

# Implementation of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programmes in Public Administration: Russian students' and matriculants' opinion about their first CLIL experience

Teaching Public Administration

2016, Vol. 34(3) 229–246

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DOI: 10.1177/0144739415620950

tpa.sagepub.com



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## Abstract

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a pedagogic approach that has developed in response to the demand for integrating education in both school/university subjects and language skills. Our paper is devoted to the implementation of CLIL programmes in Public Administration within a particular sociolinguistic context: that of Russian universities. Using CLIL as a theoretically grounded framework and as an ideological platform of such an introduction, we have described Public Administration students' and matriculants' ideas on their current CLIL experience. Data comes from a survey of university students ( $N = 141$ ) and formalised interviews with St. Petersburg universities' matriculants ( $N = 43$ ). We draw the conclusion that their social environment is mainly monolingual and they perform daily communication in Russian. This is one of the reasons to promote CLIL as a strong methodological conception in the practice of teaching Public Administration in English in Russian higher education institutions.

## Keywords

CLIL in higher education, bilingual education in public administration, Russia

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## Introduction

In this paper, we will explore the characteristics of the implementation of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programmes in Russian universities. Content and Language Integrated Learning is one of the most famous conceptions of teaching subjects in a foreign language. Although it is a multilingual and universal conception, CLIL has often been characterised as being related to English (Dalton-Puffer, 2011; Hüttner et al., 2013). CLIL is realised at all educational levels, though it originally focused on primary and secondary education (e.g. Dafouz and Guerrini, 2009; Dafouz et al., 2010; Fortanet-Gómez's, 2013). However, more recently, there has been growing discussion about the possibility of its application at universities (Dafouz 2014; Smit and Dafouz, 2012; Dafouz et al., 2014a, 2014b).

Starting from the academic year 2012–2013, CLIL programmes in Public Administration have been introduced in some Russian universities. The introduction of programmes such as CLIL in Russia has some basis in the 'double diploma' programmes that began in the 1990s. 'Double diploma' programmes are based on cooperation with international organisations such as the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe, the Chamber of Commerce in Hamburg, etc. 'Double diploma' programmes are a rare phenomenon in Russia: in St. Petersburg there are less than a dozen programmes per 100 universities in the city (HSE, 2015).

'Double diploma' programmes in Public Administration opened up possibilities to obtain a diploma not only in a Russian but also in a foreign university, so the diploma belongs to both universities. Students have the opportunity to receive additional training in a foreign university and then they can work abroad. In contrast, the current introduction of CLIL programmes in Russia from the beginning is focused on training in the home university and puts emphasis on future opportunities for work in Russia, but with the possibility of the use of English in international communication, both at home and abroad (HSE, 2015).

The introduction of Public Administration CLIL in Russian universities may meet some problems related to educational standards. In spite of the fact that Russia has rather a high level of academic freedom, the curricula at the majority of universities have to conform to state standards on the specialities (MinObr, 2015). Some higher education institutions, for example, Moscow and St. Petersburg State Universities, can change standards independently (MGU, 2015; SPbGU, 2015). However, in both cases there has to be a consensus of the academic community concerning the changes, because opinion leaders from the scientific and teaching communities prepare changes in the standard.

Achieving this consensus has proved difficult. Russian opponents of Public Administration CLIL programmes have insisted on their ineffectiveness for students, as well as on the political danger of the proliferation of English in Russia. For instance, the Chairman of the State Duma Committee on Security and Anti-Corruption Activity, Member of the Presidium of the Council 'United Russia' Party (the governing party) Irina Yarovaya, suggested analysing educational standards to make sure that the study of Russian does not have fewer hours than the study of a foreign language. She has considered learning foreign languages at school in the current format as a threat to 'our traditions', and

establishes a strong connection between the protection of the Russian language and national interests (Yarovaya, 2015). Other main arguments given by professors are the untranslatability of Russian concepts into English, the loss of essential content and the development of a foreign culture to the detriment of Russian culture. It has been suggested that students would not be able to use Russian fundamental science in a foreign language, and that foreign conceptions would not be understood precisely (Rubtcova, 2015a).

Under the influence of political changes and the Ukrainian crisis (2014–2015), the neo-liberal policy in education was slightly softened. The new policy provides a variety of approaches on how to use English and the extent to which it can be spread in universities. Despite the deterioration in relations between Russia and NATO, the East opened up new perspectives. In connection with the development cooperation of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) countries, English is also in demand. Thus, the introduction of Public Administration CLIL programmes was included in the list of educational policy priorities. One of the ways of paving the ground for this implementation is a profound knowledge about the sociolinguistic context of Russia, which will allow us to adapt CLIL to Russian conditions.

In our study, we will focus on the implementation of Public Administration CLIL in universities. These disciplines are dealing with a professional community of professors of social sciences. This professional community controls the production of ideology in Russia, so the transition to teaching in English is a complex ideological theme because of concern about the proliferation and possible preponderance of English-language literature with Western ideological content. This study may give us opportunities to understand the opinions of matriculants and students on Public Administration CLIL programmes at Russian universities.

Our objectives are related to the initial phase of the implementation of CLIL in Public Administration in Russian universities. They are following:

**Objective 1** – to describe the role of English in university matriculants' and students' daily practice in St. Petersburg;

**Objective 2** – to analyse how the matriculants' and students' first CLIL experience can influence the selection of Public Administration CLIL professors and curricula in the future.

## **CLIL as a pedagogical conception and perspectives of its introduction in non-Western university contexts**

Content and Language Integrated Learning integrates training in school/university subjects and in language skills. Although there have been many attempts to discuss CLIL disadvantages (e.g. Bruton, 2011a, 2011b), the model quickly gained supporters throughout Europe. CLIL authors are amazed at the speed of propagation of the conception. In general, they have suggested that many factors affect the process, but belief is a very important engine (Hüttner et al., 2013).

In general, CLIL concentrates at the level of primary and secondary education (Dalton-Puffer, 2011; Hüttner et al., 2013). There is a current discussion on what to call

this programme at the level of higher education. English-medium instruction (EMI) is one of the versions of CLIL for higher education (e.g. Smit and Dafouz, 2012). According Smit and Dafouz, EMI is one of the conceptions of teaching university subjects in a foreign language. It focuses on three perspectives:

- classroom discourse as the site of teaching and learning practices in the making;
- teacher cognition that foregrounds teachers as central agents in implementing educational approaches;
- English-medium policy documents and implementation as the dynamic framework within which EMI realities are developing (Smit and Dafouz, 2012).

The emergence of EMI was a result of the ‘Bologna process’, internationalisation and marketisation of higher education, which provoked serious criticism from opponents of globalisation (Coleman, 2006). EMI is widely accepted despite many problems:

- ideological objections, which are the result of the perceived threat to national and cultural specifics and the status of the native language as a language of science;
- inappropriate language skills and the need for training of local professors and students;
- the unwillingness of non-native professors to teach in English;
- the inability of the employed professors – native speakers – to adapt to non-native students;
- loss of confidence and refusal to adapt among local students;
- lack of interest from local students;
- lack of critical mass of international students and the lower level of their cultural integration;
- organisational problems and administrative infrastructure among others (Coleman, 2006).

Unlike CLIL, which “offers a more focalized, pedagogically inspired model defined as a dual-focused educational approach which aims explicitly at a fusion of both subject content and language learning . . . EMI . . . focuses on content learning only” (Smit and Dafouz, 2012: 8). From such a point of view, EMI has the main research focus on instruction (Smit, 2010: 33). We believe that in Russian universities it is necessary to implement the CLIL version because CLIL is a theoretically grounded framework, and because of its serious social emphasis (see for example Coyle et al., 2010; Llinares et al., 2012), which can be related to the Russian pedagogical tradition.

## **Data and methodology**

### *Description of data and methodology*

In order to carry out our objectives, we concentrated on the opinions of matriculants (persons who would like to register in St. Petersburg universities and are preparing the necessary exams but have not been admitted yet) and university students regarding the roles of English in their communities and their first CLIL experience.

**Objective 1.** For objective 1 – “To describe the role of English in university matriculants’ and students’ daily practice in St. Petersburg” – we used information from two small-scale research studies: *The survey of students in St. Petersburg universities after Public Administration lectures in English* and *Formalised interviews with Public Administration’ matriculants*.

The first small-scale study *The survey of students in St. Petersburg universities after Public Administration lectures in English* addresses the following research question:

- How do students use their knowledge of the English language in St. Petersburg?

For this study information was collected from a survey of students ( $N = 141$ ). The research study was carried out in March–May 2015, in St. Petersburg. Participants were St. Petersburg university students who attended Public Administration lectures in English. They answered an open questionnaire on the last lecturing day. The sampling method is a convenience sample.

For the small-scale research *Formalised interviews with Public Administration matriculants* our research question was:

- How do matriculants use their knowledge of the English language in Russia?

In this study the data consisted of formalised interviews with Public Administration matriculants ( $N = 43$ ) after CLIL English training abroad, where they did their secondary school studies in English in the period 2009–2015. The ‘face to face’ formalised interviews were carried out in January–April 2015 in St. Petersburg ( $N = 14$ ) and in March–April 2015 in Moscow ( $N = 7$ ). The formalised Skype interviews were carried out in January–April 2015 in nine Russian cities ( $N = 22$ ).

Participants were St. Petersburg University Public Administration matriculants aged 17–19 years old. Among them, 11 had studied in Great Britain (England, Scotland); seven in Ireland; five in Finland; four in the USA; four in Switzerland; three in Spain; two in Israel; two in Cyprus; one in Malta; and four did not report a place of learning, answering ‘many different places’. The financial situation of the family was good enough to pay for private teachers. These matriculants were chosen because, according to the standard practice addressed in Elisabeth Noel’s work (Noel, 1972), we should ask those who have already had relevant CLIL experience. The sampling method used was the ‘snowball’ technique (a non-probability sampling technique that is used when the members of a population are hard to locate (Kovalyova, 2010)).

**Objective 2.** Regarding objective 2 – “to analyse how the matriculants’ and students’ first CLIL experience can influence the Public Administration CLIL professor and curriculum selection in the future” – we also used information from two small-scale research studies: *The survey of students in St. Petersburg universities after Public Administration lectures in English* and *Formalised interviews with Public Administration matriculants*.

In the small-scale study *The survey of students in St. Petersburg universities after Public Administration lectures in English* the research questions were:

- How do students evaluate their first Public Administration CLIL experience in St. Petersburg universities?
- How do students evaluate their English language skills and the skills of their Public Administration professors?

The same sample of students ( $N = 141$ ) used for objectives 1 and 2 was used in this study (see above).

In the small-scale research study *Formalised interviews with Public Administration universities' matriculants* our questions were:

- What is their opinion about the ratio of Russian and international Public Administration professors in the bilingual programmes?
- How do matriculants react to the course content of the CLIL programmes abroad?
- How do matriculants see co-working in English and Russian in the Public Administration bilingual programmes in St. Petersburg universities?

The data used to respond to these questions were the formalised interviews with St. Petersburg universities' matriculants after CLIL English training abroad (see the detailed description above, in objective 1).

### *Ethical considerations*

All studies were conducted according to the Professional Ethical Code of Sociologists by the Russian Society of Sociologists. This means that according to requirements of anonymity, signed Participant Consent Agreement cannot be asked for.

All participants were asked to participate in the study and informed about the objectives of the research. Participant consent to participate was gained. They were assured of the anonymity of their responses through the use of pseudonyms to report the results, and were guaranteed the confidentiality for collecting of data. They consented to use of the data for research purposes.

### *Limitations of the study*

Although small-scale research has been justified as an appropriate approach for addressing our research questions, a number of limitations of this strategy need to be acknowledged. The choice of small-scale research means that the results are restricted to the opinions of the participants/observers and cannot be assumed to be representative. Therefore, the small sample size and its under-representative character do not allow us to extend the conclusions to all matriculants/students.

The obtained data are of limited use. However, these preliminary findings will help us to correct hypotheses in future studies. In addition, this research study can inform stakeholders and prepare future research and decision-making process.

## Results

In line with our objectives, in this section we present the results of our analysis of the sociolinguistic context for the implementation of Public Administration CLIL university programmes using data which was collected through our small-scale research.

### *The role of English in public administration matriculants' and students' daily practice in St. Petersburg*

In relation to our objective 1 – to describe the role of English in Public Administration matriculants' and students' daily practice in St. Petersburg – we had specified research questions:

- How do matriculants use their good knowledge of the English language in Russia?
- How do students use their knowledge of the English language in St. Petersburg?

We designed a questionnaire for students and a formalised interview for university matriculants. In designing the student questionnaire, we were guided by the Eurobarometer questionnaire (Eurobarometer, 2012). Participants were St. Petersburg university students who attended Public Administration lectures in English and matriculants of St. Petersburg universities (Public Administration specialties) after CLIL programmes abroad. We were interested in how often our respondents use English and for what purposes. In the analysis of results, it is important to consider that the matriculants were presented as a special group that was trained in CLIL programmes abroad. They have fluent English. We included them in this research to understand how they use their fluent English in Russia. The matriculants were not only from St. Petersburg, but they all attended one of St. Petersburg's universities.

As we can see in Table 1, 26% of students reported that they do not speak English. These data seriously contradict data of Levada Center, that only 22% of youth can speak English (Levada Center, 2012). However, this may be closely connected with the specificity of universities and specialties. In addition, we have no large-scale research studies measuring what percentage of youth speaks English in St. Petersburg.

Results show that fluent English is not really in demand in this youth community; they prefer Russian in everyday communications. The idea to use English occasionally, for example when travelling abroad, is more popular.

In Table 2 we can see the answers to the questions regarding when English is used. Generally, it takes place when using the internet, communicating with friends abroad and during holidays abroad. English is not necessary for the immediate environment. Communication with families, friends and colleagues at school/university proceeds in the native language (see Table 2).

These results align with the answers to the question on parents' English level. Only 11% of students' parents are able to have a conversation in English (Table 3).

As a result, we can assume that bilingual programmes will get very little support from the social environment in St. Petersburg, which is mainly Russian-speaking and monolingual.

**Table 1.** Do you agree with the following sentences? I speak English . . . (answers from students' survey and matriculants' interview).

	Public Administration Students of St. Petersburg universities (percentage of the chosen answers)	Matriculants of St. Petersburg universities (Public Administration) after CLIL programmes abroad (percentage of the chosen answers)
... almost everyday	4%	12%
... often, but not on a daily basis	27%	22%
... occasionally, for example on trips abroad	33%	53%
I don't speak English	26%	—
Without answer	10%	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 2.** When do you regularly use English? (multiple answers were given).

	Public Administration Students of St. Petersburg universities (percentage of the chosen answers)	Matriculants of St. Petersburg universities (Public Administration) after CLIL programmes abroad (percentage of the chosen answers)
On the internet	74%	82%
Communicating at school/university	5%	8%
Communicating with members of my family	—	2%
Communicating with friends in Russia	3%	8%
Communicating with friends abroad	42%	74%
Watching films\television\listening to the radio	15%	22%
Reading books\newspapers\articles in journals	31%	17%
On holidays abroad	58%	87%

**Table 3.** Do your parents speak English well enough in order to be able to have a conversation?

	Public Administration Students of St. Petersburg universities (percentage of the chosen answers)	Matriculants of St. Petersburg universities (Public Administration) after CLIL programmes abroad (percentage of the chosen answers)
Yes	11%	52%
No	67%	27%
It is difficult to say	7%	12%
Without answer	15%	9%



### *Towards the implementation of a new CLIL educational environment and curriculum at university: analysis of the opinions of matriculants and students about the first CLIL experience*

In relation to our objective 2 – to analyse how the matriculants' and students' first CLIL experience can influence Public Administration CLIL professor and curriculum selection in the future – we had specified the following research questions:

- What is the matriculants opinion about the ratio of Russian and international Public Administration professors in the bilingual programmes?
- How do matriculants react to the course content of the CLIL programmes abroad?
- How do matriculants see co-working in English and Russian in the Public Administration bilingual programmes in St. Petersburg universities?
- How do Public Administration students evaluate their CLIL first experience in St. Petersburg universities?
- How do Public Administration students evaluate their English language skills and the skills of their professors?

In order to answer these questions we present the results of the student survey and formalised interviews with St. Petersburg university matriculants after CLIL English training abroad, where they did their secondary school studies in English. The Public Administration students were asked about the first CLIL experience at university. The matriculants were asked about their past CLIL school experience abroad and their expectations regarding teaching staff and the CLIL curriculum at university.

***Matriculants' opinion about the first CLIL experience abroad: the teaching staff.*** For the introduction of the university CLIL programme, it is very important to create a team of professors. As a rule, Russian universities do not work with foreigners or international courses. In conditions where support of English in the social environment is practically absent, in our opinion, it is good practice to have some international professors from other countries. So we asked the matriculants about their CLIL experience abroad and their future choice of CLIL programme professors (Russians and/or international).

Our matriculants have the experience of working closely with international professors. As we can see in Table 4, only 12% of the matriculants supported the idea that 100% of professors should be international. In fact, the matriculants suggest a balanced picture: Russian and international professors should be equal (62%).

We can see the continuation of this idea in the responses to the question: "What should be the origin of the professor of the subject in English?". Most of the respondents support the point of view that "The origin of the professor of the subject in the English language does not really matter if he/she is an expert in his field" (57%). Russian professors are in the next place (28%). Some 17% would like to choose professors from continental Europe, 12% from Asia and 4% from Anglo-Saxon countries.

As we can see, the matriculants with CLIL experience abroad prefer to see a mixed team of Russian and international professors. Thus, the fears of Russian professors that

**Table 4.** How many Russian and international professors should there be, if we open the Public Administration programme with an English working language or Russian–English bilingual programme? (multiple answers were given).

	percentage of the chosen answers
100% Russian	37%
100% International	12%
A strong Russian majority	4%
A strong International majority	7%
50%/50%	62%
A few Russian professors	17%
A few International professors	52%

the introduction of CLIL programmes will lead to them losing their jobs and respect are not confirmed. However, despite the negative comments in the open questions with regard to international professors, the matriculants wish to see them as members of the professors' team, and an international faculty can be up to half of this team. In Russia, this fact is as yet unattainable.

*Matriculants' opinion about the first CLIL experience abroad: Programme content and curriculum.* The matriculants had experience of studying subjects in English and we also asked them some questions connected with the future curriculum. In terms of administration, there were many questions about this point; for example, if universities employ foreign professors, how should the curriculum be designed? If international professors have some freedom to offer courses, how would students react to their ideas? If the programme is bilingual, how many subjects would have to be in the Russian and English languages? Of course, this small-scale research has only a preliminary role. Nevertheless, it will help us to specify future research questions.

Our matriculants were somewhat critical in the assessment of their foreign CLIL experience. First of all, their specific criticism was related to the teaching of social sciences abroad. Answers to these questions were not obligatory, the interviewer did not insist on an answer, and some of our informants did not provide answers. In general, this was a small part of the responses. We received comments on five groups of subjects: history and geography, mathematics, biology, art and social sciences. Of course, our attention was drawn by the critical responses connected to ideologies due to our interest in the implementation of bilingual programmes in social sciences. These responses are summarised in Table 5.

We see some hints of discontent with social sciences in the answer to this question. In the list of the subjects, instead of the subject name, matriculants gave estimated judgements as follows: '*some boring subject about their political elections and their local government, what their government does for them*', '*idiotic subject about their elections*'. Actually, this is two negative responses, so it possible that the same people who were critical here were also critical in other answers.

**Table 5.** What subjects did you study in English? Would you like to say something about the subjects (History, Geography and Social Studies)?

Subject	Positive response	Neutral response	Negative response
History, History and Geography	'I liked it (laughs)'	'I liked the history teacher . . . what he said about the history of Catalonia, France and Spain, was surprised me; for example, I thought that the Crusaders liberated Spain, and he said that they were barbarians . . .'	'They have some stupid textbooks. They do not normally learn their own history' 'I . . . I don't want to comment what they write' (laughs with sarcasm)
Social Studies, Civilisation	' . . .because I want to go to the Faculty of Political Science I liked how they have described in detail about his local administration. It was not in London. But about their local administration. We went there and met with the mayor or Governor. I don't know. He shook my hand and asked me how I'm studying there'; 'I would like to see this subject in Russia as well as they have, it was extremely useful!'		'They gave me clear 'brainwashing' . . . (laughs)' 'They led us to their parliament, somewhere else . . . maybe it's interesting, but I do not need it' (indignantly) 'Classes were terribly boring' 'It's too bad that they impose their views . . . I could not express my opinion openly. When I said that I think. They sat stone-faced, it is as if I had committed a crime' 'I think it is useless to argue with them. They will never agree with me' 'They ought to look at their own streets, and drugs, and poverty, rather than lie, they have a wonderful democracy'
Total	3	1	8

In total there were two negative responses about history and six about social sciences from the answers from 43 interviewees. Perhaps we have a few dissatisfied matriculants. Of course, if we take into account that they were 6–8 individuals from 43 interviewees, we can assume that this problem is not so considerable. However, as a preliminary conclusion, we can note some risk of emergence of political discussion with foreign professors of social sciences, because students may not agree with the foreign professors and the pro-Western conceptions that they provide. This may be one of the obstacles for the development of CLIL programmes, because they may be associated with Western influence and the imposition of a Western perspective.

Our second point of interest in this section was to study how matriculants view co-working in English and Russian in bilingual programmes. They preferred programmes in Russian (67%); however, programmes in other languages (German, Chinese, French) found support at 33%, including 21% in English. Further, the interviewees were asked to explain their choice on programmes in Russian. We can summarise these results into four groups of reasons:

- Work, career in Russia in Russian ('If I want to work in Russia, it is necessary to study in Russian'; 'Only Russian!!! I want to understand the political process . . . I am now joining the youth section of the political party . . . I need an excellent Russian speech. I specifically came back to study in Russian. I've already lost a lot.');
- It is difficult to study further in Russia without Russian (' . . . I have studied in English. As a result, it is difficult to take the exams in Russian; I do not understand the terminology . . .');
- The content of subjects in English will be poor quality (' . . . I will study with other students who do not speak English. This will lower the overall quality of education . . . And it will be impossible to find the best professors who know their subject in English. I've already learned in such a school. As a result English teacher gives lessons in Earth sciences. It's good that I do not need to pass the exam in this subject!');
- Patriotic sentiments and complexity of resocialisation in Russia ('I lived abroad most of my life. I want to hear only the Russian language!'; 'My friend studied in Sweden at the university, and then he opened the business in Finland. He wants to come back, but when he arrived, he realised that he is a stranger to the Russia. If you could see as he looked like. I thought that he would start to cry when he said it! Nothing good is there, abroad . . .').

Some responses in support of English were also presented, for example, 'English is more useful', 'I like English' and 'I would like to continue training in English'. Other languages have been proposed, including Chinese, German and French. However, support for the Russian language was very noticeable in the responses.

Our interest was connected with the development of bilingual Russian–English programmes; further, we concentrated on this group of questions. As Table 6 shows, the matriculants would mostly like to have 'Most of the subjects are in Russian, but some in English' (37%).

**Table 6.** If you decide to go on a Public Administration programme with the English language, what programme format would you prefer?

	%
100% in Russian	16%
100% in English	12%
Most of the subjects are in Russian, but some in English	37%
Most of the subjects are in English, but some in Russian	14%
Each subject in Russian has several topics in English	17%
Each subject in English has several topics in Russian	4%
Total	100%

As we can see, the matriculants expressed a strong desire to study in two languages – Russian and English. The programme that has ‘the most part of the subjects is in Russian, but some in English’ is more demanding. However, other options are also possible, and it depends on the initial offer of a university. If a university offers programmes ‘100% in English’ and ‘most part of the subjects is in English, but some in Russian’, the choice of the majority of the matriculants is the bilingual version. More specific options – each subject in Russian/English has several topics in English/Russian – have less support; however, they are more preferred than 100% in English/Russian.

*Public administration students’ opinion about the first CLIL experience in St. Petersburg universities.* Since 2013–2014 in St. Petersburg more programmes in English have begun to appear. It is also important to note that they are more focused on the requirements of employers within the country. As a rule, these programmes included only a few subjects in English. Neither students nor professors were ready for this change. They might know that the course will be in English a day before starting (Rubtcova, 2015b).

Our 141 participants were university students who attended Public Administration lectures in English in St. Petersburg universities in 2013–2015. They answered the questionnaire on the last lecturing day. Their future specialities are related to social sciences, business studies and public administration. The answer to a question on students’ English skills is presented in Table 7.

The results sound rather optimistic and almost coincide with the answer in Table 6 (26% students do not speak English). Here we see 29%, distributed in the following answers: Probably not (9%), Definitely not (7%), Miss answer (13%). This sounds optimistic, because we find that these students know English better than their parents and the population of the country following the results of the census 2010.

However, we have to pay attention to the result that at least 16–26% of the students who attended an English-speaking course claimed that they do not speak English or they do not have enough skills to be able to follow instructions. In practice, this means that a professor can give a course in English to a group where one-quarter of the students do not speak English.

**Table 7.** I have enough English skills to be able to follow instructions.

	%	%
1	Definitely yes	16%
2	Mostly yes	31%
3	Probably yes	24%
4	Probably not	9%
5	Definitely not	7%
6	Miss answer	13%
	Total	100%

**Table 8.** Our public administration professors have enough English skills to be able to work in English.

	%
Definitely yes	4%
Mostly yes	42%
Probably yes	21%
Probably not	20%
Definitely not	12%
Miss answer	1%
Total	100%

**Table 9.** Why do/don't we need Public Administration courses in English? (an open question).

Why do we need courses in English	Why don't we need course in English
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of international level (mentioned 121 times– 85%);</li> <li>• Improvement of language skills (mentioned 97 times– 69%);</li> <li>• Business and professional success (mentioned 22 times – 16%);</li> <li>• The development of my personality (mentioned 18 times – 13%);</li> <li>• The priority in employment (mentioned 11 times – 8%).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low level of English proficiency (mentioned 92 times – 65%)</li> </ul>

The answers to a question on professors' skills are presented in Table 8.

We see some student criticism of the English skills of their professors, although in general the professors' skills are estimated positively (67%); 32% consider that skills are not sufficient.

Despite such criticism, students do not come back to this subject with the open questions (see the analysis below). The students were very active in answers to open questions. The survey took place during seminars and professors asked students not to ignore questions, repeating many times that the students' opinion is very important for the university. The coding of these open questions was carried out by one researcher (the author of this work); this can be considered as a limitation. The answers are presented in Table 9.

In the students' answers, business and work appeared in the bottom places, contrary to our research on an economic justification. However, a considerable part of the answers to open questions looks like a template. There may be various explanations, including a rather automatic filling of the answer as it is usually taught in textbooks in English: English is an international language; we need to improve English skills; and topics about international business at the end of the book. Very often students limited the answer to the first two options (85% and 69%). The group of answers closely connected with personal and business success considerably lags behind them (from 8 to 16%).

**Table 10.** Please write your ideas about the improvement of the Public Administration courses in English (an open question).

Students' ideas about the courses' improvement	How many times mentioned	% (N = 141)
1. It is possible to combine discussion and presentations	41	29%
2. We need for immersion in the English atmosphere	27	19%
3. It is necessary to study the course in Russian and then in English	15	11%
4. Only some lectures may be in English	13	9%
5. It is necessary to duplicate the lectures and video films, YouTube with subtitles	5	3.5%
Total	101	

In the identification of why we do not need programmes in English, students were unanimous. All varieties of their answers can be reduced to one thought: their poor English for this purpose (65%). The students did not explain who does not speak English well: the students themselves or their professors. Students preferred to assess the situation as a whole. In this regards, our findings partially support some CLIL university research in Spain in which students can critically evaluate the CLIL experience and level of English of their professors (e.g. Aguilar and Rodríguez, 2012).

The next question suggested that students write their ideas on how to improve courses in English. Answers were rather concrete and detailed. Indirectly, this confirms the students' interest in the development of these programmes. In total, 101 ideas were stated; they were classified into five groups (see Table 10).

The first group – ‘It is possible to combine discussion and presentations’ – reflects the new students' experience. When Russian professors start to work in English, they introduce the Western format of lectures. They make presentations and discuss them with their students. In Russian-language programmes this model is rare. Students suggest continuing this Western ‘discussion and presentations’ format. The second group – ‘We need immersion in the English atmosphere’ – reflects a popular belief that immersion is required to achieve an effect in studying of the language. The third and fourth ideas show the commitment of students to bilingual (but not 100% English) programmes. The students show similar ideas to those of matriculants. In the opinion of students, the introduction of Russian into the English-language programme is necessary to better understand the subject content. The fifth group, with the idea of using videos and YouTube in lectures, is new for Russia because the Russian professors often perceive it as improper.

**Discussion and conclusions**

Our objectives and related research questions were connected to the initial stage of the implementation of CLIL in Russian universities (specialty of Public Administration).

Our research is based on the analysis of secondary data, official statistics and several small-scale pieces of research.

With regard to objective 1 ‘to describe the role of English in Public Administration matriculants’ and students’ daily practice in St. Petersburg’, we can conclude that our matriculants and university students prefer not to use English for communication in their everyday life: communication with families and friends proceeds in the native language. Communication in English takes place when using the internet, communicating with friends abroad and during holidays abroad. Therefore, English is not necessary for their immediate environment.

However, we obtained some data that show differences with the data of Levada Center, which said that only 22% of youth can speak English (Levada Center, 2012). In our research, 26% of the students reported that they did not speak English, 10% did not give answers and 64% claimed that they could speak English. We have no large-scale studies of students in order to carry out a full comparison and we cannot make an optimistic conclusion; however, students reported that their level of English was significantly better than that of their parents: only 11% of students’ parents are able to have a conversation in English.

With regard to objective 2 ‘to analyse how the matriculants’ and students’ first CLIL experience can influence the Public Administration CLIL professor and curriculum selection in the future’, as a description of the micro level of sociolinguistic context, we have considered the problem of the selection of CLIL programmes and professors at universities. We asked our matriculants – future Public Administration students with CLIL experience at secondary school abroad. This small study may serve to refute some of the myths that support the worries of the administration and professors. The administration often assumes that students would like to see only foreign professors in the English-language programmes. Professors also believe that foreigners may displace them from their jobs. Matriculants with CLIL experience would like to see a team of Russian and foreign professors. According to research results, they are often more loyal to Russian Public Administration professors. At the same time, a considerable number of respondents suggested that qualifications were more important than questions of origin.

In the survey of Public Administration students after their first experience of CLIL programmes in St. Petersburg, the desire to replace Russian teachers with foreign teachers was also not revealed. Despite some criticism of Russian professors’ language skills and quite extensive comments, they never (from 101 ideas) suggested replacing the Russian professors with foreign ones, or at least employing some foreigners. Perhaps students simply do not know about this opportunity.

The question of preferences for a format of the bilingual programme was also discussed. Matriculants expressed a steady desire to have the Public Administration programme in two languages – Russian and English. They gave priority to Russian quite often because they think that fine and terminologically developed Russian languages skills are necessary for their work and a good career in Russia. However, only a few students independently reflected on a bilingual format for the programmes. In their opinion, the introduction of Russian into the English-language programme is necessary to better understand the subject content.



In questions of the CLIL programmes' content, some features of Russian public opinion also have to be considered. There is a risk of tension on political affairs, which has to be examined regarding foreign professors working with Russian students. Our research on matriculants shows that Russian students can have a negative reaction to the much-focused establishment of Western experience as universal. This does not mean refusal of their own opinion or the offered ideas; however, these ideas and opinions should not be considered as 'common'. Russia has a long history that often occurred in opposition to the West; therefore, there are no reasons to recognise many of these ideas as the 'universal' and 'common'.

Russia already has a system of names for these ideas. We can recommend our foreign colleagues to pay attention to the Russian methodology of lectures in Public Administration. Each subject's course, and sometimes each topic, begins with the consideration of the opposite points of view on this problem, including Western and Eastern approaches. Courses and subjects capable of providing tools for the analysis of these distinctions can be of particular interest.

### Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Ana Llinares (UAM, Departamento de Filología Inglesa) for her very insightful and useful comments on our work.

### Declaration of conflicting interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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