
The potential of a multidisciplinary approach in teaching a foreign language in primary education

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Annotation

This article examines the role and potential of a multidisciplinary approach in teaching foreign languages at the primary education level. In today's globalized and information-driven society, language learning is not limited to developing linguistic competence but also aims to cultivate 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, and problem-solving. The multidisciplinary approach integrates language instruction with other subjects, allowing learners to acquire knowledge through practical and meaningful applications. Theoretical foundations of this approach are linked to educational philosophy, cognitive psychology, constructivism, and activity theory, and are reflected in modern pedagogical paradigms such as CLIL, STEAM, and Project-Based Learning. Practical strategies include integrating language learning with science, mathematics, art, music, and cultural studies, fostering deeper understanding, linguistic creativity, and intercultural competence. Challenges such as teacher readiness, non-standardized curricula, and limited resources are addressed through teacher retraining, methodological support, and the use of digital technologies. By implementing a multidisciplinary approach, students perceive language as a tool for communication, develop interdisciplinary reasoning, and acquire skills for independent learning, creative thinking, and intercultural interaction. Full integration into the education system requires further research, adaptation of innovative methods, and alignment with national educational standards.

Keywords

Multidisciplinary approach, primary education, interdisciplinary integration, CLIL, STEAM, Project-Based Learning, creative thinking, cultural competence, teacher professional development, innovative pedagogy

Потенциал междисциплинарного подхода в обучении иностранному языку в начальном образовании

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Аннотация

В данной статье рассматривается роль и потенциал междисциплинарного подхода в обучении иностранным языкам на этапе начального образования. В условиях глобализованного и информационно ориентированного общества изучение языка не ограничивается только развитием лингвистической компетенции, но также направлено на формирование навыков XXI века, таких как критическое мышление,

креативность, коммуникация и решение проблем. Многодисциплинарный подход интегрирует обучение языку с другими предметами, что позволяет учащимся усваивать знания через практическое и осмысленное применение. Теоретические основы данного подхода связаны с философией образования, когнитивной психологией, конструктивизмом и теорией деятельности и находят отражение в современных педагогических парадигмах, таких как CLIL, STEAM и обучение на основе проектов. Практические стратегии включают интеграцию изучения языка с естественными науками, математикой, искусством, музыкой и культурологией, что способствует глубокому пониманию, языковому творчеству и развитию межкультурной компетенции. Проблемы, такие как готовность преподавателей, нестандартизированные учебные программы и ограниченные ресурсы, решаются через повышение квалификации учителей, методическую поддержку и использование цифровых технологий. Применение многодисциплинарного подхода позволяет учащимся воспринимать язык как инструмент общения, развивать междисциплинарное мышление и приобретать навыки самостоятельного обучения, творческого мышления и межкультурного взаимодействия. Для полного внедрения в образовательную систему необходимы дальнейшие исследования, адаптация инновационных методов и соответствие национальным образовательным стандартам.

Ключевые слова

Многодисциплинарный подход, начальное образование, междисциплинарная интеграция, CLIL, STEAM, обучение на основе проектов, творческое мышление, культурная компетенция, повышение квалификации преподавателей, инновационная педагогика

Boshlang'ich ta'limda chet tilini o'qitishda multidisiplinar yondashuvning salohiyati

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Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqola boshlang'ich ta'lim darajasida chet tillarini o'qitishda multidistsiplinar yondashuvning roli va imkoniyatlarini o'rganadi. Bugungi globalashgan va axborotga asoslangan jamiyatda til o'rganish faqat lingvistik kompetentsiyani rivojlantirish bilan cheklanmay, balki tanqidiy fikrlash, ijodkorlik, muloqot va muammolarni hal etish kabi XXI asr ko'nikmalarini shakllantirishga ham qaratilgan. Multidistsiplinar yondashuv til ta'limini boshqa fanlar bilan integratsiyalash orqali o'quvchilarga bilimni amaliy va mazmunli shaklda egallash imkonini beradi. Ushbu yondashuvning nazariy asoslari ta'lim falsafasi, kognitiv psixologiya, konstruktivizm va faoliyat nazariyasi bilan bog'liq bo'lib, CLIL, STEAM va loyiha asosida o'qitish kabi zamonaviy pedagogik paradigmalar orqali ifodalanadi. Amaliy strategiyalar til o'qitishni tabiiy fanlar, matematika, san'at, musiqa va madaniyatshunoslik bilan bog'lashni, chuqur tushuncha, lingvistik

ijodkorlik va madaniy muloqot kompetentsiyasini rivojlantirishni o'z ichiga oladi. O'qituvchilarning tayyor emasligi, o'quv dasturlari va resurslarning cheklanganligi kabi muammolar o'qituvchilarni qayta tayyorlash, metodik yordam va raqamli texnologiyalardan foydalanish orqali hal etiladi. Multidistsiplinar yondashuvni joriy etish orqali o'quvchilar tilni muloqot vositasi sifatida qabul qiladi, fanlararo mulohaza yuritish ko'nikmalarini rivojlantiradi va mustaqil o'rganish, ijodiy fikrlash hamda madaniy muloqot ko'nikmalarini egallaydi. Ta'lim tizimiga to'liq integratsiya qilish uchun ilmiy tadqiqotlarni kengaytirish, innovatsion metodlarni amaliyotga moslashtirish va milliy ta'lim standartlariga muvofiqlashtirish zarurligini tahlil etadi.

Kalit so'zlar *Multidistsipliner yondashuv, boshlang'ich ta'lim, fanlararo integratsiya, CLIL, STEAM, loyiha asosida o'qitish, ijodiy fikrlash, madaniy kompetensiya, o'qituvchilarning malakasini oshirish, innovatsion pedagogika*

Introduction

In the modern era of globalization and information-driven societies, foreign language education in primary schools has acquired new significance, extending beyond the development of basic linguistic competencies to the cultivation of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, and problem-solving. The growing interconnection of global knowledge and the increasing demand for multifunctional competencies in learners necessitate innovative pedagogical approaches that integrate language learning with other domains of knowledge. Among such approaches, the multidisciplinary method has gained prominence as it enables learners to acquire foreign language skills through the integration of content from multiple subject areas and the engagement in meaningful, real-life activities.

Recent educational policies in Uzbekistan emphasize the implementation of modern pedagogical technologies, integrative methods, and multidisciplinary approaches to enhance the quality of education to meet international standards. These directives underscore the importance of fostering learners' cognitive, creative, and communicative capacities through interdisciplinary learning.

The multidisciplinary approach in primary education is particularly relevant because this stage forms the foundation for children's cognitive development, worldview, and creative thinking. By integrating language instruction with subjects such as science, mathematics, art, music, and cultural studies, educators can promote deeper understanding, linguistic creativity, and intercultural competence. Moreover, this approach aligns with contemporary pedagogical paradigms such as CLIL, STEAM, and Project-Based Learning, which support active, student-centered, and integrative learning experiences.

This article explores the theoretical foundations, practical applications, and potential benefits of the multidisciplinary approach in primary foreign language education, highlighting strategies to overcome implementation challenges and enhance teaching effectiveness, thereby preparing learners for the complex demands of the 21st century.

In the context of globalization and an information-oriented society, teaching a foreign language at the primary education stage is considered a systematic activity aimed not only at developing language competencies but also at fostering learners' 21st-century skills such as thinking, communication, creativity,

and problem-solving (Trilling & Fadel, 2009; 1). In this process, a multidisciplinary approach plays an important role as an innovative methodological direction that enables learners to acquire a language through its integration with practical activities by combining content from different subject areas.

In the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated May 8, 2019, **“On Measures to Further Improve the System of Teaching Foreign Languages,”** the task of using modern pedagogical technologies in the educational process, including integrative and multidisciplinary approaches, is clearly defined. At the same time, the **Law “On Education” (2020)** and the **Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022–2026** emphasize the need to raise the quality of education to the level of international standards and to organize the teaching and learning process on the basis of innovative approaches.

Thus, the use of a multidisciplinary approach in teaching a foreign language at the primary education level not only enhances the effectiveness of language learning but also develops children’s worldview, creative thinking, and cognitive activity through interdisciplinary connections (Beane, 1997; Drake & Burns, 2004).

Theoretical Foundations of the Multidisciplinary Approach and Its Role in Education

The multidisciplinary approach is one of the contemporary trends in educational philosophy, centered on the idea of integrating knowledge through interdisciplinary connections. Dewey (1938) emphasized the necessity of linking education with real life and regarded the boundaries between academic subjects as artificial barriers. From this perspective, the multidisciplinary approach can be seen as a pedagogical system that ensures the integrity and wholeness of the learner’s cognitive process.

In primary education, the importance of this approach is particularly significant, as this stage is when children develop a general

understanding of the surrounding world, the fundamental mechanisms of cognitive activity, and creative thinking abilities (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). The methodological foundations of the multidisciplinary approach are closely linked with cognitive psychology, constructivism, and activity theory. From a constructivist perspective, learners acquire knowledge by independently “constructing” it (Piaget, 1952). In this process, new meanings and experiences are created through interdisciplinary integration.

Moreover, the multidisciplinary approach is reflected in modern pedagogical paradigms such as **CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)**, **STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics)**, and **Project-Based Learning**. The CLIL model enhances the effectiveness of language learning by integrating language instruction with subject content (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). The STEAM approach, in turn, fosters creative thinking by combining elements of science, technology, and the arts.

Opportunities for Implementing a Multidisciplinary Approach in Teaching a Foreign Language in Primary Education

To apply a multidisciplinary approach in teaching a foreign language to primary school pupils, it is necessary to revise curricula, lesson content, and methodological tools. For this purpose, identifying points of interdisciplinary connection is essential – for example, integrating language elements into subjects such as natural science, art, mathematics, and music (Fogarty, 1991).

1. Integration Based on CLIL Technology.

For example, if topics such as *“weather,” “seasons,”* and *“animals”* are taught in a foreign language during natural science lessons, children not only learn new vocabulary but also understand concepts related to the natural sciences. This creates opportunities for deeper comprehension of meaning and practical use of the language through

interdisciplinary connections (Mehisto, Marsh, & Frigols, 2008).

2. **Creative Integration through STEAM Activities.** Using activities related to art, music, or technology in foreign language lessons helps develop children's *linguistic creativity*. For example, in a lesson on the topic "Build Your Dream House," pupils create projects by integrating elements of architecture, geometry, and language. This method fosters interdisciplinary reasoning and integrative thinking in learners (Yakman & Lee, 2012).
3. **Integrated Teaching through a Project-Based Approach.** For example, in a project on the topic "My Favorite Planet," students integrate knowledge from geography, astronomy, and language studies while developing skills in information gathering, writing, and presentation. This model contributes to the development of 21st-century *soft skills* such as collaboration, critical thinking, and communication abilities (Thomas, 2000).
4. **Integration of the Cultural Component.** In a multidisciplinary approach, elements of cultural studies also play an important role. For example, using information about national holidays, music, or historical figures of other countries in foreign language lessons helps develop students' *intercultural communication competence* (Byram, 1997).

At the same time, there are several challenges in implementing a multidisciplinary approach: teachers' lack of readiness for interdisciplinary integration, the non-standardization of curricula, and insufficient resources. To address these issues, it is essential to provide teacher retraining, develop methodological guides, and utilize multimedia technologies.

Ways to Enhance the Effectiveness of Foreign Language Teaching Based on a Multidisciplinary Approach

To increase the effectiveness of foreign language teaching in primary education, it is necessary to systematically implement a multidisciplinary approach. The following strategies are recommended:

1. **Developing Integrated Curricula and Textbooks.** Modular programs aimed at linking foreign language materials with topics from other subjects enrich the educational content. For example, integrated courses such as "English through Science" or "Math in English" provide meaningful interdisciplinary connections.
2. **Enhancing Teachers' Professional Competence.** The multidisciplinary approach requires complex pedagogical skills. Therefore, it is necessary to support teaching staff through retraining courses focused on interdisciplinary teaching methodologies (Fullan, 2013).
3. **Utilizing Information Technologies.** Digital platforms such as *Kahoot*, *Quizlet*, and *Edmodo* offer great opportunities for organizing interdisciplinary activities. For example, students can watch videos on natural science topics and then discuss them in English, simultaneously developing both subject knowledge and language skills.
4. **Implementing an Integrated Assessment System.** When assessing interdisciplinary learning activities, it is important to evaluate not only grammatical or lexical skills but also cognitive, social, and creative competencies.
5. **Creating a Creative Learning Environment.** Introducing *learning corners*, interactive models, and visual aids in classrooms to support interdisciplinary projects enhances student engagement and active participation.

As a result of these approaches, students acquire not only knowledge of the language but also the ability to apply it in various areas

of life. The multidisciplinary approach enables them to perceive language not merely as a *subject* but as a *means of communication*.

Implementing a multidisciplinary approach in teaching a foreign language at the primary education level is one of the pressing directions of modern education. This approach promotes deep and meaningful understanding of knowledge through interdisciplinary connections, fosters creative thinking, intercultural communication, and independent learning skills. In this process, the teacher becomes not only an information provider but also a manager of the integration process, a researcher, and a creative individual.

For the full integration of the multidisciplinary approach into the education system, it remains an important task to expand scientific research, implement innovative methodologies in practice, and adapt them to national educational standards.

Conclusion

The analysis of the potential of a multidisciplinary approach in teaching foreign languages at the primary education level highlights its pivotal role in contemporary education. By integrating language instruction with content from various subject areas, including science, mathematics, arts, music, and cultural studies, this approach not only enhances linguistic competence but also promotes cognitive development, creative thinking, and 21st-century skills such as collaboration, problem-solving, and effective communication. The multidisciplinary approach encourages learners to perceive language as a dynamic tool for real-life application rather than as an isolated academic subject, thereby fostering meaningful learning experiences and deeper comprehension.

Theoretical foundations of the approach, rooted in educational philosophy, constructivism, cognitive psychology, and activity theory, provide a robust framework for designing interdisciplinary learning experiences. Modern pedagogical paradigms such as CLIL, STEAM, and Project-Based Learning exemplify practical implementations of this approach, demonstrating how language education can be enriched through integration with other domains. These paradigms enable students to engage in creative, inquiry-based, and reflective activities that reinforce both subject-specific and cross-disciplinary knowledge.

Despite its evident benefits, the implementation of a multidisciplinary approach faces several challenges, including limited teacher preparedness, non-standardized curricula, and insufficient educational resources. Addressing these challenges requires systematic professional development for educators, the creation of methodological guides, and the incorporation of digital and multimedia technologies to facilitate integrative learning processes.

In conclusion, the multidisciplinary approach represents a strategic and forward-looking direction in primary foreign language education. Its effective implementation has the potential to cultivate not only linguistic proficiency but also holistic intellectual and personal development, equipping learners with the skills necessary to navigate the complexities of a globalized and information-driven society. Full integration into the educational system necessitates ongoing research, adaptation of innovative methodologies, and alignment with national educational standards to ensure sustainable and high-quality outcomes.

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