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**CRITICAL COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INFLUENCE OF CLIL AND PBL IN IMPROVING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT***Aisana Baktybayeva<sup>1</sup>, Yakup Doganay<sup>2</sup>*<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Humanities and Educational Sciences, SDU University,  
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*Globalization, multilingualism, and growing cultural diversity make contemporary education systems capable of preparing learners with disciplinary knowledge while demanding from them intercultural competence and strong moral character. Large-scale educational reforms in Kazakhstan through the trilingual education, new competency-based curricula, and an emphasis on learner-centered pedagogy have raised keen interest toward innovative instructional approaches that would support holistic learner development. Among such approaches, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and Project-Based Learning (PBL) are two among a few that have gained particular prominence. This paper of critical comparison discusses how CLIL and PBL map intercultural competence and character education across different educational contexts, specifically placing Kazakhstan within their scopes. Using Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competence model and the Character and Virtues framework of the Jubilee Centre, this paper draws a close critique on the theoretical underpinnings, pedagogical practices, and contextual implementations of both approaches. Consequently, while CLIL is found appropriate in detailing the dimensions more related to linguistic, cognitive, or academic axes through which intercultural competence can be developed, the approach articulated by Marlow provides richer and more explicit room for character formation, civic engagement, and critical cultural awareness. It argues that neither can work well separately in responding to the complex demands of Kazakhstan's education system but rather depend on intentional pedagogical*

*design, teacher preparation, and the country's priority policies. The study finally proposes a context-sensitive hybrid model that combines the strengths of CLIL and PBL to support holistic learner development in Kazakhstan.*

**Keywords:** Intercultural Communicative Competence, Content Language Integrated Learning, Project Based Learning, Character Development, EFL.

## **1. Introduction**

The fast tracks of globalization, international migration, and the technological change have significantly altered the goals and methods of education at all levels around the world. In this new century, education delivery systems are not viewed as transmitters of subject content; there is increasing demand that they prepare their recipients for an elusive, indefinite world involving complex customs and traditions interacting dynamically. Contemporary education that must prepare learners not only with disciplinary knowledge but also with the intercultural competence and ethical dispositions required for participation in diverse and interconnected societies (Byram, 1997; Arthur et al., 2017). Therefore, intercultural competence and character development become educational foci at both international and national levels. Global policy frameworks demand that graduates be cross-culturally communicative, diversity appreciative, ethically reasoning, responsible citizen actors- these put social cohesion, democracy, and sustainable development at the front. It puts the school or university under direct pressure to apply pedagogical approaches that foster not only cognitive and academic outcomes but also social, moral, and intercultural capabilities.

In Kazakhstan, the global imperatives intersect with the very unique national context articulated through post-Soviet transformations between linguistic diversity and ambitious educational reforms. Thus, Kazakhstan could be described as a multilingual and multiethnic society where more than 130 ethnicities live here while historically Kazakh and Russian were considered to be dominant languages in communication as well as used in function and administration. Today English is primarily seen as a means of international communication and academic mobility, while national values must simultaneously be preserved by education that also has to foster cultural harmony (Sengerbekova et al., 2024). Since gaining independence, the government has been developing policies on strengthening national identity yet promoting a country image welcoming to an international community where education is perceived as an immediate tool towards such ends.

The most major change is the trilingual education policy that encourages mastery of Kazakh, Russian, and English. The new framing of English is that it is a language of global communication, science, and economic competitiveness. Accompanying the language reform has been new updated curricula based on competencies that emphasize critical thinking and collaboration as well as creativity and values

education. These reforms are indicative of a departure from traditional teacher-centred instruction towards more learner-centred and constructivist pedagogies.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and PBL form part of this landscape of reform initiatives. CLIL has found its main application at the secondary level within elite implementations such as Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools where content subjects are delivered in English. PBL has found a more general promotion through curriculum updates as purported means to develop higher order thinking skills and life competencies.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1 Intercultural Communicative Competence in Education**

Intercultural communicative competence is a core category in language learning, global citizenship education, and teacher education. While less comprehensive definitions exist, the broader definition holds that intellectual competence is the ability to ensure effective and appropriate interaction with people of diverse cultural backgrounds. This competence presumes sensitivity not only to skills but also to attitudes, knowledge, interpretive abilities, and ethical judgement.

Michael Byram's model of ICC is considered to be one of the most referenced among different models used to discuss intercultural competence. Developed within the context of foreign language education, Byram's model extends the notion of communicative competence by explicitly integrating cultural and ethical dimensions.

Byram conceptualizes ICC as comprising five interrelated components. The first component, attitudes (*savoir être*), includes curiosity and openness, and willingness to question one's own cultural assumptions. Attitudes are a pre-condition whether learners will achieve an approach of respect or of defensiveness against cultural difference. A second component is knowledge (*savoirs*) of social groups and their cultural practices in both one's own country and that of the other, and knowledge of the institutions and history of the society. The third element, skills of interpreting and relating (*savoir comprendre*) refer to the competence for interpretation of cultural significations and relating these to one's own cultural framework. The fourth element, skills of discovery and interaction (*savoir apprendre/faire*) focus on learners' competence for discovery of new cultural knowledge and competence for interaction in situations where they find themselves in unfamiliar contexts. A fifth element, critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*), is defined as the ability to undertake an evaluation of the practices of cultures critically based on explicit criteria; for example, those founded on the principles of human rights, democracy, and social justice. (Byram, 1997)

Byram's model sits pertinently for this study as it stresses the fact that intercultural communicative competence is not something which can be value-free. Rather, it contains an inherent component of ethics and politics, requiring learners to approach cultural difference critically rather than just assimilating differences. Such a

perspective is highly relevant in Kazakhstan, wherein education has a major role in the development of national identity and fostering intercultural harmony.

## **2.2 Character Development and Character Education**

Character development refers to the cultivation of those moral, civic, intellectual, and performance virtues by which one can lead a good life and support others in society. (Character Education Partnership, 2008) In the past few decades, this has renewed interest in character education because there is growing social fragmentation, an increasing sense of ethical ambiguity, and falling civic participation that educators have noted.

The four broad categories are in the following description. Moral virtues embrace honesty, respect, compassion, and integrity. Civic virtues embrace responsible citizenship and social participation between justice and service and respect for the rule of law. Intellectual virtues can contain curiosity, consideration, and receptivity to thoughts. Performance virtues encompass perseverance, resilience, teamwork, and self-discipline. Recent studies further emphasized that character is best developed when learners have responsibility and agency-actual opportunities for making ethical decisions (Arthur et al., 2017)

The Jubilee Centre states that character education does not occur by direct instruction only. (Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, 2017) Pedagogical approaches must accompany it, which will allow students to practice the manifestation of some virtues within authentic contexts and reflect on their experiences. Such an understanding closely links character education with the development process of CLIL and PBL pedagogies through active learning and collaboration between learners working on real problems.

## **2.3 Integrating Intercultural Competence and Character Development**

While the development of character and intercultural competence has been viewed as separate aims, increasing educational theories assert their fundamental connection and even suggest their organic nature toward mutual reinforcement. Communication competence across cultures – that somewhat generally relates one's abilities to interact effectively and appropriately with people of different cultural orientations – would most likely be incomplete without relating this concept to some moral and civic virtues. Qualities like empathy and respect, fairness, responsibility, and openness accompany meaningful intercultural engagement since they pave the way for understanding feelings attached to differences in culture rather than making judgements or remaining indifferent. Pedagogies that integrate ICC and character education must involve reflection, ethical inquiry, and learner agency (Nguyen 2024; Sanches-Garcia & Reyes-de-Cozar 2025). Such virtues aside, intercultural interaction is at best instrumental or even a mere strengthening of existing stereotypes.

Also, character education in culturally plural societies has to be guided by an intercultural perspective to avoid falling into the traps of ethnocentrism, cultural essentialism, or exclusionary practices. A program based on a single cultural or

national framework runs the risk of marginalizing the perspectives of minorities and placing more inclination toward obedience rather than reflecting ethically. Therefore, it is through intercultural competence that character education can fruitfully be interrogated and enacted since it raises in learners' consciousness the questions of whose values are promoted, how moral norms are constructed, and how ethical principles can be applied across cultural contexts with due regard for diversity.

The combination of the ICC model by Byram and the framework of the Jubilee Center for Character and Virtues can arguably provide very insightful theoretical underpinnings for viewing this relationship. In this respect, the dimensions that Byra brings in relating to attitudes (*savoir etre*) and critically cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*) help in understanding intercultural learning as essentially an ethical endeavor that requires a learner to judge cultural practices against explicit values, for instance, human rights, social justice, or democratic participation. This is therefore very closely related to the main areas of concern of moral and civic virtues at the Jubilee Center which emphasize ethical judgement, social responsibility, and active citizenship.

Also, both frameworks talk about the place of reflection and practice in learning. Intercultural competence does not improve just by knowing what makes a culture rather through active engagement, dialogue, and critical reflection. In like manner, character development becomes a process of habituation that reflective practice supports participation in meaningful social contexts. This shared emphasis points once again toward the need for pedagogies to go beyond transmission models of teaching and create opportunities for learners to practice ethical and intercultural skills in real situations.

To Kazakhstan, this integrated perspective perfectly applies. The multicultural setting and multilingual education policy compel learners to negotiate cultural differences at home and abroad simultaneously with a strong value imposition on such elements of social harmony, respect for diversity, civic responsibility, and patriotism by the national education policy. The integration of character development and intercultural competence harmonizes these goals as it makes possible learning between being grounded in some ethics of culture while opening up to new cultures.

This holistic framework allows the current study to build a solid foundation for critical comparison between CLIL and PBL in terms of how each respond to linguistic and cognitive achievements, on the one hand, and ethical engagement, moral reasoning, and civic responsibility, on the other. Such an integrated lens is crucial when assessing the degrees to which CLIL and PBL are involved in holistic education and sustainable social development in Kazakhstan.

### **3. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)**

#### **3.1 Pedagogical foundations of CLIL**

CLIL represents educational situations where subject matter is delivered through any additional or foreign language. CLIL does not treat language as an isolated

phenomenon, rather it places languages as vehicle for the acquisition of disciplinary knowledge. The most popular representation of CLIL has been CLIL in terms of content, communication, cognition, and culture - the called as 4Cs.

The content dimension is about subject matter learning such as science, history, or mathematics. Communication stresses meaningful use of language to enable learners to build and express comprehension. Cognition involves the development of higher order thinking skills. Content focuses on the raising of cultural awareness and the importance of intercultural understanding.

CLIL grows out to sociocultural theory, where language is seen as a mediating tool and learning happens through the making of meanings actively, also from constructivist approaches. In Kazakhstan, CLIL works mainly as an implementation of the trilingual education policy in secondary schools and other elite institutions like Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools. This is the context in which CLIL has come to be associated with English-medium instruction in science and mathematics.

### **3.2 CLIL and International Competence**

CLIL has great potential for fostering intercultural competence due to the interplay of language, cognition, and subject matter. Students learn the academic discipline through another language and get acquainted with alternative academic discourse, culturally embedded notions, and different traditions of epistemology. The process sensitizes learners to realize that knowledge is not something culturally neutral but rather formed by both linguistic and cultural dimensions. In this respect, CLIL can develop openness toward diversity and tolerance for ambiguity together with sensitivity towards linguistic and cultural diversity.

In the view of Byram's ICC model, CLIL is contributing mostly to the acquisition of knowledge – *savoirs*, and skills of interpreting and relating – *savoir comprendre*. It does this by allowing learners to gain an understanding of global issues, scientific perspectives, and cultural practices from outside their immediate context through subject content learned in a different language. Meanwhile, it develops for them those interpretive skills that can be used to compare, contrast and mediate different linguistic and cultural meanings. Such processes are most useful in multilingual societies like Kazakhstan where students are expected to operate with several frames both nationally and internationally.

But though CLIL has all those advantages, it does not necessarily foster critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*). Studies reveal that the intercultural component learning in CLIL usually stays tacit when other pressures such as curricular and assessment pressures predominate classroom practice (Coyle et al., 2010; Lagou & Zorbas, 2020). In Kazakhstan, CLIL classrooms typically emphasize content mastery and English language competence because of systemic pressures relating to assessment and international benchmarking. Cultural dimensions can become incidental rather than integral to learning if teachers do not possess training in the area of intercultural pedagogy.

Thus, while CLIL does create a good basis for intercultural competence, it can only be optimally applied when reflective tasks make explicit the intercultural objectives. These tasks' function is to include ethical discussion and encourage students to challenge critically different cultural perspectives. If not purposefully designed to include such elements, CLIL can very easily result in mere multilingualism on a purely functional level rather than on a more profound level of understanding.

### **3.3 CLIL and Character Development**

From a character education perspective, CLIL can be seen as contributing significantly to the development of some intellectual virtues and performance virtues. Since learners face the struggles with challenging subject matter through the use of an additional language, CLIL naturally inculcates intellectual virtues such as curiosity and attentiveness that to critical thinking. As it requires student consideration of meaning more consciously related to terminology and to the relationships between concepts, a degree of cognitive engagement that can be transformed into habitually applied analytical inquiry is encouraged. This cognitive motivation leads learners to question assumptions, explicitly seek answers, and reflect on their understanding.

Besides the mental virtues, CLIL also encourages the growth of performance virtues-most importantly perseverance and resilience, as well as self-discipline. There are huge challenges to learning content in non-native language barriers are linguistic, that therefore increases cognitive load. Overcoming such challenges successfully requires sustaining efforts in adaptability which are the aspects of learning effectively that contribute to long-term personal development. In Kazakhstan where CLIL is predominantly introduced at secondary level, these virtues have immediate application since students are always preparing to sit for high-stakes tests and advance academically.

The contribution of CLIL towards the development of moral and civic virtues is less direct and limited. Content learning through language does not necessarily lead to ethical reasoning, empathy, or social responsibility. Much depends on curriculum choices and the extent to which teachers mediate these aspects. Unless there is an opportunity for reflection on action and discussion of values and related ethical issues, character development in CLIL would probably be incidental rather than deliberate. Therefore, CLIL cannot stand alone as an adequate method for character education unless the teaching strategies that address the lessons' moral and civic dimensions are explicitly added.

## **4. Project Based Learning (PBL)**

### **4.1 Pedagogical Foundations of Project Based Learning**

Project Based Learning is a student-centered method based on constructivist and experiential learning theories. Realistic investigation, teamwork, thoughtfulness, and showing work to others are key aspects (Thomas, 2000; Sanches-Garcia & Reyes-de-Cozar, 2025). Unlike teaching separate content units or unconnected skills, PBL

organizes learning through long-term projects that make students bring together information, abilities, and attitudes from different fields. The main goal of PBL is not just getting subject knowledge but also building higher order thinking, independence, and social responsibility.

The theoretical basis of PBL naturally occurs within Constructivist and Experiential Learning theories. From the constructivist view, learning is seen as an active process by which learners make meaning through interacting with content, other people, and the environment. Knowledge does not flow from teacher to student but rather is co-constructed between teachers and students as they inquire into matters through dialogue and problem-solving. The experiential learning theory places more emphasis on experience as the foundation of learning and reflects in action. Students do thereby uncover issues, test ideas, reflect on ideas, and continuously improve their understanding based on a cyclical discovery wherein real-world problems continuously refine comprehension.

At the heart of high-quality PBL, several core design principles distinguish it from the project work add-on or substitute activity. Authenticity sits at the core, because projects are framed within real-world challenges and professional practices, considering varying degrees, valid to increase learner engagement and make learning relevant. Student voice and choice are equally imperative, since learners should determine aspects of the project's content, method, and products; hence motivation is better fostered as ownership of learning increases. Collaboration defines it as students work in groups to negotiate roles and share responsibility.

Also, PBL puts a strong emphasis on critique and revision by encouraging the learners to peer assessment, self-assessment, and continuous improvement. The public presentation of project results raises even more the accountability and communication skills because now the learner must be able to organize his/her thoughts for real audiences outside the classroom. Reflection is infused in the process by which students can relate experiences to learning goals and values.

In Kazakhstan, PBL was recommended via new competency-based curricula as a way of fostering critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and life skills that happens to be the new goals of national education reform. Because learner agency is real world relevant, PBL sits in pole position as a pedagogical approach for holistic development across diverse educational settings.

#### **4.2 Project Based Learning and Intercultural Communication**

PBL can be very powerful in fostering intercultural competence as it typically deals with global, societal, or community-based problems. While most aspects of intercultural learning are treated theoretically or as incidental effects, PBL places intercultural contact at the heart of the learning experience. The process of collaborative inquiry necessitates dialogue that develops through the negotiation of meaning and awareness of conflicting perspectives that develops through the negotiation of meaning and awareness of conflicting perspectives that underline

effective elements contained within any model of communication competence. Therefore, since PBL is a social and dialogic by nature, it makes the experience of intercultural competence real rather than learned as a set of abstract principles.

Byram's ICC model demonstrates that PBL can definitely relate it to all five components of intercultural competence. This includes the attitudes openness, curiosity, and respect which develop as students realize different cultural assumptions or values that their fellow group members may have. Knowledge is developed through investigation by learners pertaining to those cultural, social, and historical contexts relevant to their projects. Skills of interpreting and relating begin developing as students compare viewpoints on cultural practices, analyzing practice; and mediating perspectives within collaborative tasks.

PBL delivers powerful avenues for the development of discovery and interaction skills because learners should vigorously search for information that answers new contexts and share their findings with varied audiences. Where projects include structured reflection and ethical inquiry, the method supports the development of critical cultural awareness. Students are enabled to undertake an evaluation of cultural practice and social issues against explicit ethical criteria This moves them toward a more critical and responsible form of intercultural competence.

In Kazakhstan, PBL proves most effective at the point of intersection between multicultural realities and critical cultural awareness (Gatiat & Zhorabekova, 2022). Projects based on issues in the local community, environmental sustainability, or social inclusion enable learners to appreciate cultural diversity within their immediate environment and relate the concerns of locals with global challenges. The dual focus addressed national interest on social cohesion and global citizenship.

### **4.3 Project Based Learning and Character Development**

The PBL approach becomes very instrumental in the development of character since it provides real contexts for the practice, reflection, and internalization of virtues. Other related moral values that can be improved in students through constant group work where they listen to others and solve conflict situations as well as share responsibilities for the outcome of the group work include respect, empathy, honesty, and responsibility. The experience will build concrete ground for moral learning which will be above theoretical teaching.

The civic virtues find good support in PBL, mostly when projects involve community engagement or social problems. Students begin to develop a sense of agency and social responsibility as well as a notion of commitment to common good by working on issues that are related to their school or community. They also provide an excellent match for the education policy of Kazakhstan that emphasizes such values as civic responsibility and respect for cultural diversity in the orientation of character education as a matter of national priority.

The PBL method promotes appreciating the values of curiosity, critical thinking, and intellectual open-mindedness because the students are constantly involved in

questioning, collecting evidence, and evaluating solutions. The working virtues of perseverance, team working, leadership, and self-regulation are fostered by project work which is sustained and mostly challenging. Reflection provides a transformation of such experiences into character learning by which students can relate actions to values and results. PBL, therefore has proved an appropriate powerful pedagogy toward intercultural competence integrated with the total development of character in holistic education.

### **5. Critical Comparative Analysis of CLIL and PBL**

A comparative analysis of CLIL and PBL reveals a variance in how the two methods treat the infusion of intercultural competence and character development in conceptualization, implementation, and experience from the point of view of the learner. While both are philosophies of education based on constructivist theory and its resultant active learner involvement, they differ in their prioritization between pedagogy and the explicit assumptions regarding how learning about others' cultures as well as values takes place. The CLIL approach mainly speaks to linguistic competence as well as cognitive outcomes that result from content-based engagement carried out through an additional language. PBL reconceptualizes these competences as social processes developed in cooperation, discovery, and ethical reflection. Consequently, such differences translate into direct classroom practice, teacher agency, and assessment effects. In Kazakhstan with its curriculum constraints rendering approaches particularly effective or ineffective when language policy intertwines with value education.

#### **5.1 Conceptualization of Intercultural competence**

CLIL conceptualises or constructs an understanding of intercultural competence primarily through language-mediated access subject content situated within the larger frames of global academic and professional discourses. Thus, in large measure, cognitive-linguistic terms frame what constitutes intercultural competence by gaining international perspectives, scientific knowledge and culturally situated ways of meaning-making through exposure to another language – most often English (Byram, 1997; Coyle et al., 2010). From this perspective, explicitly articulated content reflective of global contexts rather than through explicit engagement with cultural otherness would implicitly foster the development of intercultural learning.

In the Kazakhstan context, this conceptualization sits very well with the national education priorities about internationalization and academic competitiveness added on top of English language proficiency. CLIL prepares learners for participation for learning to be ready international higher education offers and labour markets (Sengerbekova et al., 2024). Since the integration of language and content would most often be default incorporate intercultural competence, its ethical and critical dimensions – the bigger part that Byram's model emphasizes such as critical cultural awareness – might not be developed fully. Often cultural difference is treated as an object of knowledge rather than a site for ethical reflection, dialogue, or contestation.

Therefore, CLIL would normally favour academic interculturality over lived, relational intercultural experience.

PBL therefore frames intercultural competence as a social, dialogic, and ethical practice that can be built through cooperation, inquiry, and engagement with real-world problems. It does not place language at the core of pathways to intercultural learning but rather emphasizes interaction among learners on the negotiation of meaning and collective problem-solving as central mechanisms for developing competence. Competence in PBL is thus framed not by knowledge about other cultures but by the ability to work ethically-effectively with others across difference.

It is of particular relevance in the multicultural classrooms of Kazakhstan, where students are constantly exposed to cultural, linguistic, and social diversities that make up their daily educational encounters. PBL allows structured access to such diversity through group work followed by conversation and reflection, thereby activating all components for acquiring intercultural competence – attitudes, skills, and ethical judgement (Byram 1997). Unlike CLIL, which exposes learners implicitly, PBL requires learners to consciously confront diversity of opinion, reflect on values and judge cultural practices regarding and ethical criterion. Thus, intercultural competence is framed not as an academic outcome but rather a form of civic and moral agency as inspired by character development and social responsibility.

### **5.2 Cultural Engagement**

CLIL usually throws at learners those cultural elements implicit in the subject content, for instance, disciplinary discourse, world views, or culturally based examples. Such treatment may widen learners' horizons regarding other cultures but will most likely dwell on the surface if explicit reflection or discussion does not bring out the cultural meanings. This has been further limited in the Kazakhstani context by rigid curricula, time constraints, and an examination orientation that allows for the mere coverage of content and language accuracy to be emphasized rather than indulging crucial cultural inquiries. The facts reflect that learners get to know the other contexts without critically questioning the cultural values and power relations or even questioning their own assumptions.

PBL delivers deep yet long-lasting cultural engagement since learning is anchored on real-life social contexts. Community needs-based projects, environmental sustainability, or social inclusion issues allow the learner to discover cultural perspectives actively yet critically. Inquiry may involve collaboration and reflection thereby opening the students to question norms by comparing values systems and judging practices against ethical criteria. It thus falls quiet neatly into Byram's understanding of critical cultural awareness in reflecting learners not only as cultural observers but also as reflective and responsible social actors.

### **5.3 Character Development: Implicit or Explicit**

The most explicit differences between CLIL and PBL lie in the transparency of character development within pedagogy. CLIL posits the infusion of character

education mainly as an ancillary outcome of scholarly pursuit rather than forming part of explicitly set instructional objectives. Students are obliged to study demanding content through a new medium; therefore, it has great potential to develop performance related values such as perseverance, resilience, self-discipline, and responsibility. Since outcomes related to character are seldom named or reflected upon and assessed, students may not be consciously aware of the moral or ethical dimensions attached to their learning experience.

Also, CLIL classes usually focus more on getting the content right and on language accuracy because this is an examination-oriented context like that of Kazakhstan. Therefore, chances of interacting with moral dilemmas or civic values or even ethical questions within subject content remain underdeveloped. In the absence of structured reflection or guided discussion, learners do not critically reflect on values, social responsibility, cultural norms. This makes CLIL less capable of helping in the development of moral and civic virtues despite its potential in the improvement of intelligence and other forms of performing virtues.

PBL explicitly foregrounds character development as an integral component of the learning process. In PBL, collaboration injects learners to practice respect and empathy, fairness, and accountability toward shared goals that they are working for. The modelling of ethical decisions forms an integral part of the design since most project work falls into real-world issues such as challenges within a community, environmental sustainability, or social inclusion. Reflection -individual and collective provides an opportunity for learners to connect action with values and to assess choices in terms of ethics.

Kazakhstan emphasizes such values in its educational policy as respect for diversity, patriotism, and social responsibility, thus making the path more direct and coherent through which character education can be infused into daily classroom practices via PBL. By making explicit values, assessable, and accountable to bring pedagogical activity into alignment with the national educational priorities, PBL simultaneously supports the international formation of morally and civically engaged learners.

#### **5.4 Teacher Agency and Contextual Constraints**

CLIL simultaneously imposes linguistic, methodological, and cognitive demands on teachers since they need to effectively manage subject content, foreign language lessons, and learners' comprehension. In Kazakhstan, these demands are exacerbated by uneven levels of English proficiency among subject teachers lack of access to sustained professional development in the areas of CLIL methodology and intercultural pedagogy. Thus, teachers may resort to content delivery and examination preparation that does not leave room for reflective discussion of cultural perspectives or ethical issues which are embedded in subject matter. This is also facilitated by institutional constraints through standardized curricula and assessment

frameworks that further reduce teacher autonomy and space for pedagogical experimentation.

PBL is also time and energy intensive, but teacher agency and contextual adaptation are much more available. Projects may be defined in such a way that teachers identify projects reflecting the needs of their immediate local community, cultural traditions, and students' experiences. Therefore, teacher can intentionally design an approach to integrate intercultural and ethical contexts found across Kazakhstan as a choice that puts more power into the hands of teacher thereby supporting context sensitive pedagogy.

### **5.5 Moving to a Mixed Model**

The comparative analysis shows that neither CLIL nor PBL can fully and appropriately respond separately to the multicultural competence and character dimensions of the Kazakhstani educational context. CLIL improves language access to academic knowledge around the world, but explicit ethical and intercultural engagement is not clearly articulated within its framework. PBL does foster critical reflection on civic responsibility for character formation, but it does not support learning academic language in more systematic way. This would be better addressed through a hybrid CLIL-PBL model which uses language as a means for content-based learning integrated into inquiry practice grounded in ethics, thereby offering an approach that balances these issues with contextual sensitivity. More particularly, an integrated approach enables learners to develop linguistic, intercultural, and moral capacities in parallel with teachers' endeavours regarding global competencies about national educational priorities and local cultural realities.

### **6. Effects on Education and Policy**

This study has articulated results that bear valid and considerable implications for educational practice and policy in Kazakhstan. First, it recommends setting as explicit curriculum goals, not assumed outcomes, the development of intercultural competence and character. Second, teacher education programs should inculcate training on how to teach intercultural pedagogy and character education. Third, assessment practice should be opened up by implementing reflective and performance-based methods through which holistic learning can be better captured.

At the policy level, there has to be more synergy between language policy, curriculum reform, and pedagogical support. Time, resources, and professional development for teachers are a prerequisite toward getting the best out of CLIL and PBL.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has compared CLIL and PBL in their contribution to intercultural competence and character development, content, and language integrated learning, and project-based learning. The study referred largely to the educational context of Kazakhstan. It took Byram's model of Intercultural Communicative Competence and the framework of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues to lead the discussion

beyond the analysis of the pedagogies in terms of their ethical, cultural, and contextual dimensions through instrumental effectiveness. In such a way, it brings out how teaching methodologies shape not only cognitive or linguistic outcomes but values, attitudes, or social engagement of learners.

Analysis brings out the fact that CLIL does serve great strengths in building linguistic proficiency and academic intercultural competence. Since the method engages learners with subject content through an additional language, it represents an approach to knowledge systems around the world and different academic discourses. The trilingual education policy of Kazakhstan puts CLIL in a very important strategic place concerning internationalization and multilingual development.

It also indicates that the promise of CLIL in the development of critical cultural awareness and moral reasoning is less often realized. As long as cultural learning remains implicit and pedagogical focus tilts to content coverage and hence to how well one performs in an examination, time for ethical reflection and deeper intercultural engagement is pushed to the periphery, particularly in such contexts where teachers are linguistically challenged as well as professionally unprepared within a relatively rigid curriculum.

Project-based learning makes a stark contrast. It is an approach to teaching and learning that has great appropriateness for overt intercultural and character education because, through real-world tasks based on inquiry, it allows learning to be contextualized in social worlds where collaboration, ethical decision-making, and reflection are the norms. Students get opportunities to challenge assumptions of culture critically interpret meanings from different perspectives and matters relating to social responsibility. PBL forms the closest path toward Byram's concept of critical cultural awareness since it encourages students to judge cultural behavior against explicit ethical standards rather than assimilate the knowledge passively. From the perspective of character education, this program offers actual instances through which one can learn moral, civic, intellectual, and performance virtues by active experience in work with others reflecting systematically on practice.

The weaknesses of PBL are enormous. It requires teacher expertise, institutional support, and time and resources to be effectively implemented. Without careful design, projects may not be academically rigorous or may fail to systematically support language development-especially in a multilingual setting. Hence, this underscores the need to avoid simplistic pedagogical choices and rather opt for approaches that would respond to contextual realities.

It is being advanced here that neither CLIL nor PBL, in their stand-alone applications, can fully satiate the intricate educational appetite of Kazakhstan; rather, a context-sensitive hybrid model wherein the linguistic and academic prowess of CLIL is amalgamated with the fundamentals of ethics, interculturalism, and character-building embedded within PBL would make a better pathway. Knowledge development about subject content and language acquisition through meaningful

inquiry are enabled by such a hybrid approach while simultaneously recognizing cultural difference dimensions and ethical imperatives-including components related to civic responsibility. Teachers will find such hybridity more pedagogically liberating as it allows them to fuse global competency elements with national values and local cultural contexts.

This study retrieves education practice, teacher education, and policy development. There should be the articulation of intercultural competence and character as explicit educational goals supported by professional development for the area of intercultural pedagogy and reflective teaching practices. Holistic learning outcomes involving ethical reasoning, collaboration, and intercultural awareness require assessment frameworks in their extended forms.

Also, future research should analyze the implementation of hybrid CLIL–PBL models in Kazakhstani classrooms within an empirical study. The best understanding of how these pedagogies practically work and can be adjusted to drive holistic education sustainably in the dynamism and diversity of Kazakhstan would come from the experiences that teachers and students undergo.

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## **КРИТИЧЕСКИЙ СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ ВЛИЯНИЯ CLIL И PBL НА ПОВЫШЕНИЕ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТИ И РАЗВИТИЕ ХАРАКТЕРА**

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Глобализация, многоязычие и растущее культурное разнообразие делают современные системы образования способными готовить учащихся, предоставляя им знания по различным дисциплинам, одновременно требуя от них межкультурной компетентности и сильного морального характера. Масштабные образовательные реформы в Казахстане, включающие трехязычное образование, новые компетентностно-ориентированные учебные программы и акцент на педагогике, ориентированной на учащегося, вызвали большой интерес к инновационным подходам к обучению, которые способствовали бы целостному развитию учащихся. Среди таких подходов особое место занимают интегрированное обучение содержанию и языку (CLIL) и проектное обучение (PBL). В данной статье, представляющей собой критическое сравнение, рассматривается, как CLIL и PBL соотносят межкультурную компетентность и воспитание характера в различных образовательных контекстах, в частности, в контексте Казахстана. Используя модель межкультурной коммуникативной компетентности Байрама и концепцию характера и добродетелей Центра «Юбилей», в статье проводится тщательный анализ теоретических основ, педагогической практики и контекстуальной реализации обоих подходов. Следовательно, хотя CLIL считается более подходящим для детализации аспектов, связанных с лингвистическими, когнитивными или академическими осями, посредством которых может развиваться межкультурная компетентность, подход, сформулированный Марлоу, предоставляет более широкие и явные возможности для формирования характера, гражданской активности и

*критического культурного восприятия. В нем утверждается, что ни один из этих подходов не может эффективно работать по отдельности, отвечая на сложные требования системы образования Казахстана, а скорее зависит от целенаправленного педагогического проектирования, подготовки учителей и приоритетной политики страны. В заключение исследование предлагает контекстно-зависимую гибридную модель, которая сочетает в себе сильные стороны CLIL и PBL для поддержки целостного развития учащихся в Казахстане.*

**Ключевые слова:** Межкультурная коммуникативная компетентность, Интегрированное обучение содержанию и языку, Проектное обучение, Развитие характера, Английский как иностранный язык.

## **CLIL ЖӘНЕ PBL ТӘСІЛДЕРІНІҢ МӘДЕНИЕТАРАЛЫҚ ҚҰЗЫРЕТТІЛІКТІ АРТТЫРУ МЕН ТҮЛҒАЛЫҚ ҚАСИЕТТЕРДІ ДАМУЫҒА ЫҚПАЛЫНЫҢ СЫНИ САЛЫСТЫРМАЛЫ ТАЛДАУЫ**

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*Жаһандану, көптілділік және мәдени әртүрліліктің артуы қазіргі білім беру жүйелерінен оқушыларды тек түрлі пәндер бойынша біліммен қамтамасыз етуді ғана емес, сонымен қатар олардың мәдениетаралық құзыреттілігін және берік тұлғалық қасиеттерін қалыптастыруды талап етеді. Қазақстандағы ауқымды білім беру реформалары, соның ішінде үштілді білім беру, құзыреттілікке негізделген жаңа оқу бағдарламалары және білім алушыға бағытталған педагогикаға басымдық беру, оқушылардың жан-жақты дамуын қамтамасыз ететін инновациялық оқыту тәсілдеріне деген қызығушылықты арттырды. Осындай тәсілдердің ішінде мазмұн мен тілді кіріктіріп оқыту (CLIL) және жобалық оқыту (PBL) ерекше орын алады.*

*Бұл мақалада сыни салыстырмалы талдау негізінде CLIL және PBL тәсілдерінің әртүрлі білім беру контексттерінде, әсіресе Қазақстан жағдайында, мәдениетаралық құзыреттілік пен тұлғалық қасиеттерді дамытудағы рөлі қарастырылады. Зерттеуде Байрамның мәдениетаралық коммуникативтік құзыреттілік моделі және «Jubilee Centre» орталығының тұлға мен ізгі қасиеттер тұжырымдамасы негіз ретінде алынды. Сонымен қатар, екі тәсілдің теориялық негіздері, педагогикалық тәжірибелері және контексттік жүзеге асырылуы жан-жақты талданады.*

*Нәтижесінде, CLIL тәсілі мәдениетаралық құзыреттіліктің тілдік, когнитивтік және академиялық аспектілерін дамытуда тиімдірек деп қарастырылса, Марлоу ұсынған PBL тәсілі тұлғалық қасиеттерді*

*қалыптастыру, азаматтық белсенділікті дамыту және мәдениетке сыни көзқарасты қалыптастыру үшін кеңірек мүмкіндіктер береді. Зерттеу көрсеткендей, Қазақстанның білім беру жүйесінің күрделі талаптарына жауап беру үшін бұл тәсілдердің ешқайсысы жеке-дара жеткілікті емес. Керісінше, олардың тиімділігі мақсатты педагогикалық жобалауға, мұғалімдердің кәсіби даярлығына және ұлттық білім беру саясатының басымдықтарына тәуелді.*

*Қорытындылай келе, зерттеуде CLIL мен PBL тәсілдерінің артықшылықтарын біріктіретін, Қазақстан жағдайына бейімделген гибриді модель ұсынылады. Бұл модель оқушылардың жан-жақты дамуын қамтамасыз етуге бағытталған.*

**Кілт сөздер:** мәдениетаралық коммуникативтік құзыреттілік, мазмұн мен тілді кіріктіріп оқыту (CLIL), жобалық оқыту (PBL), тұлғалық даму, ағылшын тілі шетел тілі ретінде.