

NARVA COLLEGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TARTU  
DEVISION of FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Jelena Korsak

STUDYING ENGLISH THROUGH THE LESSONS OF HANDICRAFT

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Supervisor: N. Raud, PhD

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## **PREFACE**

The rapid development of modern technologies provided many changes in society, therefore new teaching methodologies also appeared. Today one of the most popular teaching methods is “Content and Language Integrated Learning” or CLIL, which involves teaching a subject through a foreign language.

The aim of the current research is to analyse teaching and learning outcomes of CLIL on the basis of recent studies. The empirical part of the paper is aimed at compiling a methodological portfolio (lesson plan) for applying CLIL in handcraft lessons for primary school pupils. Coloring, drawing, cutting out help pupils consolidate content learning while activating their creativity and mastery of English.

The paper consists of the Introduction, three chapters and the Conclusion. The Introduction describes the necessity of the new teaching approaches in studying due to global changes in technologies. The first chapter discusses the definition and the main points of content and language integrated learning. The second chapter reveals some common craft teaching advantages. The third chapter presents the analysis of how teaching handicraft is supported by teaching English. The Conclusion sums up the outcomes of research.

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## INTRODUCTION

Today English is spoken by over two billion speakers, and 400 million of them are native speakers. Being the second one according to the number of speakers, the English language is truly the most widely spoken language in the world according to the territories it covers; it is being used in actually every little corner of our planet. Also it covers almost all fields of modern society – science, technology, commerce, tourism and culture.

The acceptance of the English language as the language of global communication in the fields of technology, business and science made it very popular as the second or foreign language. As a result of this ongoing process the number of people who use English as a second language is higher than the number of native speakers.

Widening and development of international links of our country make English language necessary to study.

It is possible to say that the Estonian educational system attaches great importance to the study of foreign languages, especially to the English language. Unofficially it also became a second language of the Estonian society. Knowing English provides a lot of opportunities for Estonians. English is studied in every school and there are also many English language schools in Estonia.

In a lot of schools around the world English is a compulsory subject and obviously most of Estonian schoolchildren prefer studying the English language as a foreign one. Teaching English starts long before school and it takes many years to learn and improve the language. Modern youth culture is strongly influenced by English language and culture; Internet resources also provide worldwide communication, therefore foreign language should not be just a school subject, but at the same time it is a necessary practical skill. One of the most difficult tasks is to involve a child in the process of studying, therefore, language lessons should be various and enthralling.

The question of the raise of interest in language learning, the maintaining and the development of the interest of primary school children in subject „foreign language“ is requiring a lot of attention from psychology and education. The difficulties of teaching are highlighted by many Methodists and in accordance they search, suggest and develop different educational approaches.

According to psychological studies of motivation and interest in learning a foreign language teacher's efforts should be focused on the development of pupil's interest which comes out of the activity.

What could be done to make lessons more interesting and support the learner so, that his/ her learning interest would not decrease at the first encounter with the difficulties, but the student could react to it as a challenge that provokes even more interest and motivation? All the answers are lying inside the learner, in his/ her sphere of interest, because it is the basis of any of the human's activity.

Some modern methods of teaching English are based a lot on the theory of different learner type. According to this theory, there are three main types of learning styles: auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. Most people learn best through a combination of the three types of learning styles, but everybody is different. According to the psychological and pedagogical research, primary school children better learn through movement, game or handicrafts. Consequently, teacher should enliven traditional English lesson with movement activities, playing games or making handicrafts.

Children at this age operate easier with objects rather than abstract ideas; hence handicrafts open a new channel to approach the language and support children in the language-learning. For primary school students language-learning must be fun and engaging. One of the best ways to achieve this goal is to focus students' attention on interesting activity and at the same time create right conditions for successful language learning.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is one of the most applicable language-learning approach in Europe today. This approach involves learning a language through another subject, for example biology, history or handicraft lesson.

Content and language integrated lessons expand the frames of traditional lesson, and provide the development of pupil's creativity. Creativity and creative teaching are becoming a part of modern approach to education. The integration teaches pupils to get knowledge independently and raises their interest. This way of teaching involves children into the process of studying.

Yet, this approach requires teacher's special preparation and selection of effective methodologies. The task of the teacher is to create the conditions for practical language learning for each student and choose teaching methods that would help every student to exercise their activity and their creativity. If the student is interested in the lesson's activity, for example in handicraft, he/she would listen, read and learn with the greatest interest. When student is motivated, the success is provided.

When a teacher decides to teach English through the handicraft lesson, it will give him or her endless possibilities. It will also provide teacher's development in searching and choosing suitable tasks. Teacher can find a lot of materials on every

topic, starting from the simple to the more complicated. It is obvious that handicrafts do not need to be complicated in order to be useful to the language learning process.

In every class, it is important to get students paying attention and listening. One of the most effective ways is to create simple, fun handicrafts. Children of all ages quickly get involved in the creation. While the teacher is giving instructions in a foreign language, students have to listen carefully in order to learn how to do it properly. The teacher should choose a suitable rate of speech to make everything clear. It will help pupils to understand the teacher's instructions better, because in a foreign language they require a few extra minutes to understand the new information they are receiving in English.

CLIL helps to solve the problem of individual approach to children with different skills. Handicrafts in the English language give children a lot of new information and at the same time they receive a charge of positive emotions.

The aim of the present research is to find out if / how handicraft supports students in their English studying. The topic of the research fully corresponds to the purpose of the thesis because along with all changes in modern society a new studying system requires elaboration and testing of new language teaching methods. Moreover, it is obvious that present day education acquires more professional direction and a curriculum becomes more integrated.

Because of the fact that the Estonian educational system is focused on the Estonian language, the examples of immersion are mostly in Estonian. However, CLIL practice in Estonia is rather wide, so English teachers improve their skills and also in cooperation with subject teachers make experimental language and subject integrated lessons. In the empirical part of the present research the information from English language teachers of different schools, including language schools, which held handicraft lessons in English language is discussed and analysed.

The research into the application of the CLIL studying process on the example of handicraft lessons with English will allow to hypothesise that studying English through the lessons of handicraft can increase learner's interest in language learning and provide the right background for the better achievements.

## **CHAPTER I. CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING**

### **1.1.The Development of CLIL**

Undoubtedly, socio-economic, scientific, technological and cultural progress increases the importance of the school subject of foreign language at primary, elementary and secondary level. New requirements to language teaching encouraged the development of new methods and CLIL is among them.

Teaching methods have been developing for many centuries, and through the centuries, they have changed. Different reasons have affected language teaching. Nowadays the abundance of teaching methods provides teachers opportunity to choose appropriate teaching strategy for certain class. Modern life requires modern teaching strategies.

“Globalization and the forces of economic and social convergence have had a significant impact on who learns which language, at what stage in their development, and in which way. The driving forces for language learning differ according to country and region, but they share the objective of wanting to achieve the best possible results in the shortest time.” (Coyle,Hood, Marsh 2010 :2)

Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols (2008: 10) in their book Uncovering CLIL mention about interrelation of globalization and growing language teaching requirements. The authors write that “by the mid-1990s globalization was placing greater linguistic demands on mainstream education, from the primary level through to institutions of higher education”(Ibid)

The expansion of international communication has made English the global language. The authors note that “globalization has made the world interconnected in ways not seen before. New technologies are facilitating the exchange of information and knowledge. This, in turn, is driving the integration of the world economy and change in all spheres of our lives.” (Ibid)

The situation in the world is changing and multilingual communication is developing. Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols continue on this topic “the world is rapidly becoming a very mixed global village. Mobility, both physical and virtual, is becoming an ever-increasing reality and this is having an impact on languages.”(Ibid)

Changes require new vision of education and new teaching approaches. According to Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols living in a “mixed global society is having an impact on how we teach and what we teach - and this concerns language education, as much as any other form of subject learning.” (Ibid)

Nonetheless main principals of CLIL are not novelty.

CLIL practice has a long history which started around 5000 years ago on the territory of modern-day Iraq where the conquerors of Sumeria, the Akkadians, applied subject learning in the local language they were aiming to acquire. The subjects taught in Sumerian as the medium of instruction included theology, botany and zoology. (LAK Lõimitud-aine ja keeleõpe.)

2000 years ago when Romans invaded Greece, invaders' families started teaching their children in Greek to provide better life in Roman-Greek-speaking society.

This historical experience has been shared across the world and it is about English language learning.

There are a lot of examples of integrated teaching in the history. Quite often two or more nationalities co-lived on one territory or in one country and studied each other's language, traditions and culture. People in multiple social community, could choose the language of communication according to particular communicative situation. But it was not just the ability to speak several languages; it was also a special type of thinking, including cultural values of several civilizations.

Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols also mention that "in the distant past, learning content through an additional language was either limited to very specific social groups, or forced upon school populations for whom the language of instruction was a foreign language." (Ibid : 9)

Another example is the Latin language. It had a great influence throughout the world. Religious texts, arts, poetry, medicine and science were in Latin. In a certain sense for a long period of time it was a privileged language and moreover only wealthy families could afford bilingual education for their children.

Europe of more recent centuries recognized the value and advantages of multilingualism, but still, language learning and multilingual education remained the privilege of the wealthy. However Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols state that "despite having strong similarities with CLIL, the use of Latin cannot be considered, in the purest sense, an example of CLIL. Latin in academia left little room for the development of local languages. CLIL, by contrast, seeks to support second-language learning while also favouring first-language development." (Ibid).

By the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Canada there was launched a special programme of language immersion for children from English-speaking families. The aim of this programme was to teach them French at the highest level as a mother-tongue.

The programme of immersion in Canada was successful, because of the support from both the state and families. Although the Canadian immersion was not directly transferable to the European educational landscape, it encouraged and set an example to many European countries, including Estonia. (LAK Lõimitud-aine ja keeleõpe.) "To

that end, several European projects have recommended the implementation of reforms to develop learners' communication skills in several languages and to encourage innovations in language teaching and teacher training.” (Zarobe, Sierra, Puerto, 2010: 9)

In fact, present situation shows that classical teaching methods should be improved and adapted to the requirements of the modern society. Some linguists even state that classical teaching methods are hopelessly outdated. They suppose that integrated models of teaching can be more effective. Content and Language Integrated Learning is one of the most popular approaches in the modern education.

Lyster in *Learning and Teaching Languages Through Content* also writes about the rapid development of schools and necessity of new programs. “To develop such programs, good reasons abound in support of teaching additional languages through content rather than through traditional methods.” (Lyster, Roy 2007:13).

## **1.2. What is CLIL?**

Content Language and Integrated Learning is an approach which combines subject and language teaching. Foreign language is a teaching tool for another subject.

Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010:1) give the following definition of CLIL:

“CLIL is a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for learning and teaching of both content and language. There is a focus not only on content and not only on language. Each is interwoven – even if the emphasis is greater on one than the other at a given time.”

CLIL is very effective teaching method and has already proven itself. For last ten years it became very popular and the popularity of this approach is still growing.

The same state Doyle, Hood and Marsh:

Content and Language Integrated Learning has clearly become a priority concern during the last years in the European education. The term “CLIL” describes teaching subjects in foreign languages. Two main purposes of CLIL are learning subjects such as history, geography or others, through an additional language and learning language through the subjects. (Ibid)

As previously mentioned the main principals of CLIL are not novelty. “CLIL is not a new form of language education. It is not a new form of subject education. It is innovate fusion of both.” (Mehisto, Marsh, Frigol 2008:1)

In 1994 the term “CLIL” was suggested by David Marsh – the author of the books about content and language integrated learning. This approach is more than language teaching, it suggests the use of foreign language for teaching another subject. The quality of teaching a subject and language is equally important. Furthermore, this method suits for every educational level.

“Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) can be described as an educational approach where subjects such as geography or biology are taught through the medium or a foreign language, typically to students participating in some form of mainstream education at primary, secondary and tertiary level.” (Puffer, Nikula, Smit 2010:1)

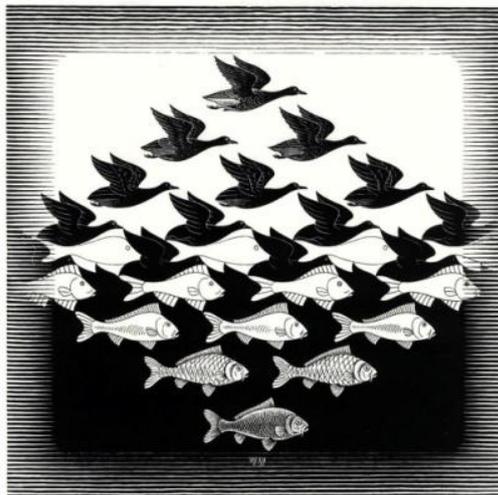
The statement that CLIL is only a language learning approach is not right, because this teaching method covers both language learning and subject learning. This is a combination of two subjects. The idea is highlighted by Doyle, Hood and Marsh (2010:1).

CLIL is teaching method which is not language learning and not subject learning, but it is the union of both.

“CLIL is about using a foreign language, not a second language. That is to say, the language of instruction is one that students will mainly encounter at school since it is not regularly used in the wider society they live in.” (Puffer, Nikula, Smit, 2010:1). Of course a CLIL lesson requires a lot of teacher's preparation, but not least in importance is teacher's knowledge of the language. Fluent language speaking is obligatory. Another point is the clear understanding of the idea of integrated lesson. Clearly set goals help to achieve good results. At first sight it may seem that the CLIL approach is rather simple, but teacher won't succeed if there won't be understanding of what CLIL is and what it is not. Dale and Tanner in their book *CLIL Activities* exemplify the idea of the approach through the M.C Escher's famous picture “Sky and Water”. Authors describe the approach in a following way:

In CLIL, you can imagine the birds to be the subject elements and the fish to be the language elements. Sometimes as teacher you focus on the birds – the content of your lesson – and sometimes you focus on the fish – the language. But sometimes you are focused on both, and the fish – the content and the language – are more intertwined and connected. (Dale, Tanner 2012:3)

**Picture 1.** Sky and water (1988) bt M.C. Escher



The aim of the CLIL lesson is to develop oral communication skills of the students, develop intercultural communication skills, improve subject-specific language terminology and increase student's motivation. It is necessary in this approach that the teacher speaks less and a student speaks more.

European schools usually choose CLIL in their curriculum for several reasons. According to Dale and Tanner (2012 : 11), "in some countries, CLIL developed as a grassroots movement and in others, with the aid of government funding in large or small-scale projects. Elsewhere, CLIL has been implemented in schools as a part of nationwide policy. "

Some European schools apply widely CLIL in the primary schools. Also they distinguish CLIL programmes on Soft, Modular, Hard.

- Soft CLIL is a teaching of some topics from the curriculum as part of a language course.
- Modular CLIL is a teaching of a certain number of hours of a subject.
- Hard CLIL is almost half of curriculum is taught in a foreign language. (CLIL principles 2011)

In other words Soft CLIL focuses on Language, while Hard CLIL focuses on Content. (Colabianchi 2010).

**Table 1.**The example of the CLIL programme

Type of CLIL	Language/ Subject Balance	Time	Contex
Soft CLIL	Language-led	45 minutes once a week	Some curricular topics are taught during a language course
Modular CLIL	Subject-led	15 hours during a term (1-hour a week)	Schools or teachers choose parts of the subject syllabus which they teach in the target language.
Hard CLIL	Subject-led (partial immersion)	About 50% of the curriculum	About half of the curriculum is taught in the TL. The content can reflect what is taught in the L1 curriculum or can be new content.

### **1.3.Benefits of CLIL**

As already been mentioned before, CLIL approach provides many advantages for learners and for teachers. Some learner's benefits are obvious.

This teaching method helps to increase student's interest in language studying, but there can raise the question about how CLIL method increases learner's interest? Presumably one of the motivating factors is real purpose. When student have to learn foreign language without real purpose it won't be effective. In contrast, when learner understands clearly the purpose why he or she has to learn second language, then studying process will be more successful. Returning to the handicraft, student is motivated to listen more carefully instructions to understand how to make task correctly and succeed.

"Learners blossom and feel challenged because they are learning both subject and a language. They develop a strong sense of achievement as they notice their rapid progress in other language." (Dale and Tanner, 2012:11)

Also integrated language learning introduces students to the wider cultural context. While students study subject in a foreign language they analyze, compare and at the same time they understand both the culture of the language and the subject. Foreign language knowledge increases learner's opportunities in future career. Peter Lang in his book *Content and Foreign Language Integrated Learning* consider reaches on the current topic and writes that people who know additional languages can succeed in business, for example in trade area. (Zarobe, Sierra, Puerto, 2010:22)

At the same time Authors point on some cognitive benefits of bilingual learning:

“This does not necessarily indicate that bilinguals are cognitively more capable than monolinguals, but that they may be better at processing a larger number of cognitive demands in a shorter timeframe. They may be able to handle more tasks at once.” (Lang 2010:34)

Moreover, it is very important that students learn language like native speakers.

Dale and Tanner in *CLIL Activities* (2012) give following benefits for learners:

- CLIL learners are motivated.
- CLIL learners develop cognitively and their brains work harder.
- CLIL learners develop communication skills.
- CLIL learners make new personal meanings in another language.
- CLIL learners' language progresses more.
- CLIL learners receive a lot of input and work effectively with that input.
- CLIL learners interact meaningfully. CLIL learners concentrated more on the meaning of what they are learning.
- CLIL learners learn to speak and write. In CLIL, when teachers encourage their learners to speak and write, this helps learners to become more proficient users of language.
- CLIL learners develop intercultural awareness.
- CLIL learners learn about the “culture” of the subject. Subject involves learning the language of a subject and how each subject has its own “culture”.
- CLIL learners are prepared for studying in another language. CLIL learners are often very confident and fluent in their second language at the end of their school careers.
- CLIL learners learn in different ways.

(Dale and Tanner 2012:11-13)

Returning to handicraft, it is fair to mention about positive emotions received by students at the process of creation. Positive emotions bring positive outcomes.

Teachers' Advantages of adopting a CLIL approach.

A CLIL teacher is far from being an ordinary language teacher. He/ she combines at least two subjects – Language and Nature Studies, or Language and Handicrafts, Language and Music, Language and History and so on and so forth. It requires from the teacher high qualification and professional management of two (three, four or even more) subjects at one lesson – it is serious, very effort-consuming, but really challenging. It may be presumed that different skills of a CLIL teacher will

benefit – language itself, different fields of knowledge, analytical thinking and others. There is a necessity in quite a wide education for such a specialist.

“Non-native speaker teachers improve their language skills: through attending language development courses, teaching their subject in another language and using their language skill in practice, teachers become more fluent and develop more sophisticated command of the language” (Ibid:14)

Also teacher can show creativity in choosing tasks for the lesson. CLIL helps to develop teacher’s professional skills and expand frames of regular lesson.

## **CHAPTER II. HANDICRAFT LESSON**

### **2.1. Brief Historical Overview of Handicraft Subject**

Every country always had some form of handicraft on the curriculum. Usual craft lesson always included metalwork and woodwork for boys and domestic work for girls in order to prepare pupils for manual or domestic work. Girls were taught handicrafts for their future roles of mothers and housewives. Primary school students often studied simple cutting, coloring and gluing in their handicraft lessons in order to improve logical thinking and improve some other skills.

The teaching methods of the subject of Handicrafts had quite a traditional approach – pupils were taught the basics of crafts by quick overview of the theory and some practical tasks. Changes came with the development of the society. At the end of the XIX – beginning of XX century the development of feminist movement and call for equal opportunities brought changes to school and teaching itself.

The world of work also changed, industrialization and computerization established new requirements. New working demands assumed new kinds of knowledge and skills from their employees. Along with the changes in working world there were also changes in education. Educational philosophy moved to more child-centered learning. All these changes influenced the school subject of Crafts and changed its contents.

For example, in Britain, metalwork and woodwork separated from cooking and needlework and became craft, design and technology (CDT), while cooking and needlework became home economics. But changes in the society and employment continued, so that CDT and home economics were not meeting pupil's needs. Pupils needed to be taught to be adaptable and know how to be creative. So the curriculum responded to needs of pupil and adapted both its content and pedagogy. (Owen-Jackson, 2000:24)

### **2.2. Benefits of Handicrafts**

The name of this subject can be verified depending on countries and their curricula. It can be called “Art and Craft Lesson” or even “Design, Craft and Technology lesson” but its content is handwork.

Handicraft lesson is a very effective developing tool for children. Handicrafts helps primary school students receive a lot of positive emotions. They get personal satisfaction and feel proud of themselves when they are able to finish the task. The

process of making handicraft during the lesson also develops children's skills of independent working.

“The practicing of handwork is not meant to provide just a pleasant past-time but to specifically help the young child to develop a healthy imagination and harmonize his unfolding will and feeling life.” (Bernard Graves, 2005)

Moreover, handicraft activity increases creativity of a pupil. And creativity in itself is considered as a very valuable feature of a present-day personality and is very much welcome in different fields of management, economics, science, culture and education. The prospects are that this feature will be a target of education for many decades on. “Creativity enables children to try out and benefit from new ideas, options and alternatives in any future career.”(Joubert, 2009)

Also students study how to make choices, because at the process of creation they have to decide what tools to use, how to colour and decorate their crafts and how to apply them when they are finished. Students learn to express their emotions and make decisions.

“Kimbell et al. believes that the studies of design and technology give pupils opportunities ‘for exercising unique ways of thinking about the world and for intervening constructively to change it’ and that ‘the process of trying to create change requires pupils to engage in a challenging, enriching, empowering activity.’”(Owen-Jackson, G. 2000: 25)

All handicraft activities require numerous serious skills. Handicraft involves design, modeling, cutting, gluing, painting, drilling and many other activities. Children learn how to use different tools - scissors, pins, needles, glue, clay, coloring pencils and brushes. Working with these tools help them obtain better control over their hands. More difficult crafts can require working with other tools and improve manual dexterity, concentration, patience and certainly coordination.

“From craft and design, it was said, pupils would be expected to encounter materials and learn the ways they can be worked; to know tools and safe methods for their use; to understand aesthetic factors (including effects of colour, pattern and texture); and to develop the ability to communicate design ideas.” (Tickle 1990:20).

As it has already been mentioned, handicraft tasks are usually time- and effort-consuming, therefore, if the teacher motivates a child correctly, Handicrafts can increase pupil's concentration and develop his patience. Moreover, the task may consist of several parts and a series of steps should be taken to make the final product, this teaches a pupil to set the goal, to plan his/ her work, to foresee future steps, control the process,

manage the time and assess the final product and the work itself. Some sophisticated tasks require accurate work and may need more attempts to get it right. In this way students learn to keep trying until they succeed with the task and in case of failure they are thinking and trying new ways and means.

This is obviously a good way for students to develop self-control, self-assessment and perseverance and to understand that sometimes they need to work harder to achieve positive results. (Sarah Dray, 2010)

“Perseverance is regularly stated as the single most important quality for any successful business person, sportsman, professional or individual.” (Dalene Joubert, 2009)

“It offers a proven vehicle for pupils to realize their full potential and it delivers success and promotes overall achievement for all pupils.” (Nicholas Houghton, 2005)

Along with all the important skills mentioned above, concentration comes as one of really important skill that Handicrafts help to master and develop. Handicrafts will definitely teach a student to focus on the task ignoring distractions. Handicrafts very often imply step-by-step instructions and students should learn how to follow them quite consciously and stay concentrated through all the process of production of the final product.

Concentration and patience are very important characteristics to achieve long-range goals. Practicing crafts is also an ability to work hard for the final result. A pupil learns to understand that the result may come in some longer time, that crafts are time-consuming and require a lot of patience and persistence in work in order to get the desired result. Unfortunately, if a teacher does not practice long-term tasks, that are time-consuming, his pupils may lack in development of the sense of timing and the ability to work for a longer period of time to get the result. For example, a pupil, who always focuses on short term results can refuse to go to university and get higher education because it takes a lot of time.

This quality is important not only for pupils, but also bear fruit in adult life. Together with perseverance it eliminates giving up before a task is completed or even being distracted to focus on other interesting things. (Joubert, 2009.)

All the handicraft tasks play a serious role in socialization. When pupils work in small groups, they interact a lot, communicate, they have to complete a task working as a team and thus, they learn to acquire different roles in teams, to manage the teamwork, to get the result and to assess the strong and weak sides of their team. This experience can be described as a very important one for the child, as he learns that work can be done in a team and that working in a team requires skills, different from those,

when a child works alone. This encourages a child to develop his personality towards socializing and being able to work in a team – the skill that you will hardly over evaluate for the child’s future life and career.

Craft lesson prepares young people for living and working in a technological world by teaching the technical understanding, it also trains skills needed to produce practical solutions to real problems. (Ibid)

Owen-Jackson (2000: 27) claims that craft lesson should help learners to pursue following goals:

- to evaluate products critically
- to recognize opportunities
- to improve systems or products
- to be creative
- to be organized
- to gain a better understanding of materials
- to use tools and equipment confidently
- to make quality products.

Handicraft lesson can also teach a learner to cope effectively with criticism and assessment from other people – peers and adults. Assessment and criticism may be of different mood – positive and negative. Facing assessment and criticism a pupil learns how to assume other people’s opinion of his/ her work, to analyze it, to see how other people’s opinion can help to improve the work and the final product. Parents and teachers should support pupils in their work, see their attempts, results and always praise children for their achievements.

“Start from mere enjoyment to developing long- lasting, useful adult-life qualities.”  
(Joubert, 2009)

### **2.3. Handicrafts and English lesson**

As it has already been mentioned in CHAPTER I, modern educational system requires new approaches in language learning. Lessons should be more interactive and effective. The task of the teacher is to find appropriate teaching methods to motivate and encourage young learners. Integration of handicraft into English lesson can help to increase pupil’s interest and as a result improve student’s knowledge of English language. While pupil is creating handicrafts his creativity is stimulating. Each activity comes with teacher's detailed instructions which provide pupil’s focusing at the language. English through handicraft enrich the learning experience. There are a lot of handicraft activities to assist teachers, but integrated lessons also need exact strategy and preparation.

Gerald van Dijk in his research sets the example of a strategy of integrated handicraft and language lesson:

- Rich, challenging, comprehensible input: There should be extensive exposure to new concepts and language forms, adapted to the learner in such a way, that it just would exceed the actual acquisition phase. The teacher's talk is one oral form of input, but the textbook also gives written input. The teacher can play an active role in making the language of the textbook comprehensible and available as a resource for learning (Eerde van, 2008) Students receive support when they are faced with difficult language. New words and expressions that come along with the subject matter are learned in four steps: 1) orientation on the contexts in which the word is generally used 2) semantization: giving meaning to the word 3) consolidation: the student uses the word or expression in different ways 4) checking for correct understanding and use of the word.
- Language production: Students are encouraged to produce new language, both in written and in oral form. In addition to teacher-student interaction, there are ample opportunities for student-student interaction.
- Feedback: Learners receive feedback on their use of written and oral language.
- Use of contexts: New concepts are firmly embedded in meaningful contexts.

(Gerald van Dijk, 2010)

Teacher has a great opportunity to choose tasks based on the aspects of studying he/she would like to train during the lesson.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **STUDYING ENGLISH THROUGH THE LESSON OF HANDICRAFT**

#### **3.1. Objectives of the Study**

The present study was designed to test the hypothesis that Handicraft in the English lesson increases learner's interest in language studies and supports vocabulary learning. The aim of the present research is to find out if / how craft at English lesson supports students in their English studying. It was necessary to receive the information from English teachers about their practice of teaching handicrafts and language integrated lessons and receive the information from students on their preferred activities in these lessons.

#### **3.2. Analysis of Questionnaires**

The research was focused on English teachers and students.

Questionnaires included open and closed questions. Questionnaires were sent to 10 English teachers, who understand principals of CLIL, passed special courses and in cooperation with subject teachers use this method to support studies. All the teachers have more than 10 years of experience in teaching. Teachers were suggested to answer 7 questions about their practice of teaching English through Handicrafts. The aim of the questions was to know how often they held handicraft lessons and to know their opinion of the effectiveness of this method. Examples of questions:

1. Do you hold integrated Handicraft and English lessons to improve pupils' vocabulary?
2. Does CLIL approach increases pupils' interest in language studying?
3. Do you think that pupils learn shapes, colour, and other vocabulary, required by the Handicrafts lesson in a better way?
4. What types of Handicrafts do you use at your lessons?
5. What is the most suitable age group for the Handicrafts in the English Language?
6. What types of Handicraft tasks are the most effective or interesting for children?
7. Can CLIL approach become the main teaching method at the English language learning in Estonian schools?

15 fourth-grade students of Narva Kesklinna Secondary School aged 10-11 answered the following questions just after the integrated lesson of Handicrafts in English, which was held by their English teacher. Pupils had to answer 5 questions about the lesson they have just had.

Examples of questions:

1. Did you like your lesson today?
2. Do you like to practice handicrafts in english?
3. Would you like to take part again in such a lesson?
4. Would you like to have more lessons like this in your timetable?
5. Please write down all new words you learned today.

Analysis of Teachers' questionnaires

According to the theoretical data investigated in the first chapter, many researchers state that Handicrafts integrated into language lesson can help to increase student's interest in language learning and improve educational outcomes. Some of them even assume that traditional teaching methods are outdated and suggest considering CLIL approach as a modern very promising method.

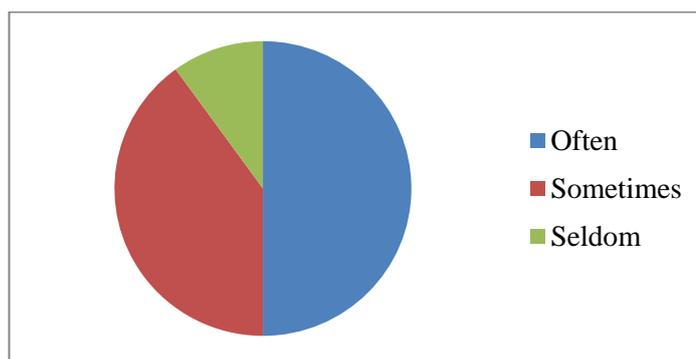
Therefore, the aim of the teachers' questionnaire was to obtain information about the outcomes of integrated teaching.

It can be said that in general all the teachers agreed that CLIL teaching method is rather effective and raises student's interest in language learning.

**Table 2. The use of handicrafts at the English lesson**

1. Do you held integrated Handicraft and English lessons to improve pupils' vocabulary?		
Often	<b>5</b>	<b>50%</b>
Sometimes	<b>4</b>	<b>40%</b>
Seldom	<b>1</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Diagram 1. The Use of Handicrafts in the English Lesson**

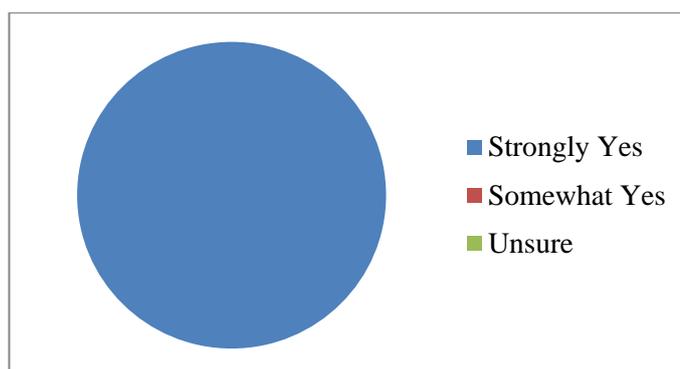


Answers suggested to this question were: often, sometimes and seldom. Five of ten respondents answered that they often make handicraft lessons in English, four teachers answered “sometimes” and one chose to answer “seldom”. It is possible to conclude that popularity of Handicraft lesson in English is gaining.

**Table 3. Handicrafts and Pupils’ Interest in Language Studying**

1. Does CLIL approach increases pupils’ interest in language studying?		
Strongly yes	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>
Somewhat yes	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
Unsure	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

**Diagram 2. Handicrafts and Pupils’ Interest in Language Studying**

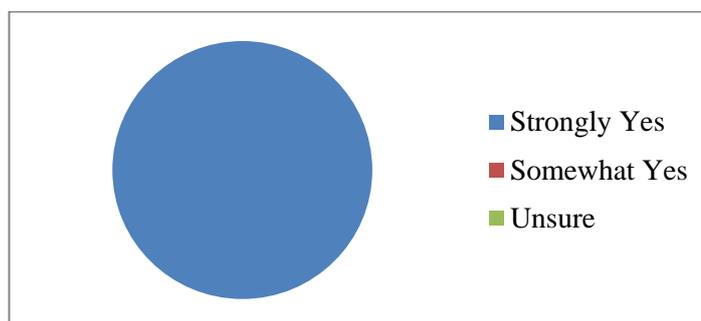


The results of this question show that all the respondents agree that handicraft influences on the student’s interest in a very positive way.

**Table 4. Benefits of CLIL in Teaching Vocabulary**

2. Do you think that pupils learn shapes, colour, and other vocabulary, required by the handicrafts lesson in a better way?		
Strongly yes	10	100%
Somewhat yes	0	0%
Unsure	0	0%

**Diagram 3. Benefits of CLIL in Teaching Vocabulary**

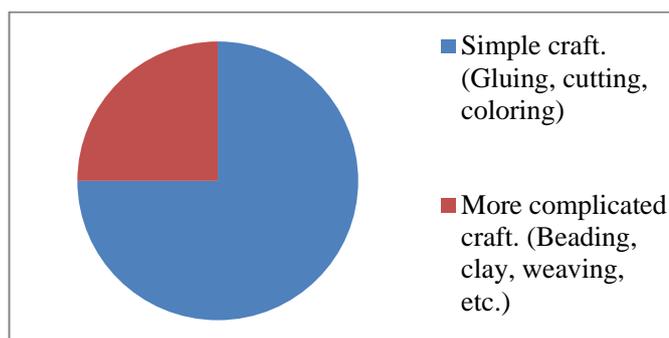


The answers on the fourth question show that all the respondents consider that handicraft integrated to the English language helps to improve students' vocabulary.

**Table 5. Types of Handicraft**

3. What types of handicrafts do you use at your lessons?		
Simple crafts. (Gluing, cutting, coloring)	8	80%
More complicated craft. (Beading, clay, weaving, etc.)	2	20%

**Diagram 4. Types of Handicraft**

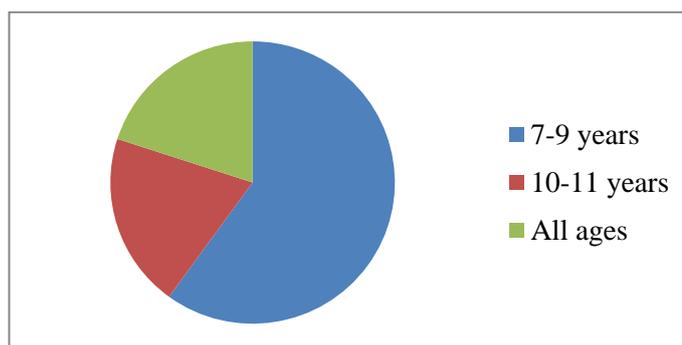


The results of this question show that 80% of the respondents prefer using simple handicrafts and only 20% use more complicated handicrafts. According to the results it is possible to suggest that teachers prefer easier tasks to avoid the lack of time, because difficult tasks require longer instructions.

**Table 6. Most Suitable Age for Handicraft Tasks**

4. What is the most suitable age group for the Handicrafts in the English Language?		
7-9	6	60%
10-11	2	20%
All ages	2	20%

**Diagram 5. Most Suitable Age Group for Handicraft Tasks**



The following question included three possible answers: “7-9”, “10-11” and also “12-13”, but 60 % of respondents consider that the age of 7-9 is most appropriate age for studying language through handicrafts, 20% answered 10-11, but 20% didn’t choose any possible variant and instead offered their own answer. In their opinion craft assignments and complexity should be matched according to student’s age.

### **The Analysis of Questions 6 and 7**

6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> questions are opened questions.

Question 6: “What types of Handicraft tasks are the most effective or interesting for children?”

Teachers were given the opportunity to express their opinion about most interesting and effective handicrafts they applied in their lessons. It was found that four of ten respondents consider that making puppets for puppet show give pupils a lot of

positive emotions and stimulate the raise of their motivation. Five respondents answered that any craft is effective and increasing interest and 3 of them completed their answer by clarification that handicraft improves hand's motor skills, activates brain and also develop logical thinking. One respondent answered that in her opinion modeling is the most entertaining task for children.

The last question was ” Can CLIL approach become the main teaching method at the English language learning in Estonian schools?” and despite all the benefits of this approach almost all the respondents answered in general that CLIL teaching method is new and useful, but only as an additional tool to the traditional teaching. Only one teacher suggested that it is possible, but only in case if there are created right conditions for integrated learning.

Nonetheless, David Marsh had an interview suggested that in the future CLIL may have an impact on language teaching. The question was: “Will CLIL eventually replace other methods of language teaching?” And the answer was: “Language teaching is evolving like the teaching of subjects. CLIL does not threaten language teaching, it actually helps to enhance it. I certainly see the future of good language teaching as very strong.” (David Marsh on CLIL 2010).

#### Students' Questionnaire

**Table 7. Students' Opinion about the Lesson**

Did like your lesson today?		
Yes	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>
Unsure	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
No	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

The results of the first question show that all the students liked to be a participant of this lesson.

**Table 8. Students' Opinion about Practicing Handcrafts.**

Do you like to practice handicrafts?		
Yes	<b>12</b>	<b>80%</b>
Unsure	<b>3</b>	<b>20%</b>
No	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

This question shows that surprisingly not all the students like handicraft tasks.

**Table 9. Students' Attitude to this Kind of Lesson**

Do you want to take part again in such a lesson?		
Yes	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>
Unsure	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
No	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

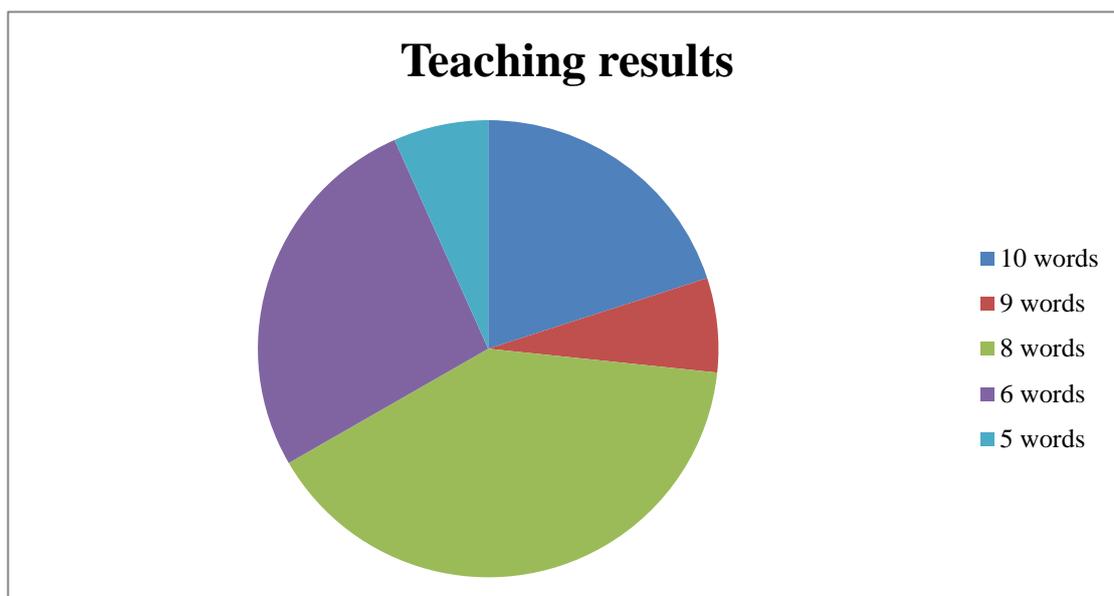
This question shows that students would like to participate in such lesson again, so it is possible to suggest that they received a lot of positive emotions and it should be noted that to support pupils' interest in language learning this kind of lesson should be held.

**Table 10. Students' Preference to have more Lessons like this**

Would you like to have more lessons like this in your timetable?		
Yes	<b>12</b>	<b>80%</b>
Unsure	<b>3</b>	<b>20%</b>
No	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

Table 10 shows that not all the respondents would like to have more lessons like this. It can be possibly explained by the fact that they could have some difficulties with the handicrafts, or they could not be as good in drawing or coloring as other students.

## Question 5



The last task was to write down new words which respondents have learned in this lesson. Vocabulary of this lesson included 10 new words: to cut, to colour, to glue, to fix, paper, model, theatre, puppet, stage, to act. Most of students learned 8 words of 10. 3 students learned all 10 words and also 3 learned 6 words. 1 student learned 9 words and one 5, that means that only one student learned a half of words. It should be emphasized that the results of this task show that most children have learned more than half of the new words given.

### **Interview with Teacher**

The free form interview was held with the English teacher, who made experimental integrated Handicraft and English lesson in cooperation with Handicraft teacher for the 4<sup>th</sup> form students. Also the teacher had a course of CLIL.

She suggested making puppets for puppet theatre. First they chose the roles of their heroes in the play. Every child chose a hero and the task was to make it of the paper. After this class students had to learn their roles. As a result, everyone had to make a puppet, to learn words and then to speak in the English language lesson for the puppet.

Teacher prepared instructions and pupils had to produce puppets by hand following these instructions and at the same time learn new vocabulary.

In teacher's opinion children were very interested in this task. This lesson let some children show the best of themselves. Some pupils, who were usually passive at the lesson, participated actively and communicated with other students. She was also surprised that some children who have difficulties in language learning were better in

handicrafts and with the help of handicraft could show their hidden abilities and talents. The teacher agreed with the statement that handicrafts raise students' interest in language studying and at the same time helps to improve their vocabulary.

Another interesting fact is that handicrafts create a background for development and liberation of children with speech difficulties. She also set as the example one situation from her previous practice. One pupil who had a minor disability of speech always had some difficulties with writing. The girl could not make a logically and grammatically correct sentence expressed herself in creative task. The pupil had to draw the picture of dinosaur and to write the discription of the picture. Her work was made with diligence, but the teacher was surprised when she found out that student's texts was written without any serious mistakes and were rather logical.

It is possible to conclude that the CLIL teaching method can create the basis for teaching students with some learning needs.

## CONCLUSION

According to the hypothesis of the present research studying handicraft in the English lesson increases learner's interest in language studies and supports vocabulary learning. The results of this investigation show that hypothesis was confirmed.

The hypothesis was tested with the help of questionnaires and also interviewing the teacher who practiced integrated language and handicraft lessons. In the first two chapters of the paper there were studied both features and advantages of teaching handicrafts and features and advantages of the CLIL approach.

Also the research has shown that many teachers of Narva schools find this teaching method rather effective and apply it in practice. It was also shown that students find studying language through handicraft entertaining and more interesting than usual lessons. The CLIL approach let children concentrate on craft and at the same time insensibly study foreign language.

Another finding of the study is that students with educational needs can express themselves through handicraft activities and achieve better results in English. Therefore, there is an assumption that the CLIL approach may be considered as an additional tool to support and encourage children with needs in their foreign language learning.

However, despite all the advantages of these method teachers-respondents were unanimous in the opinion that this approach cannot be basic in language teaching. The specificity of language learning requires a lot of traditional teaching. Nevertheless, CLIL can be considered as an important tool in modern language-learning process. For example, every topic of English subject could include some lessons of handicrafts, thereby improving learners' communication skills, vocabulary and also making learning process more flexible and creative.

## SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Käesoleva töö teema on inglise keele õppimine käsitöö tunni kaudu ja töö eesmärgiks oli uurida kas käsitöö tekitab õpilastel huvi inglise keele õppimise vastu ja parandab õppimistulemusi.

Töö koosneb teoreetilisest ja praktilisest osast. Teoreetilise osa esimeses peatükis on ülevaade Lõimitud Aine ja Keeleõpe põhimõistetest ja selle õppemeetodi edemustest. Teises peatükis on ülevaade Käsitöö tunni ajaloost ja selle kasust õpilastele.

Praktilises osas on tehtud uuritud tulemuste analüüs. Selleks küsimustike abil oli viidud küsitlus inglise keele õpetajatele, kes läbisid erilise koolituse ja rakendasid antud meetod praktikal. Õpetaja küsimustik koosnes 7 küsimusest, et saada nende arvamust Lõimitud Aine ja Keeleõpe meetodi efektiivsusest.

Samuti küsimustiku abil oli saadud informatsioon õpilaste käest. Neljanda klassi õpilased osalesid lõimitud käsitöö ja inglise keele tunnis ja pärast tundi vastasid küsimustele. Küsimustiku eesmärgiks oli saada informatsiooni tunni huvitavusest. Seejärel oli intervjueritud nende õpetaja.

Küsimustiku ja intervjuu analüüs näitas, et käesoleva töö hüpotees leidis kinnitust, et inglise keele õppimine käsitöö tunni kaudu toetab õpilaste huvi inglise keele õppimisele vastu ja parandab õppimistulemusi.

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Students' questionnaire

1. Did you like your lesson today?



2. Do you like to practice handicrafts in English?



3. Would you like to take part again in such a lesson?



4. Would you like to have more lessons like this in your timetable?



5. Please write down all new words you learned today.

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