SEARCHING FOR THE GOLDEN AVERAGE BETWEEN ESP AND CLIL

Mirela Alhasani[1], Nadežda Stojković[2]

[1]Epoka University, Tirana, Albania, [2]University of Niš, Serbia
Phone: +3554 22 32 086, E-Mail: malhasani@epoka.edu.al

Abstract. *Higher education institutions have turned into main actors of multidimensional societal transformations in the EU context but also worldwide. Moreover, these rapid international developments and dissemination of the scientific research at global level have been cohesively accomplished through English language; by now English has been acknowledged as the lingua franca of technological, economic, socio-cultural and educational advances. Consequently, the current academic debate regarding effectiveness of English teaching approaches at university programs has gained special significance. This debate has been centered into two main English teaching approaches; the one targeting English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and the other focused on Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). This paper will shed light upon the attributes of each of these two important English language teaching paradigms. Yet, we argue that it is precisely the flexible - agile nature of ESP to help students socially construct their linguistic potentials which matches very precisely with the social constructivism of European environment and global adjustments of international universities these days. Moreover, we aim to prove that having abundant knowledge on various subject matters is definitely important however, knowing how to express clearly, correctly and properly this immense knowledge to guarantee successful 'competitive 'communication in an increasingly interdependent, multi-cultural world takes more prominence than ever before. Therefore, despite similarities between ESP and CLIL, ESP promises a brighter perspective of coping with future linguistic challenges. Our analysis will be carried through a comparative method of the theoretical literature on ESP and CLIL as elaborated in line with the most representative theoretical literature of social constructivism encompassing its recent adaptation in higher educational context especially in the EU.*

Key words: *ESP, CLIL, Active Knowledge Construction, EU context*

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to the widespread usage of multidisciplinary literature in English language, lots of attention has been placed upon the effectiveness of English teaching methods which guarantee fast and successful English language acquisition. Research topics treated in latest linguistic debates vary from the role of the university teacher in course designing and class materials selection, the language assessment techniques, task activities, balance between theory and practice; to confrontational SWOT analysis comparing the effectiveness of English teaching methods with regard to their compatibility to labor market communication needs. Stemming

from the current developments at higher education institutions in Europe and worldwide, this article will aim to provide an elaborate and insightful comparative analysis of the two main 'opposing' English teaching approaches – English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). We rightly coded these two approaches as falling in sheer contrastive argumentation and thus, at the extreme spectrum of the language teaching pendulum.

Our research questions are explicitly concerned with what ESP and CLIL offer to English language acquisition? Which of these teaching approaches guarantee productive and compatible English acquisition in line with the professional linguistic needs of the dynamically expanding markets? Why ESP is more prone to guarantee the accomplishment of independent thinkers; of professional communicators in possession of both hard and soft skills; of social constructivists to actively build up functional dialogue? Finally, despite divergences, can ESP and CLIL come into a golden grey ground to better benefit from their mutual strong attributes? These questions will guide to plausible answers and solutions to the above dilemmas. We build this research upon the premise that having abundant knowledge on various subject matters is definitely important; however, knowing how to express clearly, correctly and properly this immense knowledge to guarantee successful communication in an over increasingly interdependent, multi-cultural world takes more prominence than ever before. We argue that despite similarities and/or contrast between ESP and CLIL, ESP promises a brighter picture of coping with future linguistic challenges.

The research paper will be conducted through comparative and contrast content analysis of the body of literature on the two English theories, - ESP and CLIL. Consequently, the first parts of the research will constitute a descriptive analysis on the definition, origins and striking characteristics of each 'opposing' English teaching approach. Next, we will focus on the in-depth effectiveness and contribution these approaches make to the overall higher education goals and socio-political community values in the framework of the European Union developments and evolutionary ongoing adjustments. What is meant by the EU constructive tertiary educational background is the Bologna Declaration originally signed by 19 countries in 1999 and its creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). [1]

Some researchers, for instance, Phillipson rightly asserts to this regional internationalization process of university curricula and study programs as solely an English language education by quoting Phillipson "in the Bologna Process, internationalization means English-medium higher education". [2] According to Bologna Charter, the curricula internationalization, staff and student mobility within the EHEA will rely on wide and efficient usage of English language at tertiary level university programs. Thus, definitely the need to improve academic English courses to the highest relevance and market and socio-political compatibility has augmented among academicians.

Therefore, in particular, these comparative sections of the paper will discuss how and why the ESP objectives match tightly to the mission of higher education in European Union. The European vision for 2020 is to further reinforce the link between languages and employability outlining that "linguistic and intercultural skills increase the chances of obtaining a better job" and as such "students should have access to practice-oriented

---

[1] http://www.ehea.info/cid100210/ministerial-conference-bologna-1999.html Ministerial Conference Bologna 1999 downloaded on 4/11/2017
[2] Robert Phillipson "English in higher education: panacea or pandemic?", *Angles on the English-Speaking World* 9 (2009), pp 29-57

language provision"[3]. Moreover, the 2006 *Recommendation on Key Competence Framework* pointed out that mastery of communicative competence in a foreign language will comprise one of the eight key competences "all individuals need for personal fulfillment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment"[4]. The role of university programs and courses is to prepare the future leaders equipped with the right skills for a civilized, open-minded, scientifically- illuminated, socially-integrated community. Most importantly, these future leaders have to be very good communicators in EU professional settings and beyond the EU borders to solve job-related problems and other multispectral challenges.

Consequently, it is our ultimate scope that this original research be a multifaceted contribution not only into English teaching debates at tertiary level of studies; to ESP and CLIL researchers; but, also to the professional audience of business representatives, industries and politics. The paper will make an original contribution to the fostering of English language status, ESP in particular versus general scientific content as well as reconciling to the benefits of a mutual merger of the CLIL and ESP best functional and feasible strong points influencing fast and effective language acquisition in compliance with the needs of our dynamic professional domains. This complete dimension of the paper constitutes its novelty and very tangible contribution to all stakeholders rather than being limited only to ESP teachers and CLIL teachers.

2. DESCRIPTION OF ESP FEATURES

The first origins of the ESP date back in the 1960s as a reaction to General English incapability to meet the growing linguistic needs of employers.[5] The earliest linguistics scholars to define the striking features of an ESP class were Halliday, MacIntosh and Strevens in their publication of *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching* in 1964. Apart from scholastic interpretation, one most contemporary definition of ESP is offered by the working group called by the Director General for Education Culture of European Commission in spring 2010. The main aim of this working group was on language competence for occupational purposes having implications for all educational and adult tertiary level in particular. They define Language for Specific Purposes as "a teaching method designed to meet specific (mainly professional) needs of the learners. For that reason, according to this source, ESP always integrates the language learning and subject learning approaches. Great emphasis is put on the practical outputs of language learning"[6]. ESP learning is not the language itself learning itself but it is the purpose. Moreover, the purpose is not the linguistic skills, but the function and the notion. To quote the authors, "Every one of the specialized needs required, before it can be met by appropriate teaching materials, detailed studies of restricted languages and special registers carried out on the basis of large samples of the

---

language used by the particular persons concerned"[7]. Furthermore, considering back the quote of Halliday, MacIntosh and Strevens, "It is perfectly possible to find out just what English is used in the operation of power stations in India; once this has been observed, recorded and analyzed, a teaching course to impart such language behavior can at last be devised with confidence and certainty".[8] These founding -pillars of the ESP course main characteristics were further built up and fostered by other linguistic scholars such as Widdowson who restates the core arguments put forward by Halliday. In addition, Widdowson confirms that "ESP is simply a matter of describing a particular area of language and then using this description as a course specification to impart to learners the necessary restricted competence with this particular area".[9]

Notwithstanding the aforementioned references, definitely the most contemporary contributors to ESP theoretical interpretations remain Hutchinson and Waters with their publication in 1987 *English for Specific Purposes: A learning-centered approach*. They not only define ESP features but also explain the contextual background of its coming into existence as a reaction to the demands of a Brave New World, a revolution in linguistics and the focus on the learner.[10] They elaborate how the end of the Second World War paved the way to "… the age of enormous and unprecedented expansion in scientific, technical and economic activity on an international scale – for various reasons, most notably the economic power of the United States in the post-war world, the role of international language fell to English"[11].

Secondly, Hutchinson and Waters enlist as another contributory factor to the growth usage of English language the Oil Crisis in the early 1970s which made English language of rich western countries flow into oil-rich regions together with the scientific knowledge and technology. As a result the dissemination of technological oil infrastructure started to be conducted through English language. Apart from these favorable geopolitical circumstances, English for Specific Purposes was also remarkably influenced by the revolution of linguistics; the focus of language scholars had shifted from mere language methodology to language to be delivered in special contexts in real communication. [12]

A decade later, in 1998 another well-elaborated definition of ESP was advanced by Dudley-Evans and S.T. John.[13] They relied on the original definition of ESP as put by Strevens identifying four absolute characteristics and two variable ones. Strevens distinguishes four absolute and variable characteristics of ESP as following:[14]
    1. Absolute characteristics of ESP:
        ▪ designed to meet specific needs of the learner;
        ▪ related in content and subject matter to particular disciplines, occupations and activities;

---

[7] Michael Alexander Kirkwood Halliday, Angus MacIntosh and Peter Strevens. *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*, London: Longman, 1964, p190
[8] Ibid
[9] Henry G. Widdowson. *Learning Purpose and Language Use*. Oxford:OUP, 1983, pp 9-12
[10] Tom Hutchinson, and Alan Waters, A. *English for specific purposes: A learning-centered approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1987, pp 6-20
[11] Ibid, p 6
[12] Ibid, p 7
[13] T. Dudley-Evans and St John, M. *Developments in ESP: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge University Press.1998, pp 4-5
[14] P. Strevens. "ESP after 20 years: A re-appraisal". In M. Tickoo (Ed.), *ESP: State of the Art*, Singapore, SEAMEO Regional Centre, 1988, pp-13

- centered on the language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, etc and analysis of this discourse;
- in contrast with General English.

2. Variable characteristics, ESP may be but is not necessarily:
- Restricted as to the language skills to be learned e.g. reading only;
- Not taught according to any pre-ordained methodology.

However, despite the wide implementation of ESP teaching approach in more than three decades, there are still blurring and ambiguous perceptions of its definition and key qualities. One of the renowned ESP scholars, Dudley-Evans even adjusted the standard definition of ESP in the 1997 conference in Japan, by removing the absolute variable as being in total contrast with General English. Instead, together with St. John, he expanded the range of relative variables as following:

- ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English;
- ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level;
- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students;
- Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners.[15]

David Carter depicts three types of ESP[16]:
- English as a restricted language
- English for Academic and Occupational Purposes
- English with specific topics

Nonetheless, despite some nuances of original interpretations Gatehouse makes the positive point that authors like Carter and Hutchinson still conclude with an ultimate indisputable final purpose of ESP - employment and linguistic relevance to professional real-work settings. [17]

3. DESCRIPTION OF CLIL FEATURES

CLIL is a relatively new approach to learning which implies an umbrella notion tracing back 20 years ago in Finland. David Marsh and Anne Maljers were the first to maintain that "CLIL refers to situations where subjects, or parts of subjects, are taught through a foreign language with dual-focused aims, namely the learning of content and the simultaneous learning of a foreign language".[18]

---

[15] T. Dudley-Evans and St John, M. *Developments in ESP: A multi-disciplinary approach.* Cambridge University Press.1998, pp 4-5
[16] David Carter. "Some propositions about ESP", The *ESP Journal,* 2. pp 131-137
[17] Kate Gatehouse. "Key issues in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Curriculum Development", in *the Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. VII, No.10. October 2001, p 4
[18] Alina Balagiu & Mariora Patesan, "Content and Language Integrated Learning or English for Special Purposes", in *Naval Academy Scientific Bulletin*, Vol XVIII- 2015-Issue 1, Naval Academy Press, Constanta, Romania. p 284

European Union Commission placed special priority aiming to make CLIL a most important teaching approach in Europe citing in 2003 "Content and Language Integrated Learning, in which pupils learn a subject through the medium of a foreign language, has a major contribution to make to the Union's language goals, it can provide effective opportunities for pupils to use their new language skills now, rather than learn them now for use later.[19] CLIL teachers spend more time on content teaching but pay less attention to language teaching.[20] In CLIL classes, English is mainly used to deliver content knowledge without the explicit intention of integrating linguistic skills into content teaching and, therefore, unlike ESP in CLIL there is less interaction and few opportunities to perform creative tasks.[21]

It is significant the critical yet, constructive findings of two experienced CLIL teachers and researchers, - Rasasen and Klaasen, - after having assessed the staff competence in CLIL in 2006. They concluded that in order to improve CLIL teachers' learning incomes; to help students to master the language and communication skills necessary in their graduate field of study, content teachers had to provide an environment stimulating both language and content knowledge construction.[22] This conclusion reveals the gap of CLIL whose main concern is the content substance rather than the language and as such the interactive social communication cannot be guaranteed sole by relying on the content dimension. According to the LANGUA Frame of Reference (7-8), CLIL objectives and learning outcomes aim at acquisition of:

- Knowledge of what constitutes multilingual competence in the field –specific and professional domain;
- Understanding of the national and international dimensions of the professions in the field (Including cultural differences);
- Knowledge and understanding of how multilingual and multicultural professional teams, networks and communities operate;
- Awareness, knowledge and understanding of target language communication conventions of the professions in the field;
- Understanding of the importance of continuously developing one's own professional expertise.

Wolf highlights in his minute portray of CLIL that ever since its origins CLIL was a European Commission teaching approach aimed at promoting multilingualism within EU area respecting diversity of cultures and languages within the old and new perspective EU members.[23] In addition to that, the most reconcilable definition given to CLIL is by Marsh & Lange 2000 that "Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) is a generic term and refers to any educational situation in which an additional language and therefore

---

[19] Commission of the European Communities Brussels, 24.07.2003 449 Final Communication From the Commission to the Council, The European Council, The Economic and Social Committee and the Committee on the Regions
[20] Wenhsien Yang, "ESP vs CLIL: A coin of two sides or a Continuum of two extremes?"in *ESP –TODAY, Journal of English for Specific Purposes at Tertiary Level,* Vol.4 (1). 2016.pp 43-45
[21] Ibid, p52
[22] Anne Rasanen & Renate Klaasen, "From learning outcomes to staff competences in integrated content and language instruction at higher education level". In Wilkinson, R., V. Zegers and C. Van Leeuwen (eds), *Bridging the Assessment Gap in English- medium Higher Education*, AKS-Series. 2006. pp 256-275
[23] Dieter Wolff, "Integrating Language and Content in the Language Classroom: Are transfer and Knowledge and of language ensured?", in *ASP*, 41- 42/2003, pp 35-46

not the most widely used language of the environment is used for the teaching and learning of subjects other than the language itself."[24]

The compendium list of CLIL explicitly points out the cognitive and content aims of CLIL as follows[25]:

- Develop intercultural communication skills
- Prepare for internationalization
- Provide opportunities to study content through different perspectives
- Access subject-specific target language terminology
- Improve overall target language competence
- Develop oral communication skills
- Diversify methods and forms of classroom practice
- Increase learner motivation.

It is interesting to note though, that these CLIL aims have been accomplished only in collaboration with the language courses. To be more concrete, the best illustrative example is that of the Faculty of Applied Sciences in Universite Libre de Bruxelles. In 2007, a partial Content and Language Integrated Learning Program was implemented within the Framework of a joint Master's Program in *Chemistry and Materials Science*. More precisely, the course approach design and materials development during the Bachelor cycle were based on English for Academic Purposes and pre-experience English for Specific Purposes aiming to link the English language courses effectively to the Engineering curriculum[26]. In English for Academic Purposes the course was targeted at developing communicative skills needed to conduct academic tasks and participate in academic discourses.[27] Interestingly, one of the pedagogical approaches utilized by EAP to fulfill its objectives was the CLIL one. It means that EAP course reinforces academic language within a specific academic context in the domain of study and academia.

We intend to investigate into further in-depth details and findings resulting from this CLIL case study application in Brussels. CLIL classes consisted of 14 students in a class lasting 50 min and, as far as speaking activities and interactive student- driven tasks were concerned, each student was literally exposed to no more than 5 min in a class. This limited time assigned to building up speaking skills and communicative fluency upon the thematic content falls in sheer contrast with the student-centered and communicative teaching approach very much recommended in English language teaching in tertiary education. Moreover, dating back since the 1970s, the rigid grammatical competence concept of English language teaching has been almost totally replaced by the broader current concept of communicative competence: knowing what to say and how to say it appropriately based on the situation, the participants and their roles and intentions.[28]

---

[24] D. Marsh & G. Lange (eds). *Using languages to Learn and Learning to use Languages,* Jyvaskyla University, Sweden, 2000. p iii.
[25] http://www.clilcompendium.com
[26] Kristin Bark , Cyrielle Maerten, Ian Tudor and Jeniffer Valcke, *A Discussion Brief of Content and Language Integrated Learning at the Faculty of Applied Sciences* , University Libre of Brussels. 2010
[27] Ibid, p3
[28] Jack C. Richards. Communicative Language Teaching, Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp 9-11

We all agree as higher education instructors that the main source of students' linguistic and intellectual development is precisely the classroom discourse.[29] Definitely, this drawback of CLIL courses turns to be more troublesome at massive courses which outnumber the modest class of 14 students; instead CLIL courses for instance, Introduction to Economics, Introduction to Accounting, and Introduction to Art History due to their nature as fundamental courses on a faculty - base typically exceed 100- 150 students especially in huge public universities.[30] Consequently, these massive classes further deteriorate the interactive and communicative student-minded teaching environment at universities.

Another interesting illustrative case study to manifest CLIL in real practice is the University of Ottava as the largest and oldest bilingual university in North America offering academic programs and degrees in both French and English. Content- based language teaching courses were firstly introduced at this university in 1982. Ever since its beginnings, CLIL courses were taught in compliance with Krashen's input hypothesis arguing that 'if students received a great deal of comprehensible input at a level just beyond their current language proficiency, in a non-threatening context, language acquisition would take place'.[31] To paraphrase, this model is also referred to as the sheltered model where students would be exposed to authentic academic language but the input would be modified to insure comprehensibility. According to Krashen, the CLIL professor should provide a good model of the language for students and offer rich input.[32]

This Ottava case study, in 1985 due to budgetary concerns the adjunct model in which students 'are sheltered in the language course and integrated with native speakers in the content course' started to be implemented.[33] Interestingly to our analysis, it was only in 2006 that a student survey was conducted to show students' perceptions of the quality and effectiveness of these adjunct courses of CLIL at Ottawa University. Unlike regular three-credit content courses with large number of students, in the adjunct language class there are usually 10-15 maximum 20 students aiming to tailor the linguistic needs of students to succeed in the content course (massive students in hundreds) whose the latter linguistic input is not adjusted to linguistic needs of the students.[34] The results of the survey demonstrated that oral presentations and other speaking activities had been most helpful to students in learning both the L2 and content. Overall the results and comments were positive towards CLIL courses; they found all activities helpful but most importantly, what they appreciated mostly from the language classes was the small classes and therefore the individual attention they received by the language teacher. [35]

---

[29] Claudia Mewald, *Paradise Lost and Found. A Case Study of Content Based Foreign Language Education in Lower Austria*, Unpublished PHD Thesis, Norwich; University of East Anglia, 2004
[30] Alysee Weinberg, Sandra Burger, Amelia Hope. "Evaluating the Effectiveness of Content-based Language Teaching", in Theme 4- Content-Based Language Teaching, *Teachers of English as a Second Language of Ontario*, Vol 34, Issue 2 Special Symposium Edition June 2008, pp 69-70
[31] Ibid, pp 68-69
[32] Stephen Krashen, *Principles in Second Language and Practice Acquisition*. Oxford; Pergamen Press, 1982
[33] Ibid, p 68
[34] Alysee Weinberg, Sandra Burger, Amelia Hope. "Evaluating the Effectiveness of Content-based Language Teaching", in Theme 4 - Content-Based Language Teaching, *Teachers of English as a Second Language of Ontario*, Vol 34, Issue 2 Special Symposium Edition June 2008, pp 77-79
[35] Ibid, p 79

4. DISCUSSION OF ESP COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

Following up the core argument of the previous descriptive sections on the ESP features; the main quality is its profound focus on specific needs and, as such designed in content and language appropriate to those needs. In brief, ESP focuses on learning the language for professional communication where content is only a source from which language forms for learning are obtained and background for acquiring those forms.[36] We argue on the supremacy of language and form regulation versus the substantive content and as such supporting our thesis that clarity and appropriative of linguistic expression comes first. This brings up the most ancient scholastic debate over the inherent irreplaceable role of language use and usage for humanity. Ancient Greek thought will be brought back on scheme to demonstrate that language possession is still the most valuable and distinctive innate human feature and necessity; then knowledge content comes second in line of priorities.

Tracing back early Greek philosophers' works, Aristotle was among those pioneers believing strongly on the predominance of language clarity rather than the knowledge itself. In various fragments of his writings Aristotle tackles and points to the factors that can enhance or inhibit a clear perception. In his work *Rhetoric* 1404b) he argues that "Being clear is the chief merit in discourse, since if it is not clear, speech cannot perform its function … and it is the parts of speech that give speech its clarity".[37] He continues that 'using any word with several meanings renders the statement obscure '.[38] Aristotle explains that a failure to achieve clarity in language would be caused by a mixture of individual elements of speech; by usage of unknown or unfamiliar words or by using terms with multiple but unspecified senses. This conclusion of Aristotle complies very tightly with the theory of needs analysis which is the most striking feature of the ESP approach. In other words, Aristotle's findings turn to be in utter compatibility with ESP features for a clear, precise, selective language and methodology relevant and tailored strictly to the discipline to guarantee successful communication and information dissemination.

Apart from Aristotle, other founding –fathers of Greek philosophy such as Socrates and Plato have made crucial contributions to the debate on importance and supremacy of accurate language versus the content knowledge itself. For instance, Socrates believed that 'if a man new anything, he could give an account (logos) of it to others, he could explain what he knew to others'.[39] If we were to interpret, the core of Socrates' argument is that knowledge (content) cannot speak up for itself unless the individual is equipped with the language input to reveal and demonstrate that knowledge to others. This statement emphasizes again not only the importance but, above all the supremacy of language command and expressive skills to conduct effective communication compared to possession of subject knowledge; if the latter cannot be transmitted properly and successfully to others then, the act of communication has not been conducted at all. However, our society within EU border but at global level is increasingly relying on soft power tool- linguistic communication to perform trade , financial transactions, peaceful

---

[36] Liew Khe Li and Khor Ching Pey, "ESP at Tertiary Level: Traditional ESP or Integrated ESP?", 2015 Malaysia http://dspace.unimap.edu.my/dspace/bitstream/123456789/34587/1/GENERAL%20PAPER_3.pdf
[37] J.H.Lesher. "Sapheneia in Aristotle:Clarity, Precision and Knweledge" in *APEIRON Journal of Ancient Philosophy and Science* 003-6390/2010/4304 143-156@Academic Printing and Publishing
[38] Ibid, p 144
[39] Guthrie. *Xenophon, Memorabilia* iv. 6.1, p 436

negotiations and diplomatic agreement, educational reforms and accreditation among other accomplishments.

Furthermore, unlike traditional grammar competence method, ESP utilizes the communicative competence teaching method by overstating the usage of meaningful language, problem-solving tasks aiming to accomplish functional communication through English. Thus, communicative competence equals the ESP essential goal of equipping learners of tertiary education with the functional linguistic potential for their future professional engagements. Richards, highlights that one of the main goals of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is to build up fluency by involving the speaker in meaningful interactions and maintaining comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in its communicative competence.[40] A final very crucial attribute of the CLT which is borrowed by the ESP courses, is the push for authenticity in language classroom and real professional life.

Ellis highlights that second language instructions should be predominantly targeted at the meaning ; the semantic (meaning of lexical items) and the pragmatic meaning (the contextualized meanings that arise in communication acts)[41] Moreover, with reference to principles of L2 teaching, Ellis places a great emphasis onto the importance of abundant communicative activities and tasks in classroom in order to build implicit knowledge; the latter to Ellis ' theory is the ultimate goal of any instructional program.[42] Only by being exposed widely to opportunities that endorse pragmatic meanings in communication channel, may students develop true fluency in English as a foreign and second language. In his definition, 'implicit knowledge is procedural, unconsciously held, accessed rapidly and thus available for use in rapid, fluent communication'.[43] The goal of ESP is primarily to equip students with the relevant professional communication to sound natural and confident in natural job settings where they will have to have acquired successfully the fluent level of their targeted professional English. Moreover, much in line with the ESP dual focused perspective on content and functional language in discipline usage, even the representatives of skill- learning theory such as Dekeyser argue in favor of huge communicative practice in foreign language classroom as the most effective channel of transforming explicit knowledge into implicit one. [44]

The ESP courses typically rely on the usage only of English as the sole medium of explaining the concept as well as the object of study by utilizing extensive authentic material, thus creating natural and genuine linguistic environment. Ellis and Krashen among many others strongly claim that only by extensive comprehensible input in the target language will the learners fasten their English language proficiency and develop highly connected complicated implicit knowledge.[45]

ESP courses are more prone to generate motivation among learners due to its tailored mission ever since the beginning of course compilation by matching perfectly well the

---

[40] Jack C. Richards. *Communicative Language Teaching Today*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p14

[41] Rod Ellis, "Principles of Instructed Language Learning", in *Asian EFL Journal*, September 2005, pp 3-4

[42] Ibid, pp 3-7

[43] Ibid, p3

[44] R. DeKeyser, Beyond Focus on Form: Cognitive Perspectives on learning and practicing second language grammar. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds). 1998

[45] Stephen Krashen , The Input hypothesis and its rivals. In N.Ellis (Ed.), *Implicit and explicit learning of the languages*, London, Academic Press, 1994

learners' particular aptitude for learning since it is a course build upon the needs assessment analysis of the learners. Unlike CLIL content-driven courses, ESP provides more space for teachers' flexibility in selecting class materials and classroom learning activities that better fit the learners' language level and their academic or domain purpose to learn English for real functional usage.

5. ESP Constructivist Approach of Building Learners' Social Skills

The needs' analysis fundamental pillar of ESP makes ESP university instructors and higher education experts more capable of catching with the changes and reforming adjustments in higher education. Their needs ' analysis reflection provides them with the professional capability of addressing strategic questions about institutional language objectives, pedagogical approaches and above all , the relevant tools to accomplish these goals as well as to evaluate the whole changing movements in the higher education system.[46] Therefore, ESP turns to make a highly influential and valuable contribution to European Union higher education institutions and, in particular to its constructive transformations aiming at consolidating high quality standards all over the EU zone and EU applicant countries.

It is significant to point out that likewise the European Union community itself; the ESP teaching approach represents a bottom-up approach of teaching and research in perfect matching- analogy with the evolution of the EU democratic values from the bottom-up democracy consolidation. We intend to further elaborate this strong and striking comparison between the ESP and, in particular, the conducive social, co-integrating environment EU-like climate that these language teachings approach guarantees. In addition, this socializing environment comprises the key to EU political, economic, social and educational coherent developments. As a soft power ever since its genesis EU has been relying on a bottom-up dissemination of its democratic values and norms to other non-EU yet aspiring country members: from bottom (individual) to up (leading political elites) to guarantee a genuine and consolidated democracy rather than ad hoc short-term democratic cultivations of certain profitable behaviors.

In order to demonstrate why and how ESP is more prone to making a tangible contribution to EU higher education objectives and to the EU social and democratic principles in general, we will narrow the focus of this section to EU most representative literature of its social values and its construction to better compare/contrast with the ESP features and objectives. Moreover, we will shed light on the extraordinary importance of socialization which is central to a variety of inquiries in social science. For instance, it is a core concept in language acquisition and linguistics; sociology and theories of –in-group formation; international relations theory today encompassing issues on national identity formation, the creation and diffusion of, and compliance with international norms; and effects of international institutions.[47]

---

[46] Gail Taillefer, "CLIL in higher education: the perfect crossroads of ESP and didactic reflection", in *ASP*, 63, 2013, p 39-43
[47] Alastair Iain Johnston, "Treating International Institutions as Social Environments", in *International Studies Quarterly*, 45, 2001, pp 488-489

ESP task-based teaching approach aiming to have students construct themselves independently their knowledge is a teaching approach as well as a transformative process of developing people , articulating values , vision, personality traits attainment, and attitude in that ESP course.[48] For instance, Zhang in his very elaborative article examines the case study of a subject specialist Business English teacher appointed to teach the ESP course of Business English writing at a Chinese University.[49] To gain further insights into this case study, the business specialist centered his teaching on business concepts, skills, the mind-sets and attitudes while language is only dealt with where considered useful. In addition, simulating real business functions such as managers who set objectives and provide solutions to business problems by enhancing their critical and analytical thinking skills. [50] Moreover, students were given possibility to interact for business purposes by increasing active participatory learning, independent thinking, self-confidence and autonomy in their business writing. Unlike other content-based courses of CLIL or even other traditional text-centered ESP courses, this functional and practical ESP Business writing course focused on business concepts and skills acquisition in real professional context turned to be a successful and effective mechanism to drive bridge the chasm between classroom and real working premises.

It is precisely this flexibility and agility in creative task assignments aiming at using the functional language in such authentic climate that gives ESP courses more attributes in terms of endorsing socialization processes among class participants or team members; these latter social skills are the ultimate scope of EU community whose joint values and accomplishments are a result of a long history of transformation and evolutionary processes among member states similar to ESP transformative learning processes occurring to students.

The impressive story of the European Union establishment and ongoing enlargement processes has been deeply examined and analyzed by several theoretical approaches but the most representative ones are the rationalist and constructivist arguments. In particular, closely related to the argument of our research paper on the catalyst role of the ESP courses in constructive and functional content- knowledge acquisition, the constructivist theoretical explanation will be given the following space. To EU scholar and theoreticians, it is very clear that the EU as a non- military alliance but rather an economic, socio-cultural entity is totally build upon decades of negotiations among old and new member-states; these negotiations have relied on persuasion and social interaction among participatory agents (that is EU and non-EU countries).[51]

In his social constructivist theoretical perspective, Checkel concluded that 'fundamental agent properties become endogenous to, and change through, the very process of interaction'.[52] This conclusion is drawn after having analyzed and assessed the two theoretical interpretations on norms internalization; the rationalist view versus the constructivist one. The rational choice advocates the theory that agent decide to comply and

---

[48] Zuocheng Zhang," Somewhere in the middle is the optimal balance: A subject specialist negotiating business and language teaching", in *ESP TODAY, Journal of English for Specific Purposes at the Tertiary Level*, Vol.4 (2), 2016, p 160
[49] Ibid, p 145
[50] Ibid, p 158
[51] T. J, Checkel. "Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change", *International Organization,* 55(3). 2001, pp 553- 588
[52] Ibid, p 579

alter their behavior pursuing some cost-benefits bargaining calculations.[53] From a constructivist point of view, to Jeffrey Checkel' logics, norm- compliance is a process encompassing both instrumental choice and social learning.[54]

6. CLIL DRAWBACK IN DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS' SOCIAL SKILLS

CLIL ideally is a method of learning curricula subjects through using English as a means of instruction thus; its first target is the acquisition of content knowledge rather than linguistic fluency and communication agility. In other words, content teachers are generally unaware of language considerations since they do not provide enough space in their class for linguistic collaboration.[55] On the contrary, ESP didactics places immense attention onto linguistic output through co-integration of language in authentic materials and projects assigned. Consequently, ESP didactics promises more social collaboration and socialization between students through priority given to linguistic collaboration.[56]
There is the ongoing tension between ESP and CLIL on the balance between language and content despite the holistic theoretical approach of the four Cs – model, – content, communication, cognition, and culture - all integrated in the contemporary CLIL courses; the latter are still predominantly content-based courses.[57] Moreover, this lack of focus and equal importance form compared to content, might lead to linguistic stagnation and what is worse to the early 'fossilization of errors'.[58] This last drawback of CLIL to effective and rapid language acquisition is convincingly true given the lack of a systematic and constructive approach to error correction focusing form in CLIL practice. Unlike ESP teachers whose language assessment is mainly concerned with linguistic performance of the target language, CLIL teachers are less puzzled about learners' language production, or language accuracy and fluency. Instead, CLIL instructors are indisputably primarily driven to assess the learners' content knowledge. [59]

7. CONCLUSION

In our research we aimed at providing firstly a most insightful description of the unique, clashing but even similar features that characterize the two 'opposing' language teaching theories in the current academic debates on the second language acquisition. Our examination was based on the most reputable body literature offering the relevant definitions and borderline distinctions between the advocates of each opponent mainstream. They both aim at promoting dual-focused language program on language acquisition via content knowledge in a tailored disciplinary. However, their essential contrast remains the emphasis placed mainly

---

[53] Checkel , pp 557- 558

[54] Ibid, p 581

[55] Gail Taillefer, "CLIL in higher education: the perfect crossroads of ESP and didactic reflection", in *ASP*, 63, 2013, p 31-53 http://asp.revues.org/3290 Accessed on 27 April, 2017

[56] Ibid

[57] Ena Harrop, "Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL): Limitations and Possibilities", in *Encuentro*, 21, 2012, ISSN 1989-0796, pp 57-59

[58] Ibid, p 59-60

[59] Wenhsien Yang, "ESP vs CLIL: A coin of two sides or a Continuum of two extremes?"in *ESP –TODAY, Journal of English for Specific Purposes at Tertiary Level,* Vol.4 (1). 2016. p 54

on the content- knowledge acquisition in CLIL classes, meanwhile in the ESP classes the learning outcome was linguistic accuracy and functional communication apart from content-integrated knowledge.

Thus, having pointed out the major differences between the two teaching approaches, our thesis was to prove the argument that clear, relevant linguistic communication comes prior to content- knowledge possession. This placed our research to very ancient Greek philosophers who strongly and most scientifically support the case that linguistic clarity and relevance is the most important component in order to have communication achieved among human beings. In addition, this Greek thought on the supremacy of functional and successful communication in society, was placed in the current EU enlargement processes and transformations; these EU developments were all a most convincing evidence of English for specific purposes successfully conducted among EU members while negotiating , bargaining and peacefully reconciling their political, economic, cultural and educational interest to the huge common mission of a strong European Union community and zone.

This constructivist bottom- up democracy building and norm dissemination through socialization among member-countries and other aspiring candidates is conspicuously seen at the ESP classes where interaction, functional dialogue, problem-solving and transformation processes in developing the learner's personality features are noticeably utilized in ESP teaching programs, classes and environments. Nonetheless, it is to be widely agreed that ESP with regard to specific language needs requirements is relying on CLIL content- based components; on the other hand, likewise CLIL most successful courses such the immersion courses in Ottava university in Canada depended heavily on language courses- input to achieve the much expected high results from their second language learners.

To conclude, CLIL desperately needs the ESP setting; only this way the two English teaching approaches can complete one-another and finally guarantee effective and rapid English language acquisition tailored for all disciplines without further cramming the university curricula. It is time the two approaching reconcile, accept diversity of tools, aims, learning outcomes but also be open to future co-operation for better quality teaching of English as a second language at tertiary studies; and for a more effective relevance of language command with the EU business, politics and further challenges in the future.

REFERENCES

Balagiu Alina & Mariora Patesan, "Content and Language Integrated Learning or English for Special Purposes", in *Naval Academy Scientific Bulletin*, Vol XVIII- 2015-Issue 1, Naval Academy Press, Constanta, Romania. p 284

Bark. Kristin, Cyrielle Maerten, Ian Tudor and Jennifer Valcke, *A Discussion Brief of Content and Language Integrated Learning at the Faculty of Applied Sciences*, University Libre of Brussels. 2010

David Carter. "Some propositions about ESP, *The ESP Journal,* 2. pp 131-137

Checkel. T. J, "Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change", *International Organization,* 55 (3). 2001, pp 553-588

Commission of the European Communities Brussels, 24.07.2003 449 Final Communication From the Commission to the Council, The European Council, The Economic and Social Committee and the Committee on the Regions Communication of 2008 on Multilingualism: an Asset for Europe and a Shared Commitment, COM (2008) p 566 http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/pdf/com/2008_0566_en.pdf

Communication of 2010 on "An Agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment", COM (2010) 682 final http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6328&langId=en

Dudley-Evans. T and St John, M. *Developments in ESP: A multi-disciplinary approach*, Cambridge University Press. 1998

Ellis, Rod. "Principles of Instructed Language Learning", in *Asian EFL Journal*, September 2005, pp 3-7

Guthrie . *Xenophon, Memorabilia* iv.6.1 , p 436

Johnston. Alastair Iain, "Treating International Institutions as Social Environments", in *International Studies Quarterly*, 45, 2001, pp 488-489

Gatehouse. Kate "Key issues in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Curriculum Development", in *the Internet TESL Journal*, Vol . VII, No.10. October 2001, p 4

Halliday, Michael Alexander Kirkwood, Angus MacIntosh and Peter Strevens. *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*, London: Longman, 1964, p190

Harrop, Ena. "Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL): Limitations and Possibilities", in *Encuentro,* 21, 2012, ISSN 1989-0796, pp 57-59

Hutchinson, T., and Waters, A. *English for specific purposes: A learning-centered approach.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1987, pp 9-20

Krashen, Stephen. *Principles in Second Language and Practice Acquisition*, Oxford; Pergamen Press, 1982

Krashen , Stephen. The Input hypothesis and its rivals. In N.Ellis (Ed.), *Implicit and explicit learning of the languages*, London, Academic Press, 1994

Leonardi, Vanessa. "Bridging the Gap between ESP and CLIL in the University Context", *Rivista Semestrale*, *Saggi Essays*, Vol 5, Spring 2015, p 19

Lesher H.J. "Sapheneia in Aristotle:Clarity, Precision and Knweledge" in *APEIRON Journal of Ancient Philosophy and Science* 003-6390/2010/4304 143-156@Academic Printing and Publishing

Liew Khe Li and Khor Ching Pey, "ESP at Tertiary Level: Traditional ESP or Integrated ESP?", 2015 Malaysia http://dspace.unimap.edu.my/dspace/bitstream/123456789/34587/1/GENERAL%20PAPER_3.pdf

Marsh, D. & G. Lange (eds). *Using languages to Learn and Learning to use Languages,* Jyvaskyla University, Sweden. 2000. p iii.

Mewald, Claudia. *Paradise Lost and Found. A Case Study of Content Based Foreign Language Education in Lower Austria*, Unpublished PHD Thesis, Norwich; University of East Anglia, 2004

Phillipson, Robert. "English in higher education: panacea or pandemic?", Angles *on the English-Speaking World* 9 (2009), pp 29-57

Rasanen, Anne & Renate Klaasen, "From learning outcomes to staff competences in integrated content and language instruction at higher education level". In Wilkinson, R., V. Zegers and C. Van Leeuwen (eds), *Bridging the Assessment Gap in English- medium Higher Education*, 2006. AKS-Series, pp 256-275

Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on key competences for lifelong learning (2006/962/EC) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:394:0010:0018:en:PDF

Richards. Jack C. *Communicative Language Teaching*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp 9-11

R. DeKeyser, Beyond Focus on Form: Cognitive Perspectives on learning and practicing second language grammar. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds). 1998

Strevens. P. "ESP after 20 years: A re-appraisal". In M. Tickoo (Ed.), *ESP: State of the Art*, Singapore, SEAMEO Regional Centre, 1988, pp1-13

Taillefer, Gail. "CLIL in higher education: the perfect crossroads of ESP and didactic reflection", in ASP, 63, 2013, p 31-53 http://asp.revues.org/3290 Accessed on 27 April, 2017

Weinberg, Alysee. Sabdra Burger & Amelia Hope. "Evaluating the Effectiveness of Content-based Language Teaching", in Theme 4- Content-Based Language Teaching, *Teachers of English as a Second Language of Ontario*, Vol 34, Issue 2 Special Symposium Edition June 2008, pp 68-69

Widdowson, Henry G. *Learning Purpose and Language Use*. Oxford: OUP, 1983, pp 9-12

Wolff, Dieter. "Integrating Language and Content in the Language Classroom: Are transfer and Knowledge and of language ensured?" in *ASP*, 41- 42/2003, pp 35-46

Yang, Wenhsien "ESP vs CLIL: A coin of two sides or a Continuum of two extremes?"in *ESP –TODAY, Journal of English for Specific Purposes at Tertiary Level,* Vol.4 (1). 2016. pp 43-45

Zhang, Zuocheng. "Somewhere in the middle is the optimal balance: A subject specialist negotiating business and language teaching", in *ESP TODAY, Journal of English for Specific Purposes at the Tertiary Level*, Vol.4 (2), 2016, p 160