

**The European experience of integrated curriculum in the context of school  
multilingual education usage**

Abstract: The article deals with the educational approach using more than one language as a medium of instruction and providing learning some languages as systems. Such educational approach needs special methodology and curriculum design as well as technologies supporting students' plurilingualism forming.

Keywords: school multilingual education in Europe; integrated curriculum; plurilingualism forming.

Under the influence of the migration processes, global mobility and multiorientation of communication the concept 'language education' has been changed. In the context of the earlier existing in Europe nation-states this concept was understood as mastering pupils' mother tongue automatically matching the language of instruction at schools. But from the end of the twentieth century active acquisition of modern foreign languages was begun in schools of European countries. Global English and other main European languages as well as other languages of international communication were widely used in school programs of European countries. However, the more attention was provided to diverse linguistic heritage, preservation and learning languages previously used less widely (minority languages, regional, classical and migrants' languages)[6]. Therefore, the language education in Europe has become multilingual. The concepts 'multilingualism' and 'plurilingualism' have become the core ones in the European language policies. According to views of J. Cenoz multilingual education can be defined as 'teaching more than two languages provided that school aims at multilingualism and multiliteracy'[3, 8-9].

Now this educational direction has the aim of forming students' individual plurilingualism as the complex ability to use the integrated multiple linguistic competence. According to the holistic conception (F.Grosjean F., 1989; Ludi G.& Py B, 2009; Daryai-Hansen P., Gerber B., Lörincz I., 2014) the concept of 'individual's plurilingual competence' has the following characteristics: multiplicity, dynamism, integrity, dependence on the context and individual peculiarities [5]. The dynamic model of plurilingualism (Herdina P. & Jessner U., 2002) suggests considering multilingual speakers as 'persons with a distinct communicative competence allowing interrelating in various ways in the languages acquired by learners'[8].

To intensify the process of language teaching at the secondary level the important initiative of European experts appeared to create a joint educational context for all languages included into the teaching and learning process or *language curriculum integration* [4] This process within one school is to bring together all the items in one language education sector. The integrated curriculum should be the basis for training programs with all learnt languages that allow adopting the common structure and the curriculum content. To achieve this:

1) the approval of the common terminology, principles and standards for the field of language subjects, particularly in the evaluation procedures is necessary;

2) creating recommendations on common methodological approaches used to establish connections between learnt languages to form cross-cutting skills and creating conditions for cross-language transfer is compulsory [4].

The principles of integrated curriculum in multilingual education formed in Western Europe at present can be characterized by following features:

1) initial training in native language has mandatory status for each student and includes forming literacy in writing, because the processes of thinking is established in individual's native language, it is the basis for capturing the subject content taught in non-native languages in the future study;

2) learning L2 and L3 is accompanied by constant comparison with native language in relevant aspects. In the past context of teaching foreign languages and bilingual education there was a clear linguistic distinction and separation of languages to avoid interference; in new conditions of comparative-contrastive approach the transfer of language skills is most extensively used;

3) learning additional language as a system (L2, L3, Ln) does not provide sufficient training students for using that language as a medium of instruction or means of mastering the contents of non-linguistic subjects. To facilitate understanding the subject content in the context of non-native language learning such technologies as *scaffolding* and *translanguaging* are widely used. The *scaffolding* technology involves ongoing support provided to a learner by an expert (teacher or peer-student), which often means activating prior knowledge or introducing students to the processes associated with mastering subject content in the native language and giving learners structures or terms to use, acquainting with linguistic structures of the new language(s) to express the subject content meaning. To use L1 is not prohibited, but rather encouraged, because the level of mastery in subject matter (output) under the following conditions is higher [1; 2]. *Translanguaging* is the process by which a human brain is capable of accessing two or more linguistic data based in order to formulate a tapestry of words in various languages. It refers to educational practice using plurilingualism as a resource rather than ignoring it or perceiving it as a problem [9]. Transfer occurs irrelevant of the languages being linguistically related or their using or not the same writing

system and the transfer is multidimensional, meaning that all of the learners' languages contribute to their linguistic and cognitive development.

The example of integrated curriculum is provided in Basque secondary school (Ikastolas) in Basque Autonomous Region of Spain. The school works systematically in four languages: Basque (basque. *Euskara*), Spanish, English, French. The integration of curriculum provides:

1) the determination of the training overall goal and competence levels, which must be achieved in each of the languages;

2) the choice for uniform application of approaches and methodologies in all the languages;

3) the establishment of an integrated framework of content; which is complementary for language teaching in nature, but has specific for each of the learned languages information;

4) functions performed by every language in public life of the community are registered, and languages appear in the school curriculum according to their functioning in society;

5) the decision on the start of training each language, the amount of teaching time and intensity of the process of learning are discussed by the teaching staff in every separate case.

The teaching and learning process takes place in the context of the methodological approach aimed at developing the pupil's ability to use the curriculum in all languages and therefore it requires:

1) the use of common procedures and strategies for the development of oral and written skills to understand and produce four kinds of speech activity;

2) the review of discursive situations and genre variety of literary texts, inherent common characteristics (structure, organization, content and functions) in different languages;

3) the general information about language as a phenomena is actually presented in the context of mastering one language and is repeated and clarified in the course of other languages learning;

4) forming students metalinguistic consciousness is developed through observation, analysis, conceptualization of linguistic phenomena in all the languages;

5) the motivation aspect on mastering and making use of every learnt language, forming attitudes towards manifestations of language cultural features requires special attention in learning each language;

6) the evaluation criteria are developed and decisions are made regarding each language introduced and the place in the curriculum considering the time given to teaching them;

7) besides *translanguaging* and *scaffolding*, which are commonly used, new forms of language-enhancing classroom interaction providing maximizing learners' and teachers' linguistic resources, *transliteration* and *multimodal communication* are also applied [1].

The implementation process of an integrated curriculum and evaluating its effectiveness was recognized by European experts as a complex task that should not be seen as 'curriculum revolution',

but rather as a process requiring gradual changes, as is aimed at creating educational communities in schools that are characterized by the presence of both horizontal and vertical links [7].

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