

LEARNING ENGLISH FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

“The Aspect of Intercultural Dimension, Diversity Arts and Media in the Early Foreign Language Education”

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Abstract

In the age of globalisation, the world is drawing closer together and English as the world language to connect the people of this world to be understand each other, is became the most important tool for communication. For a better understanding of cultural diversity and global interrelation in ways of life in different culture context, the people should use the right and the correct English to avoid misunderstanding and miss-communication. To learn a foreign language in this case English certainly is not easy, especially in the higher age. In the 1950s and 1960s the early learning of foreign languages was enthusiastically espoused with excessive expectations largely in the belief that the pre-pubertal period was the best, even critical, for second as well as first language learning (Doye 2000, p. 5). Young children can form a language „competence“ on the basic of quite limited exposure to adult language use. From other side the young learner, especially until age eleven (Doye 2000, p. 5) can learn a foreign language without accent and can talk almost similarly like a native speaker. As we generally know, if we ask the English teachers about the aim of their teaching, they would answer Linguistic Competence. What they mean is the ability to use and to understand the language. People spoke of four skills that had to be acquired in a language: speaking, listening, writing and reading. These skills are still listed as objectives in most of school's curricula. However, on closer inspection, one would find that these terms were used in a rather narrow sense, namely as the ability to produce well-formed sentences and to understand such sentences. What was missing was the recognition of the social dimension of language; that any use and understanding of language is determined by such conditions as setting, communicative intention, the relationship between partners and so on. The teacher should realize that producing well-formed sentences was no longer enough, but that the ability to use such sentences in communication was required. The overall aim of foreign language instruction was changed from „Linguistic Competence“ to “Communication Competence“. For this, in schools the pupils had to learn to perform speech acts and to know the culture of that foreign language what they learn under all the usual conditions and restrictions that prevail when we use language. Primary school teachers concentrated on the pragmatic domain. The aim at a certain level of achievement in the basic skills of listening comprehension and writing. Little and no attention was paid to the cognitive and the attitudinal domain and no attempts were made to integrate the three into the superordinate goal of intercultural communicative competence. The pupils had to learn to perform, can't be without the involves of their teacher. The didactic adherents to pragmatics had lost sight of the content aspect by concentrating almost exclusively on the performance of speech acts. They tended to neglect that communication is always about something, and this something is embedded in the context of a particular culture and cannot be separated from it. The good communication can be able to present, when the people has the understanding at least a part of the culture of which this language a prominent part and, maybe, it most perfect expression. The foreign language users should learn and should know that culture of the language which they learn. The cultural studies should be integrated in the language learning in the classroom, especially for the young learners. They should be a language and a culture awareness when they are able to use that language later on. The time of globalisation is the time of integration and it should be an important aim of foreign language education in order the aim of the Inter cultural Communicative Competence can reached. It can't be denied and that is naive to ignore and not to know the globalisation process and it's effect to the next generation. The environment in which most children grow up today is no longer monocultural. They do have contact with members of other cultures and direct experience of foreign influences from an early age onwards. From now on, the primary school

English teachers should be able to transfer the intercultural communicative competence to their pupils through learning English by using present media in the early ages. How can they do it? As a teacher, we should have good method and didactic to reach this aim. We should think what kind of methods can be used for it? A lot of ways the foreign language teachers can use to support them to teach English, especially for the young learners. Art, music, film and other things like card, advertisement, etc. have always been the effective tools for teaching and learning a foreign language. For example, arts learning helps teachers move from the pedagogical model of teacher as expert in the frontal learning to the pedagogy of „making“ a classroom as a studio which can connect art and technology into cooperative projects, like environment project in their school. The arts help develop capacities and attitudes central to learning and to life engagement in attending to or creating a work of art which develops the imagination of youth in learning. Almost every human likes music and some of us like to sing. This kind of media can be used also in the classroom of foreign language studies. So do other things, like film, advertisement and so on. How to use all those kind of media in the classroom to reach the certain aim of learning, depend on the method and didactic which the teacher use for a lesson.

Keywords: Intercultural Communication Competence, Globalisation, Media, Art and Technology, Environment, Method, Didactic, Foreign Language Education, Young Children.

Introduction

Learning a foreign language, especially English is not only a becomes trend in a certain society but it's also already a kind of “a must” in this millennial time. The globalisation has already forced most of people in this planet to move faster and be able to communicate each other for most of action and interaction which has happened among them since the last decades. This kind of developments have given rise to a renewed and increase in the teaching of foreign language as a second or third languages. English is a world language, is no longer regarded as a privilege and a luxury knowledge for certain class of children, but it should be part of education of every child which can be taught in the their earliest age. Learning English in school in mostly countries is started at age 13 years, whereas the active process of absorb is started to be down.

According to a new study, performed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the US, if you want to achieve proficiency similar to that of a native speaker you should start learning a foreign language before the age of 10 (independent.co.uk). This study found also out that children up to the age of 17 or 18 years old remain highly skilled at understanding of the grammar of the new language which they learn, but their ability to learn will begin to tail off around this age.

Learning foreign language is not only the competence of the learners is necessary, but also the competence of the teachers will be asked in that process. The teachers of foreign language have to prepare themselves with some good methods and didactics in order the goal of their teaching can be reached well. The media and other modern interactive tools can be used and integrated to support the process of learning and teaching in the classroom. A good method and good chosen of media are the main part of learning teaching process in the foreign language activities

Language teaching is also embedded within sociocultural practices and shaped by attitudes toward bilingualism. The sociocultural in teaching a foreign language, especially in the early age should be integrated in each teaching process. In order later to travel the world, whether for business or pleasure, a desire and willingness to adapt to new cultures and methods is necessary. Adaptability, of course, includes the ability to communicate with new people in various dialects. Being unable to communicate in a country is akin to living with a serious impairment; it is very difficult and near impossible, to adapt and get along with new people if there is no way to communicate with one another. Being able to do this automatically puts any multilingual person miles ahead of his or her peers in the competition for jobs and high-prestige positions.

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The impact of multilingualism can be traced to even more fields. In order to prepare our nation's children to be the next generation of future entrepreneurs, doctors, scientists, engineers, or whatever influential job they choose, we must foster an environment from a young age that promotes multilingual learning. Through this we are setting up ourselves, our children, and our children's children, for growth, success, security, and ultimately, prosperity. Language is such a key aspect to setting up children for success in their future professional endeavours.

Therefore, it is a time to create a warm and comfortable environment in which our children can grow to learn the complexities of language. The communication skills that the children learn early in life will be the foundation for their communication abilities for the future. Strong language skills are an asset that will promote a lifetime of effective communication. The importance of communication is often overlooked. Despite our great prowess in communication, misunderstandings and mistranslations are commonplace.

Learning a foreign language is not only learning grammar, reading, writing and speaking but also the inter cultural dimension is a main part of learning. A lot of foreign language learners are pretty good in grammar, reading, writing and speaking, but often they have less knowledge of intercultural, which can make them unsure to do the interaction and integration in the real situation. As my husband said that a language as a tool for communication and if you understand somebody and somebody understands you, that language has reached it's function.

How can a foreign language teacher teaches successfully the second language in the earlier age? What are the best ways of teaching a foreign language to younger children? What kind of media can be used to support the interactive activities of learning in the classroom and out of the classroom? And how to integrate the inter cultural dimension in this case? Those kind of questions will come often in the brain of language teachers for pre and primary school, and will get the answer in the ICOELT conference.

To understand a foreign language with it's linguistic competence had to be required in the second language learning. The ability to use and to understand a foreign language has to fulfil four skills that are still listed as objectives in most of curricula. As I watch since the last decades in my country and also in some other countries, most of schools have taught English with less touch of culture. The learners are able to produce well-formed sentences and also to understand such sentences but they do not recognize the social dimension of language. To use and understanding of language is determined by such conditions as setting, communicative intention, the relationship between partners and so on. To learn English means to say to learn also a lot of cultures. Well-formed sentences was no longer enough in this case and should be recognize by teachers. This was the time when, in the curricula of many countries, the catalogues of grammatical structures were replaced by list of language functions (Peter Doye, p. 11). Actually to learn a language can not be separated from it's culture and it should be embedded by learning that language. The globalisation has forced us to learn English language and also to integrate us with the dimension of cultures of the world. "The time for integration has come, and the guiding concept for the overall aim of foreign language education since 1990 has become Inter-cultural Communicative Competence" said Doye. It is the duty of education to enable children and young generation to engage in boundary crossing with their counterparts in other cultures. It can be started first between culture's diversity around them in their area, then in their country and after that out of their country. The concept of inter-cultural education, as UNESCO has advised in 1983, based on understanding and respect, which consist of attitudes, skills and cognitive characteristics of learners. In this case, the aim of language instruction was changed from "Linguistic Competence to Communicative Competence", that means the children had to learn to perform speech acts when, they use that language which can make them later able to compete for jobs and highprestige positions.

Art and Media as tools of TLFL

The children should start to develop their personal, cognitive and communication competence in the primary level. The frontal methods of teaching should be the smallest part in the language education for the young learners. The Reggio pedagogical concept is one of a good approach besides Montessori and other concepts, for the development of young children in many sections, including for the foreign language learning. Each people has a talent of art in them and it can not be seen if it doesn't let and doesn't have a space to grow. This talent (of art) must be supported since the beginning when we see it. Art has accompanied the live of people since they are small. Each day without we realize, the life of children and also adult will get touch and often have contact with art, whether it is a book, music, painting or craft. It is very important for the children in the early age get acquainted with art, learn how to express themselves through art. They should learn how to understand art and how to appreciate it. The Children can tell a lot of things through art and make some creations which they make by themselves. Beside that, art can be a therapy for some children, if they have problem which they can not express or tell to someone else. Art is a kind of silent language which can say thousand words and can give many interpretations. Art and culture are two

things which should give and teach to the children in the earlier age of learning a language, especially a foreign language. The children who have talent in this direction, like painting or drawing often have a good proportional of IQ and intelligent. The millennial time is the modern media time. The development of technique and communication are coming to each generation and is became problem for most of education system in school, at home and society. Of course, this kind of development can give a positive and negative aspects in the world of education. Media is a medium, which in learning and teaching process can use and can help to communicates and to transfers of knowledge to learners. To use good choosing media for learning should base on a good strategies, methods and didactic, in order the instruction and message of learning can deliver to the learners and the aim of learning can reach better.

McLuhan gave the example of a television as one form of media carrying the spoken word (another form of media) of the thoughts of a person. The second medium, the spoken word, can change to best deliver the message, for example rather than speaking the person can draw, act, or write the message. A good transfer of learning by using variety of media which referred to a blended learning and E learning will aid and motivate the children to learn better and faster. Although no one medium is better than another, a particular medium is normally better in certain situations. Before using media, the teachers should think good strategies and suitable methods first, then select the media which is suitable for subject and theme of lesson to delivering certain content and contexts (Clark 2001). The teachers must know their constraints and have to find extremely efficient media to transport the content, such as E-Learning rather than classroom training. After all, teachers can plan the teaching and learning methods accordingly. Learning methods are the conditions which can be implemented to foster the acquisition of competence (Glaser, 1976). It helps to shape information that compensates for or supplants the cognitive process necessary for achievement or motivation (Clark, 2001). A method is normally thought of as a particular procedure for accomplishing or approaching a task. On the other hand, a strategy is more of a comprehensive plan of action designed to achieve a major goal. Learning strategies basically encompass the entire spectrum of a learning environment, to include processes, such as media, methods, technologies, and styles. And most importantly, strategies tie in both the learning methods and media to ensure they meet the needs of the organization's goals. Learning strategies determine the approach for achieving the learning objectives and are included in the pre-instructional activities, information presentation, learner activities, testing, and follow-through. The strategies are usually tied to the needs and interests of students to enhance learning and are based on many types of learning styles (Ekwensi, Moranski, & Townsend- Sweet, 2006). Each people who learns a foreign language is already sure that they have reason for. Below, I quoted 25 reasons for study foreign languages from Alabama Auburn University and should start in the younger age:

1. Foreign Language study creates more positive attitudes and less prejudice toward people who are different.
2. Analytical skills improve when students study a foreign language.
3. Business skills plus foreign language skills make an employee more valuable in the marketplace.
4. Dealing with another culture enables people to gain a more profound understanding of their own culture.
5. Creativity is increased with the study of foreign languages.
6. Graduates often cite foreign language courses as some of the most valuable courses in college because of the communication skills developed in the process.
7. International travel is made easier and more pleasant through knowing a foreign language.
8. Skills like problem solving, dealing with abstract concepts, are increased when you study a foreign language.
9. Foreign language study enhances one's opportunities in government, business, medicine, law, technology, military, industry, marketing, etc.
10. A second language improves your skills and grades in math and English and on the SAT and GRE.
11. Four out of five new jobs in the US are created as a result of foreign trade.
12. Foreign languages provide a competitive edge in career choices: one is able to communicate in a second language.
13. Foreign language study enhances listening skills and memory.
14. One participates more effectively and responsibly in a multi-cultural world if one knows another language.
15. Your marketable skills in the global economy are improved if you master another language.
16. Foreign language study offers a sense of the past: culturally and linguistically.
17. The study of a foreign tongue improves the knowledge of one's own language: English vocabulary skills increase.
18. The study of foreign languages teaches and encourages respect for other peoples: it fosters an understanding of the interrelation of language and human nature.

19. Foreign languages expand one's view of the world, liberalize one's experiences, and make one more flexible and tolerant.
20. Foreign languages expand one's world view and limit the barriers between people: barriers cause distrust and fear.
21. Foreign language study leads to an appreciation of cultural diversity.
22. As immigration increases we need to prepare for changes in the American society.
23. One is at a distinct advantage in the global market if one is as bilingual as possible.
24. Foreign languages open the door to art, music, dance, fashion, cuisine, film, philosophy, and science.
25. Foreign language study is simply part of a very basic liberal education: to "educate" is to lead out to lead out of confinement and narrowness and darkness.

Conclusion

Teaching a foreign language in pre and primary school with the socio-inter-cultural education is absolutely a highly complex and most difficult procedure for teachers, These are all the task of school (teachers) as a whole. The concept of inter-cultural education for foreign language teaching is to play in the whole process, like geography, social aspect, environment and art of teaching which supported by suitable media. Inter-cultural education could be conceived as one of the cross-curricular issues that pervade the whole curriculum, but receive special attention in particular subject area. From all that has been mentioned above, it is evident how important the role is that the arts play in the everyday life of people. It is not only the family or friends, but also the school that has its share in the development of children's and young people's attitude to art. Teachers are claimed to be the artist guider in their lesson and also have to follow the development of technology and media in order they know how to choose the suitable media in their lesson. What Pablo Picasso ever said, "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up." Teachers should therefore be aware of this fact and try to keep the "artist" that resides in every child alive because "The Earth without Art is just Eh." (unknown). The important things which teachers must have for teaching children are: willingness, passion, understanding, love and like children, respect, and have ears and eyes for them. Teachers should be able to give a good response for things which the kids done and may not make them down in which thing they did bad. Try to criticize them with the purpose to grow them and don't leave a bad image of you as teacher to the children because it will stay until the rest of their life, Be teacher means being a guide of people. The life of future of one person is started when, he or she gets in touch with the teacher for the first time in the pre and primary school and the role of teacher here is as a God of life of a person. Be a good teacher and leave a good image of you in the whole life of pupils whom you teach in the pre and primary school.

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