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AN INTEGRATED ESP–CLIL–EMI–TBLT MODEL FOR ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION IN SPORTS EDUCATION

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Abstract

The paper presents an integrated methodological model for developing professional communicative competence of students in sports education through the coordinated use of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). The scientific novelty of the proposed model lies in linking a sports-oriented terminological minimum with a staged instructional cycle that moves learners from professional input to guided practice, task performance, reflection, and transfer to authentic communication. The model treats sports terminology not as an isolated vocabulary component but as a functional resource for professional discourse, decision-making, interaction, and performance in realistic sport-related situations.

Keywords: Sports education, professional communicative competence, sports terminology, ESP, CLIL, EMI, TBLT, professional discourse, integrated methodology.

The internationalization of sport has changed the communicative demands placed on future specialists. Coaches, athletes, referees, sport managers, physical education teachers, and other professionals increasingly operate in environments where English is used for instructions, competition regulations, professional networking, media communication, academic exchange, and access to



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specialized information. For this reason, English language instruction in sports education should not be limited to general language competence. It should prepare students to understand and produce professional discourse that is directly connected with their future activities. A major methodological problem is that sports terminology is often introduced through translation and memorization, while its communicative function remains underdeveloped. Knowing the equivalent of a term does not automatically enable a student to use it in a coach briefing, a match analysis, an interview, a medical conversation, or a tactical discussion. The present model therefore approaches terminology as an active component of professional communication. Lexical units are taught together with collocations, contextual meanings, speech intentions, genre features, and typical communicative situations in which the terms naturally occur. The proposed model integrates four complementary approaches. ESP determines the professional needs and the relevant language content; CLIL links linguistic development with subject knowledge; EMI increases meaningful exposure to English within selected professional topics; and TBLT transforms knowledge into communicative performance through purposeful tasks. Their combination is not treated as a simple addition of methods. The approaches are organized as a single instructional mechanism in which each component performs a specific function and supports the next stage of learning.

The scientific novelty of the model is expressed, first, in the functional integration of sports terminology with professional communicative tasks. A terminological minimum is selected according to communicative frequency, professional relevance, contextual productivity, and transfer potential. The selected terms are then activated through authentic or semi-authentic materials such as coaching instructions, competition rules, match reports, interviews, press conferences,



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training plans, tactical explanations, and sports media texts. This creates a direct relationship between lexical knowledge and professional action.

Second, the model introduces a staged microcycle consisting of professional input, guided practice, task performance, reflection, and transfer. At the input stage, students encounter terminology and discourse patterns in a meaningful professional context. Guided practice focuses on comprehension, pronunciation, collocations, and controlled interaction. Task performance requires learners to solve a communicative problem, complete a professional assignment, or simulate a real sport-related situation. Reflection helps them evaluate language accuracy and communicative effectiveness, while transfer encourages the reuse of acquired language in a new context. Such sequencing makes the learning process systematic and allows students to move from recognition to independent professional communication.

Third, the model broadens the structure of professional communicative competence. It includes terminological accuracy, linguistic appropriateness, comprehension of professional information, interactional ability, pragmatic suitability, and the capacity to transfer language knowledge into a concrete professional situation. This structure makes it possible to evaluate not only how many terms students know, but how effectively they can use those terms while performing a realistic communicative task. In this sense, professional competence is viewed as observable communicative behavior rather than as a collection of isolated linguistic elements.

CLIL supports the content dimension of the model by allowing students to work with meaningful sport-related subject matter while developing English. The 4C framework—content, communication, cognition, and culture—provides a useful basis for this process. Students can, for example, compare training methods, explain the rules of a sport, describe tactical decisions, or analyze an athlete's



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performance in English. Such activities require them to process subject knowledge and language simultaneously, which strengthens both professional understanding and communicative flexibility.

EMI is used selectively rather than as a complete replacement for the students' first language. Short lectures, instructions, presentations, demonstrations, and discussion segments can be conducted in English when learners have sufficient support. Scaffolding may include visual aids, key terminology, model phrases, structured note-taking, and follow-up questions. This form of controlled EMI helps students become accustomed to English as a working language in professional contexts without creating unnecessary cognitive overload.

TBLT provides the practical stage in which students apply the knowledge developed through ESP, CLIL, and EMI. Tasks such as conducting a post-match interview, presenting a training plan, giving safety instructions, explaining the causes of a sports injury, commenting on a competition, or participating in a coach–athlete role-play require the use of professional language for a clear purpose. The outcome of the task becomes the central focus, while language accuracy is developed through preparation, feedback, and revision.

Digital resources can further strengthen the model by extending professional input and independent practice. Video fragments from sports competitions, mobile vocabulary tools, online glossaries, interactive quizzes, learning management systems, and digital speaking tasks can expose students to authentic language and provide repeated opportunities for practice. However, technology is effective only when it is integrated into the methodological sequence and linked to clearly defined communicative outcomes.

The model also has practical value for assessment. A unified rubric can be used to evaluate terminological accuracy, listening comprehension, spoken interaction, reading and writing performance, pragmatic appropriateness, and professional



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transfer. This makes assessment consistent with the learning objectives and allows teachers to identify not only linguistic weaknesses but also difficulties in applying English to professional situations. Consequently, assessment becomes part of the learning cycle rather than a separate final procedure.

In conclusion, the integrated ESP–CLIL–EMI–TBLT model offers a coherent framework for teaching English in sports education. Its main contribution is the transformation of sports terminology from a passive vocabulary list into an active instrument of professional communication. The combination of needs-based content selection, content-language integration, meaningful English-medium exposure, task performance, reflection, and transfer creates conditions for more authentic and professionally relevant language learning. The model can therefore support the preparation of sports specialists who are able to use English effectively in academic, training, competitive, and international professional environments.

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