Content**) through the medium of a foreign **Language**
 - **Time** considerations (lack of time)
 - **Motivation** problems
 - **Crowded curriculum**
 - Effective L2 acquisition, more motivating and interesting courses

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Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

- Two types of CLIL:
 - High Intensity CLIL (regular CLIL)
 - Low Intensity CLIL (modular CLIL)

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More CLIL benefits:

- improves language competence and oral communication skills
- allows learners more contact with the target language
- does not require extra teaching hours
- complements other subjects rather than competes with them
- increases learners' motivation and confidence in both the **language** and the **subject** being taught

- http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/language-teaching/doc236_en.htm

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Natural connection between ESP and TBL – CLIL

Motivation factor

- Content is relevant to students' studies, more interesting, more familiar topics, perhaps already studied in their mother tongue
- Familiarity enables students to pay attention to details that would otherwise be missed

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CEFR - Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

- Users of the Framework should consider the “**communicative tasks in the personal, public, occupational and/or educational domains that the learner will need/ be equipped/ be required to tackle**” when designing courses (CEFR 2001)
 - Implications for **ESP, CLIL, TBL**

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Our project: **ESP Curriculum Development Project 2008 @ UCY**

Development of three new ESP (English for Specific Purposes) courses

- ❑ English for Law
- ❑ English for Architecture
- ❑ English for Biology

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Curriculum development – Basic questions asked:

- What are the needs of the learners?
- What are the linguistic - situational factors?
- What will the aims and objectives of the courses be?
- How can the content be selected and graded?
- How can the best teaching method be provided?

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Curriculum Development

Needs analysis data gathered through:

- Interviews with Faculty members
- Interviews with English teachers
- Student Questionnaires
- Diagnostic test
- Interviews – informal discussions with professionals
- E-mails, telephone conversations, informal meetings with departments

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Abilities required for successful communication in students' academic & occupational settings were considered & “translated” into TASKS:

- Discipline Vocabulary and content knowledge acquisition
- General language skills
- Academic language skills
- Study skills, researching skills
- Everyday informal talk
- IT skills

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Examples of tasks (Law):

■ Discipline (academic) tasks

- Attend a legal lecture, take notes & and provide a summary
- Hands-on practice on referencing legal documents
- Using a dictionary for legal purposes
- Reading & understanding academic legal articles – textbooks
- Presentation skills (present a legal topic in English)
- Understanding legalese & paraphrasing in plain English

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More examples (Law):

■ Occupational tasks

- Write a letter of advice on a legal dispute, outlining legal issues
- Write / respond to an e-mail / internal company memo
- Review a law case and relevant documents in preparation for a meeting with the other party's lawyer

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Course Implementation



- Students **very motivated** (tasks very well received)
- Departments **satisfied**

- **Positive results**
 - Grades
 - End-of-year Student questionnaires

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Considerations...



- Learner-centered collaborative learning

- Purpose: Involve students to do sth and make them understand why/how



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Concluding...

- The current presentation demonstrated how situated/constructivist learning theories, CLIL, learner-centered/task-based pedagogical approaches can contribute to effective ESL (ESP) curriculum development.
- More **effective** learning because students are more **engaged**, **motivated** and work **collaboratively**.

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AIM

Help students with their studies & later professional work

Help them become **independent learners** (service course)

- Key to this process: Make it all work by **relating the course to what students are already doing anyway** to keep students and departments on side...

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Questions



Thank you for your attention!

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