Languages for social cohesion
Language education in a multilingual and multicultural Europe
Les langues pour la cohésion sociale
L'éducation aux langues dans une Europe multilingue et multiculturelle

A C B D

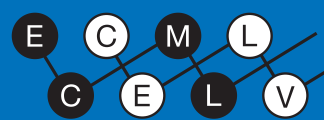
Coherence of principles, cohesion of competences

Exploring theories and designing materials for teacher education

Edited by: Anne-Brit Fenner and David Newby

CoCoCoP

Coherence of principles, cohesion of competences



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Coherence of principles, cohesion of competences: exploring theories and designing materials for teacher education

Edited by

Anne-Brit Fenner and David Newby

European Centre for Modern Languages

Council of Europe Publishing

Title of project – Coherence of principles, cohesion of competences: exploring theories and designing materials for teacher education

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Table of contents

Introduction 7
Anne-Brit Fenner

Section A: Theories and principles

Communicative language teaching 17
David Newby

Learner autonomy – One of the most widely touted terms in recent discussion of language teaching? 27
Anne-Brit Fenner

Intercultural awareness as an integral part of foreign language learning 40
Anne-Brit Fenner

Integration of citizenship, human rights and language education 59
Ruxandra Popovici

Social and cultural awareness as overruling goals in foreign language course design 69
Ruth Pappenheim

Promoting intercultural awareness through literature in foreign language teacher education 78
Smiljana Narančić-Kovać and Martina Kaltenbacher

Teaching grammar and the question of knowledge 95
David Newby

Theories and principles – Conclusions 112
David Newby

Section B: Applications, mediation and implementation

The role of reflection in pre-service student teachers' understanding of communicative language teaching 121
Jacinta McKeon

Aspects of learner autonomy in the national curricula of four European countries 132
Nicos Sifakis, Tuuli Oder, Magdolna Lehmann and Dainuvīte Blūma

Case studies of integration of citizenship, human rights and language education 151
Ruxandra Popovici and Antonio R. Roldán Tapia

The why and how of human rights in language education 168
Ruth Pappenheim, Ruxandra Popovici and Antonio R. Roldán Tapia

A seminar on intercultural awareness and literature 170
Martina Kaltenbacher

Examples of teaching materials based upon authentic literature 175
Smiljana Narančić-Kovać

Grammar awareness-raising in an initial teacher education seminar 182
David Newby

Introduction

Anne-Brit Fenner

This publication is based on ECML Project 1.2.4 and is entitled: Coherence of principles, cohesion of competences: exploring theories and designing materials for teacher education (CoCoCop). The three main aims developed for the project were to:

- consider how language-based aims can be integrated into social and educational aims;
- develop critical awareness about theories of language and language learning;
- link theory and practice in teacher education and in classroom practice.

The project was designed for teacher educators in Europe and consisted of three stages: (a) pre-workshop tasks carried out by the participants; (b) a main workshop; and (c) a number of sub-projects following the workshop. During the first stage all nominated participants were required to make a collection of theoretical principles found in the curricula of teacher education in their respective countries. The categories were, to some extent, based on descriptions in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. The participants were also asked to compile a dossier of materials commonly used in the classrooms in their country. These principles and materials provided input for discussions at the central workshop as well as functioning as a link between theory and practice. In addition the project team provided input on what seemed to be gaps in how certain theoretical aspects were dealt with in teacher education, based on the materials compiled by the participants. These related especially to learner autonomy, intercultural awareness and grammar teaching. All three topics were mentioned by the participants as not sufficiently focused upon in their respective curricula. Following the workshop, participating teacher educators designed their own sub-projects relating to different aspects of the main topics, which they carried out in smaller groups. These projects resulted in some of the articles and case studies in this publication.

The first part of the title of this project, Coherence of principles, cohesion of competences: exploring theories and designing materials for teacher education, was perhaps formed more as a question than as a statement at the early stages of planning. We wanted to investigate the multi-competence nature of post-communicative language learning and teaching to discover whether coherence of principles and cohesion of competences can be found and, if so, what this coherence and cohesion might consist of. In order to do so, we decided to look at the role and nature of teacher education and to explore theories which underlie post-communicative language learning and teaching.

The projects of the 1st medium-term programme of the ECML reflect the variety of innovative approaches that have emerged in post-communicative teaching and reflect the broadening of goals which underlie modern language learning. Just as the communicative approach extended the narrow focus on formal aspects of language systems to incorporate communication, so in the post-communicative phase the focus on communication has been extended to incorporate a variety of new competences such as sociocultural competence, intercultural awareness and learning to learn. These additional categories can be seen by comparing the language-based *Threshold level* with the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, which has taken on board educational and cultural goals and specifications. Communicative competence has been extended to incorporate a variety of competences.

For language teachers, teacher educators and materials designers, new competences are sometimes seen as being separate from language-based goals, as rivals for the valuable time available in the language classroom. An issue which our project wanted to address was the integration of a variety of goals into language learning and how communicative language competence can act as a springboard to other competences which lie within areas such as social interaction, language awareness, intercultural awareness and learner autonomy. In doing this we looked to specific theories of language use and language learning to provide a bridge between various competences.

As confirmed by Project 1.2.4 of the 1st medium-term programme, teacher education deals with specific goals, methodologies and examples of classroom activities but often does not provide sufficient opportunity to discuss the theories which underlie them. Teachers may therefore lack the ability to critically assess them and develop their own personal sets of principles, which is an essential prerequisite of democratic learning. The result may be that both teachers and their students become victims of methodology and dogma. As the first stage of an ongoing and lifelong development, teacher education should therefore provide the opportunity to rethink theoretical concepts – even those which comprise the accepted wisdom of modern language teaching such as communication, autonomy and intercultural awareness.

In order to achieve this aim, however, the form of teacher education has to be examined since innovation in language learning needs to be analysed through dialogic interaction between: learner-learner; learner-teacher; learner-text; and native culture-target culture (Project 1.2.6 of the 1st medium-term programme). Exploring these dialogic relationships was also one of the aims of the project’s central workshop at the ECML and was reflected in the modes of presentation we adopted.

In recent years, due to the influence in particular of ICT and various (misguided) interpretations of autonomous learning, there has in some teaching cultures been a

downgrading of the role of the teacher in intensive, classroom-based learning. The importance of teachers in a dialogic learning process needs to be stressed but their role also needs to be reconsidered. At the heart of our project was the centrality and importance of school learning and the language classroom. In accordance with the rationale of the 2nd medium-term programme, the project took an "integrated approach to language learning and teaching based on a new educational role for language teachers".

Aims and objectives

The first of the project's three main aims mentioned above is based on the development of language teaching over the last few decades and we chose three main areas to focus on: learner autonomy, intercultural awareness, including literature teaching and human rights teaching, and grammar. All three are important aspects of language learning and stated as such in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. Although they are all integral parts of foreign language learning, in the present edition of the *Framework* (2001), the former two are presented as general competences and not as language competences. Each of these will be discussed in this publication, both theoretically and in relation to principles and classroom practice.

The view of the project team was that only from a theoretical stance is it possible to achieve coherence and cohesion in practical teaching and learning. In order for theories to be useful for the teacher, they need to be reflected upon and critically assessed, as expressed in the second aim.

Our last aim was to provide examples where theory and practice were linked, whether textbook examples or case studies of good practice, and to ask participants in the project to provide some of these examples. This also included providing examples of how theory can be mediated in teacher education.

In order to try to achieve these aims, the following objectives were agreed upon by the project team:

- examination of teacher education curricula in different countries to discover to what extent they include current theoretical aspects of language learning, in particular with regard to language awareness, specific learning theories, learner autonomy and intercultural awareness;
- examination of materials commonly used in European classrooms and analysis of their underlying principles;
- presentation and discussion of current theories relevant to important aspects of language learning and their consequences for the design of materials;

- consideration of how a variety of learning goals and perspectives – linguistic, educational, intercultural, etc. – may be harmonised to achieve cohesion of competences;
- development of principles relevant to materials design;
- compilation, adaptation and production of exemplary materials based on these principles.

The result of the project's attempt to gain an overview of present teacher education curricula in European countries, with regard to discovering which theoretical aspects of language learning they contained, proved rather limiting. The two common denominators as far as theory was concerned were communicative language teaching (CLT) and Krashen's natural approach. Very few curricula contained more recent theories of learning. This meant that the ECML workshop could build on the participants' knowledge of CLT and the natural approach, but had to present theoretical input which could provide the cohesive links necessary to see post-communicative approaches to foreign language learning, not as additions to CLT, but as parts of a coherent development.

CLT constituted a paradigmatic change in foreign language learning. On the one hand, there was a gradual change from focusing on the teacher's and textbook's use of the language to the learner's use. On the other, there was a switch from focusing on language forms to a focus on language meaning. Although focused on developing the learners' communicative ability, CLT still has a strong emphasis on teaching rather than learning. Teachers and textbooks have defined tasks and activities regardless of learners' individual strengths and weaknesses. It has focused on activities that trigger communication, but has disregarded, to a large extent, the content of that communication. As the workshop participants' contributions showed that CLT still plays a dominant role in teacher education courses throughout Europe, this publication presents, as its starting point, an article discussing CLT where certain problems about its development are raised.

Other major changes have taken place in foreign language learning since the introduction of CLT in the 1970s. These might have developed as a consequence of this approach or they may have developed alongside it as a result of language learning theories. The three major areas which were presented at and worked on during the workshop, learner autonomy, intercultural awareness and grammar teaching, will be discussed specifically in this publication. These are important aspects of language learning and stated as such in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*.

Why focus on these three areas? An immediate answer could be because they all cause problems for teachers in the classroom and consequently have to be emphasised in teacher education courses. The first one, learner autonomy, causes problems because teachers are reluctant to leave learners in charge of their own learning and because they may not know how to do this. The second, intercultural awareness, requires a different view from the traditional one of the role played by culture in the classroom. It is no longer a question merely of gaining cultural knowledge or developing sociocultural competence. It requires that teachers and learners include their own cultural background in the learning process, which means a focus on dialogue and on learning rather than on teaching. The third aspect, grammar teaching, suffered severely as the result of misinterpretations of CLT which sought erroneously to juxtapose grammatical competence and communicative competence. Moreover, with Krashen's focus on spoken language and input rather than on language production, grammar was ignored in many classrooms, while, in others, grammar was still taught in a traditional manner, overlooking the paradigmatic change of focus from teaching to learning. This publication discusses grammar teaching in the light of current linguistic theories and theories of learning with a particular focus on cognitive theories.

If we accept the term post-communicative foreign language learning, it is important to relate the focus on the above three main aspects of language learning to CLT and try to look for the links which create coherence in foreign language learning today. The choice of a strong focus on learner autonomy and intercultural awareness in the work of the Council of Europe over the last decade is not accidental. They must be seen as foci decided upon because these aspects are essential when learning a foreign language. New ways of defining grammar and new ways of teaching it are also essential if teachers are going to regard foreign language learning as a coherent whole. Recent developments in foreign language learning need to be seen not as a set of disparate ideas and views which teachers have to put into practice in their classrooms, but as parts of a coherent whole. Teacher educators have to make clear to their students the links which create coherence and cohesion in post-communicative foreign language learning. These links can be traced in linguistic theories, general theories of learning and in language learning theories in particular.

In this project we have focused on three major fields of theory: constructivism with its focus on the individual learner's expectations and perceptions, social constructivism with its focus on the importance of the interrelationship between learners and learner and teacher, and, finally, cognitivism. In some cases the theories are interlinked, in others, they are treated separately and as part of a chronological development. Each of these theories is discussed in relation to the three major areas of the project: learner autonomy, intercultural awareness and grammar teaching.

An overview of the publication

The publication is divided into two main sections (A and B). Section A consists of chapters discussing theories and principles; section B presents examples of application, mediation and implementation of those same theories and principles. The theoretical section is introduced by a chapter on CLT as the common denominator for teacher education courses in Europe, and as a starting point for the project as a whole and for follow-up work carried out by the workshop participants. Most recent developments in foreign language teaching and learning are founded on at least some aspect of CLT.

The second chapter is on learner autonomy. It discusses the term, its definitions and implications, and relates it to learning theory. It also focuses on specific problematic aspects, especially on the content of foreign language learning in a setting where students are given a wide scope of freedom of choice in the classroom.

The following four chapters in Section A are concerned with various aspects of intercultural awareness, the topic on which most participants decided to carry out sub-projects after the workshop. Chapter three gives an overall view of the development from sociocultural competence to intercultural awareness, and discusses certain theoretical issues related to this development. It also links the concept to learning theory. In chapter four, human rights teaching is related to intercultural awareness and thus places this recent topic of foreign language learning in a wider context. Another current development, content and language integrated learning, is also presented under the heading of intercultural awareness. This subsection discusses theoretical aspects as well as giving a few practical examples from tertiary education. This and the following chapter are both concerned with teaching literature as an integral part of foreign language learning and how this affects the roles of both teacher and learners.

The last topic area in Section A is concerned with the teaching and learning of grammar. Here, grammar teaching is linked with the other aspects of foreign language learning on which the project has focused, tracing the development of grammar teaching over the past few decades and discussing the theoretical foundation underlying all the topics in this publication related to grammar.

The conclusion to Section A clarifies the coherence of the principles identified as feeding into current foreign language teaching and learning and the cohesion of the major areas of competences by summing up the theoretical links that have been discussed in the preceding chapters.

Section B of this publication begins with an example of how students' understanding of the concept of CLT can develop during a teacher education course. In the second

chapter of this part of the publication the implementation of learner autonomy in four national European curricula is discussed. The chapters on intercultural awareness in Section A are followed up in Section B by two case studies related to human rights teaching in the classroom and two case studies on literature. One of these is an example of a teacher education course on the teaching of literature. The final chapter presents case studies and examples of grammar awareness-raising in teacher education.

The broad scope of the papers presented reflects the broad scope of teacher education in post-communicative language teaching. It is the editors' wish that this publication will provide teacher educators, student teachers and teachers in general with both theoretical material for discussion as well as practical case studies based on these theories.

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Section A: Theories and principles

Communicative language teaching

David Newby

Common beliefs?

Like religion, foreign language teaching has frequently been driven by prophets who spread the good news, or their version of it, to the masses and attempt to convince them of its veracity and its potential to perform linguistic miracles. The second half of the 20th century seemed to provide particularly fertile ground for the emergence of methods and approaches. Some of these were comprehensive approaches which were adopted in mainstream teaching and which had far-reaching consequences on educational systems (audiolingualism, communicative language teaching); some hovered around the fringes (suggestopedia, total physical response) and tended to be the playthings of innovative methodologists and a handful of devoted converts; still others were particularised theories of specific areas of language or learning, which could be incorporated into more general approaches (the lexical approach, multiple intelligences, task-based teaching, etc.).

The very title of our project, which includes the phrase "coherence of principles" required us to search for, if not a common approach, then a set of beliefs and practices to which we as teacher educators subscribe and which, to some extent at least, steer the way in which we train our teachers and which will be reflected in their classroom teaching. This was one purpose in conducting the pre-workshop questionnaire, which attempted to identify what these beliefs and practices may be. As has been reported in the previous chapter, it was communicative language teaching (CLT), which proved to be the label most frequently identified by participants as having the potential at least to provide a common starting point, the foundation on which to base the cohesive tower of competences which we were attempting to construct, confirming Richards' and Rodgers' statement (2001: 244) that (CLT) "continues to be considered the most plausible basis for language teaching today".

As Richards and Rodgers further say (ibid.), "CLT is today understood to mean little more than a set of very general principles that can be applied and interpreted in a variety of ways." This view was very much confirmed on the first afternoon of the ECML workshop when each of the four co-ordinators gave his/her own personal interpretation and opinion of CLT. Not only did these interpretations differ in content but also there were quite different views as to the validity of the theories underlying this approach and the practices it advocated.

The general acceptance of CLT had also been a topic of a previous ECML project (Mediating between theory and practice in the context of different learning cultures and languages). A pre-workshop survey of that project had revealed that in many European countries the "communicative" label was one which most teachers identified with. When, however, their classroom practices were analysed, it was noticeable that many of these did not seem compatible with communicative methodology. For example, reading texts aloud in class proved to be widespread and group work activities to practice oral language were by no means as common as might be expected (see Newby, 2003).

So let us first consider some of the different interpretations of what CLT is; then we shall move on to focus on its positive aspects and shortcomings.

From "approach" to "general principles"

At its outset in the mid-1970s, it was common to refer to CLT as the "communicative approach". Douglas Brown (2002: 11) defines an "approach" as a "theory of language and language learning. … One's approach to language teaching is the theoretical rationale that underlies everything that happens in the classroom." This term reflected the view that it was based both on a coherent theory of language and an accompanying methodology – though not an actual theory of learning. It was only later that the acronym CLT began to be preferred, a clear reflection of a move in the 1980s to chip away at the language pillar on which the word "communicative" had actually been based and to focus largely on its methodology. (I shall continue to use CLT despite my personal preference for the term "communicative approach".)

One of the few advantages of finding oneself in late middle age is that language educators like myself were around when it all started, so let us briefly retrace our steps. It might be added that this is not only an excursion down memory lane but will also trace the source of some of the problems that exist today with the "communicative" label, particularly in connection with the teaching of grammar. It should also be added that the excursion follows the route of British applied linguistics. A quite different version of events can be found in Savignon's encyclopedia entry on CLT, which reflects rather an American, second-language acquisition research perspective (2000: 125-129).

Language – Skills, notions and functions

As is well known – though surprisingly not so by many younger teachers – CLT had its roots in linguistics and developed from attempts by linguists to describe language not in terms of its structure but of its use. In creating the term "communicative

competence", Hymes (1970) opened up the door for analysing language as acts of communication between human beings and for re-categorising language in terms of its meaning system rather than its formal system. He also unwittingly supplied a slogan for communicative language teaching, which helped to redefine the goals of learning a foreign language, and which is in this sense still valid today.

It could be said that a "communicative" view of language takes both a "top-down" and a "bottom-up" view of language. A top-down perspective sees it in terms of the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening – the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* has added the category of interaction, which refers to the integration of speaking and listening, reading and writing, etc. Seeing language in these terms, as top-down skill development, has remained largely uncontroversial throughout the thirty-year history of CLT and it is this category that feeds into what is generally described as communicative methodology. In essence, this methodology entails replicating ways in which language is used in real life.

What proved to be more problematic and controversial was the bottom-up analysis of language, which entailed turning traditional language description on its head. Rather than taking the sentence as the basic unit and starting point of analysis, CLT bases its analysis not only on the product of an act of communication but on the process by which utterances are generated. It attempts to model the flow of communication which occurs when speakers encode utterances and consequently it seeks to categorise the meaning systems which give rise to language forms. Principal of these meaning-based categories are so-called general notions, "abstract concepts which reflect general, and possibly universal, categories of human experience, such as time, space, quantity, location, etc." (Newby, 2000: 449), functions and categories of pragmatic meaning, which reflect a speaker's purpose in producing an utterance. The so-called "notional-functional approach" drew on the work of applied linguists such as Wilkins' *Notional syllabuses* (1976) and the *Threshold level* and in the early days of CLT, when specifying learning objectives in terms of language was more fashionable, strongly influenced syllabus design in many European countries. As will be pointed out in a later chapter, this way of categorising language also had the potential to pave the way for a communicative approach to the teaching of grammar, but soon the pendulum was to swing away from language description towards theories of learning, and as far as the language-based pillar of CLT was concerned, that was that. It is significant that although less than ten years passed between the publication of the revised version of the *Threshold Level* and the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, the notional basis of grammatical description had been lost and the latter document has returned to a highly traditional view of grammatical description (see Council of Europe, 2001: 112ff.)

Methodology – Activities and tasks

In keeping with the head of the term "communicative language teaching", it is its methodology – the teaching aspect – which represents its uncontroversial core. Everyone knows what, in general terms, a communicative activity is. Whilst extensive discussions have taken place to differentiate exercises from activities from tasks, etc. and to categorise them in various ways (see, for example, discussion in Ellis, 2003), the starting point of all methodology is an analysis of what constitutes authentic communication in the "real world" and from this it follows that activities attempt to replicate its contexts and processes to a lesser or greater extent in the design of classroom materials. This general principle ties in with the top-down, skill-based view of language referred to in the last section. Whether students are using skimming and scanning sub-skills when reading, engaging in small-group information gap speaking activities, replying to an email from an imaginary pen-friend, listening to a simulated recording of a station announcer, authenticity is the guiding principle.

What CLT does not offer is a method: that is, a structured and coherent set of procedures to support learning. Basically, it offers a bundle of activities, based on a variety of communication-based principles, which support learning and aid in particular fluency development. It is up to the course designer or teacher to provide the coherence. In the last few years so-called "task-based teaching" (see Willis, 1996; Ellis, 2003) has attempted to extend CLT and to provide a more structured view of methodology, which stands in contrast to the presentation-practice-production of traditional teaching, but, as Richards and Rodgers say (2001: 241), it "remains in the domain of ideology rather than fact".

Learner or learning?

Just as CLT does not provide a coherent method for teaching, so it does not provide a theory of learning. The learner of a language is seen first and foremost as a user of a language. Consequently, use becomes not only the aim of learning but also the means of learning. Terms such as task-based learning, learning by doing, social interaction, etc. reflect this use-skill axis. The aim of learning is communicative competence and communication is best learnt by communicating. Whilst the concept of "inductive" rather than "deductive" learning is associated with CLT, this is a logical consequence of the approach rather than a defining precept. Whilst the concept of communicative competence had been clearly defined by Canale and Swain (1980), views of how to achieve it were less clear cut.

One term that could, from its conception, be clearly applied to CLT was that of "learner-centred". However, as with the term "communicative" itself, this can have a variety of meanings and reflect a variety of rationales (see Tudor, 1996). Initially, its

learner-centredness applied to two aspects: firstly, to the identification of learners' communicative needs as the basis for materials design and, secondly, partly reflecting its authenticity principle, to the format of activities, particularly oral, with the stress on pair and group work, in which the teacher took a background role. In this, it contrasted with frontal teaching. It should be noted, however, that whilst both senses incorporate the learner, neither has anything specific to say about learning.

It was in the 1980s when history began to become blurred – at least, when looked at from the present perspective. The background to this was the general growth in interest not only in the learner but in theories of language learning or acquisition. This was spurred, on the one hand, by the new applied linguistic discipline of second-language acquisition, which in its general orientation geared its research to finding similarities between first and second-language learning and which tended to explore the learning process within a Chomskyan nativist framework. Hand in hand with this development, and with a foot firmly planted in the methodology camp, came Stephen Krashen, whose second-language acquisition theories, as our pre-workshop survey revealed, are still widely taught in teacher-education courses. His natural approach view of L2 learning (Krashen, 1981, 1982) together with research findings from L2 acquisition studies appeared to provide the missing learning theory for CLT, especially for those who took what Howatt (1984: 279) calls its "strong-version". Krashen's distinction between unconscious acquisition and conscious learning, and his rejection of the usefulness of the latter, fed into the skill-based view of language, but was in direct contradiction with the notional-functional categorisation which, at the outset of the communicative approach, had been an essential component for syllabus design. All of this was fine if you accepted Krashen's view of acquisition, but exceedingly problematic if you did not, since as far as learning theory was concerned, you were back to square one.

Post-communicative era

There was a time, in the late 1970s and 1980s, when some methodologists believed that CLT provided virtually all the answers to meeting the goals and needs of foreign language learning. In the meantime, it has been generally recognised that this approach has various limitations, a view which has given rise to the widely-used term "post-communicative". As with the term CLT itself, this can mean different things to different people, so the sense in which it is being used here will need to be specified. Post-communicative should not be interpreted as implying that CLT is *passé* or that its principles lack validity; rather it is the case that theories of language and of learning have moved forward and in doing so have expanded and enriched the insights of CLT. This is partly because educationalists and methodologists nowadays see the aims of language learning, the cognitive and affective processes which underlie learning, the needs of learners and the role they can play with regard to their own learning in

broader, and indeed deeper, terms. Two examples of how communicative principles have been developed and expanded will be mentioned.

Firstly, the concept of “authenticity”, the very bedrock of CLT, has been called into question. The idea that the “real world” exists outside of the classroom and has to be constantly simulated within it appears, on reflection, to represent only part of the picture. Surely, for the learner, the classroom itself and its pedagogical setting is just as “real” as the distant or imagined world outside. Students are learners of a foreign language and know this. Rather than being merely the play actors of communicative activities, should they not be seen as participants in the learning process? Might it therefore not be advisable to see materials and activities not only in terms of “authenticity” but of “validity”? This concept refers to the extent to which pedagogical exercises, activities and tasks contribute to learning processes. From the perspective of the learner, it might entail that learners reflect on pedagogical procedures and assess their relevance and usefulness to their own learning. From the perspective of the teacher, it means that the term “pedagogical” need not have negative connotations and be seen as a synonym for “artificial” or “unauthentic” but that we recognise the important role of a coherent and efficient pedagogy which may not necessarily tie in with communicative principles. (It might be advisable to add a caveat here: I am not advocating a *carte blanche* for all pedagogical practices. Pedagogy can, to use van Lier’s words (1996), be seen both in terms of “practice” and of “malpractice”.)

Secondly, the L1 = L2 premise, and thus Krashen’s views of learning, which was often linked to CLT towards the end of the 20th century, has found potent challengers in terms of learning theory. In particular, so-called cognitive theories of learning (see Skehan, 1998; Johnson, 1996), which draw on processing models from cognitive psychology rather than L1 acquisition, have begun to provide a valid alternative framework to explain learning processes.

Whilst neither of these developments challenges CLT as such, they do challenge various interpretations of it and require us to reconsider exactly what we mean by the term. Moreover, it has become clear that whatever the benefits CLT may have brought to language learning and teaching, we need to look to other theories to complement its important insights.

Conclusion

Whilst this chapter has been concerned with considering the nature of CLT from various perspectives, the aim of these deliberations goes beyond simply re-entering what is, after all, much-travelled territory. Within the context of the ECML project, it was our intention to use CLT as a springboard for a wider discussion aimed at

identifying principles relating to language, learning and teaching, which are reflected in teacher education programmes and which would, in turn, assist in the overall goal of establishing a coherent set of principles on which teacher education and foreign-language teaching might be based. To this end, one session of the project workshop consisted of a discussion, which took place in small groups, of the following two areas:

- aspects of the communicative approach that participants find particularly relevant in their teacher education;
- the issues that the communicative approach fails to address.

The results were as follows:

1. Which particular aspects of the communicative approach do you include and/or find particularly relevant in your teacher education work?

- situational interaction;
- social interaction;
- project work;
- open forms of instruction;
- simulations/role plays and other typical activities;
- motivation to communicate;
- interpretation;
- integrated approach;
- content: focused approach;
- integration of grammar and communication;
- skills integration;
- separation of skills in assessment;
- learner-centred approach;
- learner training;
- authentic materials;
- thematic approach;
- appropriate target language use;
- functionality of linguistic form.

2. What issues have been or are still unaddressed by the communicative approach?

- neglects cognitive competences;
- allows mistakes to be repeated, reinforced and remain unattended;
- fails to reliably assess progress;
- ignores intercultural awareness;

- sociolinguistic and strategic competence not manifested (despite being theoretical cornerstones);
- approaches to grammar/metalanguage;
- fails to exploit L1-L2 interface;
- outlaws L1;
- creates imbalance between communication in the classroom and the traditional (form/code-based) focus of testing;
- fails to cater for individual needs, learner-centred teaching;
- needs to accommodate the application of new technologies (ICT);
- takes little notice of differences between simulation and reality;
- makes forms and procedures of feedback on performance difficult;
- imposes itself on diverse contexts as one approach, that is cannot take into account diversity of settings

The results of the group work provide an interesting snapshot of how CLT is viewed in thirty European countries. Whatever reservations teacher educators may have about certain aspects of CLT, it clearly offers a sound principled basis which can feed into and link up with other theories and approaches. On the other hand, there are some aspects whose interpretation is controversial. For example, a positive feature cited in the above list is the "integration of grammar and communication"; yet, in the list of issues unaddressed by CLT, there are dissenting voices and references to grammar-related problems ("approaches to grammar/metalanguage"; "imbalance between communication in the classroom and the traditional form/code-based focus of testing").

To sum up, it could be said that CLT has some of the characteristics of a religion: it provides a core of beliefs and principles that all adherents subscribe to and which remain largely unchallenged. These principles, however, do not provide a complete picture and need to be complemented by other theories and approaches. Finally, we should not forget the reality of the classroom and note that, as with religion, CLT is something that many adherents strive towards but fall by the wayside when it comes to putting it into practice. Conversely, it is probably true to say that even those agnostics who refused to believe in or are unaware of its tenets have been unconsciously influenced by the "communicative culture" of modern language teaching.

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Learner autonomy – One of the most widely touted terms in recent discussion of language teaching?

Anne-Brit Fenner

Introduction

The title of this paper is based on a quotation by David Little (2003: 37), who states this before saying that learner autonomy is also widely misunderstood. I have chosen to reformulate Little's statement into a question because a discussion of autonomy has to consider whether it is little more than a touted term when applied to foreign language teaching or whether it is part of classroom reality.

One of the aims of the CoCoCop project was to consider how language-based aims can be integrated into social and educational aims. As early as 1986, van Ek includes "optimal personal ability" in addition to the partial competences which made up communicative competence. This ability consists of "cognitive" and "affective development". Also the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2001) includes educational goals and specifications, as do several national curricula in Europe, but there is still a tendency for teachers, teacher educators and materials designers to regard these new competences as separate from language learning goals.

This article discusses learner autonomy as one of these educational goals and how it can be seen as an integral aspect of language learning rather than as the additional competence of learning to learn. It takes as its starting point the project participants' view of autonomy based on principles discussed at the workshop before briefly relating the concept to curricula development. The paper also presents current definitions of autonomous learning. As autonomy is often presented as a set of principles which teachers might follow without presenting its theoretical foundation, this article further discusses learner autonomy in the light of language learning theories, claiming that teachers need to be aware of such theories in order to accept why a certain amount of autonomy is important for learners to develop both as language learners and as language users. Based on the definitions and the theoretical framework, the article goes on to discuss some problematic aspects of these definitions, especially the question of the foreign language learner's choice of content and assessment. Finally, learner autonomy is discussed in relation to the educational aim of "learning to learn", as presented in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*.

Participants' view of learner autonomy

The result of the pre-workshop tasks showed that some language teacher education courses include a focus on learner autonomy or "learning to learn", but within the

framework of fairly general pedagogical topics like development of identity, *Bildung*, critical thinking, personal growth, etc. A few teacher education courses also focus on issues like developing the learner's understanding of his/her own learning process and "learner-centred teaching". Only one or two courses contained specific reading material on the topic. During the workshop, autonomous learning was presented in a theoretical context and related to materials design. The participants discussed principles which could provide a bridge between learner autonomy, its theoretical framework, teacher education and classroom practice. The following is a list of principles worked out by the participants:

- learners gradually take more responsibility for planning their work: selecting materials, deciding on tasks, and evaluating work;
- the use of portfolios;
- student teachers plan their own professional development;
- targeted inclusion of learning ideas to raise awareness;
- consideration of different types of learners;
- learner autonomy entails raising awareness of one's learning strategies;
- freedom of choice of topics, content, assessment and self-assessment;
- reflection on learning;
- learners given responsibility for their own learning and personal growth;
- learner autonomy involves a new dimension in teacher-student roles;
- the teacher's role is to guide learners and to mediate content, tasks and approaches.

Most of the above principles apply to classroom learning as well as to teacher education, and show that teacher educators are well aware of several aspects of learner autonomy, although the courses they teach might not practise these principles.

Little categorises three main pedagogical principles of learner autonomy: learner empowerment, learner reflection and appropriate target language use (Little, 2001, 2004). Comparing the principles worked out by the participants with these three, it is the third one, "appropriate language use", which is missing. From this observation one can claim that learner autonomy is regarded by teacher educators as an additional aspect of language learning, not an integral one. It might also indicate that teachers do not see the potential of language use and development in the metalanguage which has to be used for reflection.

Learner autonomy in the curriculum

For learner autonomy to become more than "a touted word" in discussion, it has to be implemented in curricula. Most European national curricula include learner autonomy in some form. (For a discussion on this see, the chapter on "Learner autonomy in

national curricula” on pages 132-150 of this publication.) There is, however, still a feeling that it is regarded as an additional aspect of language learning and not as an integral part of it. Although curricula present autonomy in very general terms that are important for the development of, for instance, *Bildung* or lifelong learning, it is regarded as the responsibility of the teacher in many countries. This can be considered as an advantage as well as a disadvantage. It might be a disadvantage if there is no tradition of experimenting and supporting innovative teaching. Leaving most decisions to the teacher in such an environment will preserve traditional ways of teaching. It is an advantage in educational environments where teachers take overall educational aims seriously and search for innovative ways of implementing them in their own teaching. As Little (2003: 36-37) states:

> Of course, curricula can be learner-centred at the level of general principle, by paying attention to common characteristics, needs and likely interests of the learner population in question and perhaps encouraging certain kinds of pedagogical behaviour. The achievement of learner-centredness in practice is always a matter of what individual teachers do in particular classrooms. The truly successful pursuit of learner-centredness produces learner autonomy.

This means that unless teacher education courses include both principles and practice of autonomous learning as well as a theoretical framework which enables student teachers to look beyond the principles, learner autonomy will not be practised as an integral part of foreign language learning. It will remain only “one of the most widely touted terms in recent discussion of language teaching” (Little, 2003: 37).

Definitions of autonomy

As the principles worked out during the workshop show, teacher educators are fully aware of the focus on the learner, different learning strategies, the learners’ choices and the role of reflection in learner autonomy. However, there is little indication of why these aspects are important. Most articles and discussions on autonomous learning have been based on the following definition by Henri Holec (1981: 3): “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning”. Without being more closely specified, this definition is widely misunderstood and interpreted as self-instruction and something learners can do on their own. Holec further states that learners must be given the opportunity to determine the objectives of learning, to define the contents and progressions, select the methods and techniques to be used in the learning process, and evaluate what has been acquired (Holec, 1981: 3).[1]

1 For a further discussion of Holec’s definition see Fenner (2000).

As Benson (2001: 49) points out, Holec's definition describes the autonomous learning process mainly in procedural terms. It is concerned with which aspects of the learning processes learners can take charge of, not the cognitive aspects involved. Little's (1991: 4) definition of autonomy, therefore, becomes a necessary extension:

> Essentially, autonomy is a capacity – for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action. It presupposes, but also entails, that the learner will develop a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his learning.

It is exactly in this psychological aspect of autonomy that we can trace the link with learning theory in general and language learning theory in particular. Without this theoretical coherence, learner autonomy may remain a set of principles rather than resulting in innovative practice in the foreign language classroom.

Autonomy and learning theory

In order to create an awareness of learner autonomy as an integrated aspect of foreign language learning, one needs to see its link with both learning theories and language learning theories. As is often the case with language learning, teacher education deals with specific goals, methodologies and examples of classroom activities but rarely provides sufficient opportunity to discuss the theories which underlie them, or does not even provide the opportunity to study language learning theories at all. Without such opportunities, teachers may easily lack the ability to critically assess theories and develop their own practical theories for the classroom. As a result, they may become victims of methodology and dogma. With such a pitfall in mind, one of the aims of our workshop was to discover which theories were prevalent in teacher education curricula in Europe and then to discuss and critically assess these theories. As stated above, there was little evidence from the participants' pre-workshop tasks that their teacher education courses included theories which could provide an opportunity to understand and discuss the theoretical framework of learner autonomy.

Autonomous learning is rooted in an individualistic view of learning determined by early constructivism, especially the psychology of George Kelly. According to Kelly, each person perceives and interprets the outside world in different ways based on his or her pre-knowledge and experience. Events in themselves carry no objective meaning; we interpret events so that they assume meaning for us (Kelly, 1953: 50-55).[2] In terms of language learning, this means that individual learners, being exposed to teaching and texts in the classroom, will learn different things from the same teaching and texts. This

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2 For a further discussion on Kelly, see page 43 of this publication.

does not necessarily mean that learners do not share certain aspects of learning. In any classroom there are learners who culturally share ways of perceiving events as members of the same cultural community. This is certainly the case with foreign language learning, as most learners encounter foreign languages in a school community where they share their mother tongue competence.

If teachers and teacher educators are going to promote autonomous learning, it is necessary to accept the consequence of Kelly's view on learning as an individual construction of events, which implies a genuine difference between teaching and learning. What the teacher presents is understood in different ways by the individual learners. Because of the traditional teaching to which most educators today have been exposed themselves and tend to preserve, this is a very difficult realisation for most of us. Although teacher educators wish to promote new approaches, they also unconsciously tend to convey traditional ways of teaching in order to preserve what Bourdieu (1994) calls symbolic power. Their own experience as learners is hard to put aside, even when they try to adopt innovative approaches to teaching and learning. What do teachers do in the classroom if they really accept that learning is not an automatic result of teaching? What classroom procedures can they carry out if each learner learns different things in different ways from what is being taught? These questions might seem rhetorical, but they need to be discussed and answered by individual student teachers and teacher educators, and they need to be reflected upon in teacher education courses. No clear answers exist in innovative teaching and learning approaches.

While Kelly provides us with a theory of personal constructs, his focus is on the individual, as is Holec's definition of learner autonomy. There are, however, later definitions which include the social aspect of learning: "Autonomy entails a capacity and willingness to act independently and in co-operation with others, as a socially responsible person" (Dam, 1995: 1). More recent developments of constructivism regard the relationship between individuals as all-important for language learning. Lev Vygotsky's social-constructivist view has, in some countries, strongly influenced the development of learner autonomy. According to Little (2003: 37), "learner autonomy is the product of interactive, collaborative processes that depend on the teacher's expertise for their shape and direction". In this quotation one can trace two aspects of Vygotsky's theory of learning. One is the belief that learning, and especially language learning, is dependent on interaction with peers and teachers. The other is Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development.[3] According to this theory, the learner can only reach a certain level on his or her own and needs the support of a grown-up or an expert, in the school context a teacher, to reach beyond his or her personal limits. What

3 For a further discussion of Vygotsky, see page 43.

the learner can manage with the help of a teacher today, he or she can manage on his or her own tomorrow (Vygotsky, 1978, 1991). As Lantolf (2000) argues, in addition to the teacher, peers can also play an active and important part in scaffolding a foreign language learning process.

As discussed previously, learner autonomy can be seen as consisting of three main principles, one of which is using the target language in the classroom. Few foreign language teachers today would disagree with the view that learners have to use the language in order to develop as foreign language learners. In autonomous classroom settings, students will use the target language in all interaction and collaboration with peers as well as the teacher. It is the learner's individual perception of the teaching, texts and activities which form the basis of this interaction. What learners express in the classroom, the learners' oral and written texts, have to be the starting point of teacher mediation.

Another aspect of Vygotsky's theories is related to the above. He sees language as a tool for developing thought: "Thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them" (Vygotsky, 1991: 218). Kelly (1953: 52), too, stresses the interrelationship between using language and developing thinking: "A person must phrase his experience to make sense of it". Based on such a view of language use, perhaps the most important aspect of learner autonomy is reflection through the use of the foreign language. Language is used not only to develop linguistic competence, but also to promote reflection and to develop thinking.

The learner's choice

In Holec's definition of learner autonomy, choice is emphasised. This includes the choice of texts and activities by the learner, which can promote motivation and make room for enhancing personal engagement. Giving the learners a chance to choose texts, activities and strategies gives scope for the learner's interests and thus enhances motivation. This is important in itself for language learning, but perhaps the most important aspect of choice is that it opens up reflection. In many ways it provides an easy first step towards involving the learners in critical thinking. If the learners are given choices, it provides an opportunity to reflect on and discuss those choices in the classroom. Even young learners can easily express likes and dislikes and give valid and personal reasons for these. The ensuing communication between groups of learners or classroom dialogue is the first step towards meta-communication about texts and tasks. By having to express likes and dislikes in the foreign language, the learner starts making sense of the text and activity. By reflecting orally or in writing on, for example, which approaches worked and which did not, learners develop their thinking. As Little (2003: 37) states: "Autonomous learners are those who understand what they are

learning and why …". Reflecting on and discussing plans, content, approaches and learning progress develop such an understanding, and it is the teacher who has to guide and mediate this process of reflection.

The dilemma of choice

There has been relatively little discussion on the learners' choice of content in autonomous learning contexts. Neither Holec nor Little seems particularly concerned with this aspect. With the introduction of CLT, the focus was on authentic texts and meaningful contexts. At the time, this implied authentic language not produced for pedagogical purposes, in other words not for the purpose of language teaching. There was little discussion of what such texts contained. As far as autonomy is concerned, a lot of classroom research has been carried out with relatively young learners (Dam and Gabrielsen, 1988; Dam, 1995; Thomsen, 2003). The focus has been on using the foreign language in language contexts chosen by the learners. Many European national curricula are framework curricula, where content is not particularly specific at primary and lower secondary level. At higher levels of education this might be different. Upper secondary school curricula might, for example, require that students gain knowledge about specific aspects of the target culture. It is usually left up to local authorities, schools or teachers to define this cultural content, but far too often it is left to textbook writers. The result is that textbook writers are the ones who make the decisions about content and not teachers and learners.

On the other hand, is it possible for learners to make all the decisions concerning content? What access do they have to cultural artefacts in the form of multimodal texts? Experience has shown that learners often choose within the areas of knowledge with which they are already familiar. It is the teacher's task, therefore, to provide the scaffolding required to enable learners to make qualified choices, also as far as content is concerned.

Recent developments in the area of content and language integrated learning (CLIL) have shown the need for putting content back into foreign language learning (for a discussion of CLIL see pages 54-55 of this publication). In countries where *Bildung* has been an overall aim of all school subjects, there has always been a certain focus on content. In order to promote personal development, cultural knowledge, competence and awareness are all essential aspects of language learning. As the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* states, "*savoir-apprendre*", knowing how to learn, is part of developing intercultural awareness, and knowing how to learn is an essential aspect of learner autonomy. Learning to take charge of one's own learning must, consequently, also include learning how to choose appropriate content.

In foreign language learning, content entails both linguistic and cultural content. However, it is not irrelevant which content the learners choose for their language learning and thus they need teachers, textbooks and other sources to show them relevant materials. Learning foreign languages for personal development, or *Bildung*, requires examples of challenging content and how to approach it. In an autonomous setting this is one of the teacher's challenges. Herein lies the scaffolding which the teacher needs to provide in assisting and guiding learners. It is not only a matter of mediation, but also of providing learners with examples of challenging materials from which to choose.

Learner autonomy is primarily seen as one or several different approaches to learning foreign languages. Autonomy promotes *Bildung* in more ways than one. It involves learners directly in their own learning processes; they have to learn a variety of approaches and techniques in order to decide which might suit their own learning best. They have to plan their learning processes, and they have to reflect on them before they can assess the strategies and outcomes of their learning. All these processes are related to ways of working, or what Klafki (Aase, 2003) calls aspects of "formal *Bildung*". Since the introduction of CLT, the focus has tended to be on this type of *Bildung* rather than on the learning content, or what Klafki categorises as "material *Bildung*". During the longest-lasting period of any method in foreign language teaching, the era of the grammar-translation method, cultural knowledge and grammar knowledge were the sole aims, and language courses consisted of content-based materials, which one believed would promote gaining such knowledge. It was, however, a very static view of both culture and grammar.

When the pedagogical pendulum swings from one type of teaching to another, there is a tendency to leave behind anything which tastes of traditional methods. As far as foreign language teaching is concerned, the move from the grammar-translation method to behaviourist views of learning also meant a move away from a focus on cultural content. Approaches to learning and using the language became more important than the content of that language. With the communicative approach, language and meaning were focused upon, but cultural knowledge was only a backdrop, a thing separate from language itself. Although teaching was centred on authentic texts, the texts were chosen primarily as examples of language use rather than examples of cultural content. The focus was on the activities and using the language rather than on gaining knowledge and, consequently, cultural knowledge was random. When it is left to the learners to choose all aspects of learning, including content, there is a danger that cultural content will be even more random in the classroom. This is a problem that needs to be faced and discussed by researchers, teacher educators and teachers in order for autonomous learning to be regarded not only as a way of working, or "formal *Bildung*", but also as a means of gaining knowledge in the foreign language classroom.

In his theories of *Bildung*, Klafki (Aase 2003: 194) argues for a third kind, what he terms "categorial *Bildung*": "this is not a compound or synthesis of the two other forms but represents a fundamentally different approach that links the two traditions in a dialectic relationship". According to Aase (ibid.), "categorial *Bildung*" requires selected examples in the language classroom through which the "basic knowledge within a subject can emerge". Although learners can become autonomous and capable of discovering their own paths to such knowledge, I am not sure that they are capable of selecting good examples at all times, as it requires an insight into language and culture which learners do not necessarily possess. It is, therefore, extremely important that teachers in the autonomous foreign language classroom define their role as resource persons who can provide learners with the examples they need in order to make qualified choices related to content. It is also important that teachers can act as mediators for all learners, individually and as members of an interdependent cultural community.

Learner autonomy in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*

Learner autonomy has been central to the work of the Council of Europe since Henri Holec's definition quoted previously in this article. In the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* the term is not used, instead it uses the concept of "ability to learn" or "*savoir-apprendre*". This is defined as "the ability to observe and participate in new experiences and to incorporate new knowledge into existing knowledge, modifying the latter where necessary" (Council of Europe, 2001: 106). This definition seems to be little more than describing any situation where learning takes place. It is only when some of the components of the "ability to learn" are listed that we find the resemblance with learner autonomy, especially in the following list of study skills (ibid.: 108):

- ability to use available materials for independent learning;
- ability to organise and use materials for self-directed learning;
- awareness of one's own strengths and weaknesses as a learner;
- ability to identify one's own needs and goals;
- ability to organise one's own strategies and procedures to pursue these goals, in accordance with one's own characteristics and resources.

In line with all the competences described in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, this is a description of behavioural skills. There is no mention of how to apply these skills to language learning content. Still, it clearly states requirements in foreign language learning in line with autonomous learning, although a listing of skills cannot fully describe what autonomy is. The *Framework* goes on to ask

how the general, non-language specific competences can be treated in language courses (ibid.: 148) and continues by suggesting the following, with specific regard to “ability to learn” (ibid.: 149):

a) simply as ‘spin-off’ from language learning and teaching, without any special planning and provision;
b) by progressively transferring responsibility for learning from the teacher to the pupils/students and encouraging them to reflect on their learning and to share this experience with other learners;
c) by systematically raising the learners’ awareness of the learning/teaching processes in which they are participating;
d) by engaging learners as participants in experimentation with different methodological options;
e) by getting learners to recognise their own cognitive style and develop their own learning strategies accordingly.

Inherent in these questions several aspects of learner autonomy can be found. The first point can easily be disregarded, as although it might describe actual educational situations, it does not include a conscious development towards a pedagogical aim. In the next point a gradual introduction of autonomy can be seen, which includes both individual reflection and interactive communication about learning experiences. Point (c) presumes that the teacher takes an active role in mediating these experiences and also invites learners to assess the teaching processes in the classroom. In the following point a participating learning situation is described, one in which both teacher and learners try out different methodologies in order to discover what strategies and procedures work best for different learners. This is a prerequisite for learners gradually learning to choose which methods and techniques suit them best, an issue which is made clear in the final point of the list.

One can regret the fact that the *Framework* categorises “ability to learn” as a general competence and not more specifically as an integral part of language learning. Still, it is due to the influence of the *Framework* on foreign language curricula in Europe that learner autonomy has become a focal point in the teaching and learning of foreign languages in many countries.

Autonomy and self-assessment

One aspect of learner autonomy which remains to be discussed in this article is the requirement that learners should set their own goals and assess what they have achieved. Another European document assists the influence of the self-assessment aspect of autonomy, namely the *European Language Portfolio* (ELP). According to

Little (2004: 325), the ELP is the practical means of ensuring that learners are drawn into the processes of "social mediation". He further states (ibid.: 325):

> The ELP serves complementary pedagogical and reporting functions. On one hand it supports the development of learner autonomy via goal setting and self-assessment; on the other the individual ELP owner is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date self-report, hence self-assessment, of his or her L2 learning achievements and intercultural experience.

Little describes assessment in the ELP as both summative, in the language passport, and formative, in the language biography and the dossier. In a discussion of learner autonomy, however, one must recognise the limitations of self-assessment that is based mainly on checklists. "Can-do" statements can never replace learning logs, diaries and didactic classroom dialogues, which are based on reflection. They easily function just as instrumental tools and not as personal reflection expressed in foreign language writing, which, as discussed previously, in Vygotskyan terms develops thought. On the other hand, the ELP can work as a basis for teachers to see the relevance and importance of self-assessment in the classroom and assist the development of the learners' ability to set themselves goals and the means to achieve them. As national language portfolios based on the ELP are being developed, one can hope that not only quantitative aspects of language learning will be included, but also qualitative aspects, which are also based on different learning traditions and cultural goals.

Conclusion

This article has discussed various aspects of learner autonomy. It has presented definitions of the concept of autonomy and related these to theories of language learning. Positive aspects of autonomy have been focused upon, but the article has also pointed to problems, especially as regards content of foreign language learning and types of self-assessment. The invaluable work of the Council of Europe to promote learner autonomy over the past twenty-five years has been briefly mentioned. The fact that all the participants in our project were familiar with the concept and some of its principles shows the influence of this work. From the material collected by the same participants it is also clear that a lot of work remains in order for learner autonomy to become not only a set of general pedagogical principles in national curricula and teacher education courses but didactical practices in the foreign language classroom. For this to happen, teacher education courses need to present learning theories which can support the three major principles of autonomy: learner empowerment, learner reflection and appropriate target language use (Little, 2001, 2004).

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Intercultural awareness as an integral part of foreign language learning

Anne-Brit Fenner

Introduction

Over the last fifteen to twenty years the emphasis on cultural competence and awareness in foreign language learning and teaching has increased. This is largely the result of work instigated by the Council of Europe and the influence of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe, 2001) on curriculum design, teacher education and classroom teaching. As a main aim of our project was to investigate the multi-competence nature of modern language teaching and learning, it was natural to choose cultural competence as one of the areas of post-communicative teaching to be given attention.

One of the pre-workshop tasks was to specify theories included in the participants' teacher education courses. The purpose of this was, amongst other issues, to detect on what they base their cultural teaching. In addition, the participants were asked to present teaching materials related to cultural competence and, during the workshop, to work out a set of accompanying principles. The arguments put forward here will include references to the principles which were the result of the participants' discussion.

In this chapter various aspects of cultural competence will be investigated. Starting with the four categories defining aspects of cultural competence to be found in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, I will discuss the transition from cultural competence being regarded as an addition to foreign language teaching and learning to its being seen as an integral part of such teaching.

This transition is not only a result of changing views on culture in relation to foreign language teaching and learning, it is also a result of the influence of new theories of learning. In addition, the ways in which a subject is taught will be influenced by how we define knowledge. As far as the development of cultural competence is concerned, there is a transition from regarding it mainly as declarative knowledge to also defining it as procedural knowledge. Developing cultural competence is as much a matter of learning through culture as learning about it. Learning through culture requires different approaches in the classroom from those where gaining knowledge about the target culture is the aim.

CLT and the changing view of culture in the classroom

In its chapter on the user's and learner's competence, the *Framework* classifies what are called general competences, namely, those which are "not specific to language, but which are called upon for actions of all kinds, including language activities" (Council of Europe, 2001: 9) The following competences are specified: declarative knowledge (*savoir*), skills and know-how (*savoir-faire*), "existential" competence (*savoir-être*) and ability to learn (*savoir-apprendre*). The first three are directly concerned with cultural competence and will be discussed in relation to our project.

At higher levels of education, culture has always played an important part in foreign language teaching. The focus is mainly on knowledge of the target culture: history, geography, institutions and literature. At lower school levels cultural knowledge is focused on everyday life: home, school and spare time. At university level the subject area is still aptly referred to as background, civilisation or *Landeskunde*, as it provides a backdrop to language learning and is not regarded as an integral part of it.

With foreign language learning being made accessible to a large number of learners in all types of schools in the 1950s and 1960s, the view of culture in language learning changed. It was no longer only the culture of the "elite" which was interesting, but also the "culture of the people". Although these might be loaded words, the distinction has to be made, especially as CLT enhanced this shift of focus as far as culture was concerned.

CLT must be seen as a paradigmatic change in the approaches to teaching foreign languages.[4] In 1986, van Ek defined what he called communicative ability as consisting of the following components:

- linguistic competence;
- sociolinguistic competence;
- discourse competence;
- strategic competence;
- sociocultural competence;
- social competence.

Foreign language curricula in Europe changed radically within a fairly short period of time to include van Ek's and similar definitions of communicative competence. As far as culture was concerned, knowledge of the target language culture was no longer the sole focus in the foreign language classroom. Through information gap exercises, role

4 For a discussion of CLT, see David Newby's chapter in this publication.

plays and other simulated activities, students were required to use the language and to develop sociocultural competence, being able to act and behave in the foreign language culture.

Up until this period, the main focus in the foreign language classroom had been on reading and writing, not on speaking. Misinterpretations of the communicative approach made teachers in many countries focus on oral activities, believing that communication was largely to be understood as oral communication. Gradually the focus on cultural knowledge, in particular "high culture" including literature, decreased and foreign language classrooms became the playground for oral activities centred round acting out everyday situations and dialogues. Students acted out visits to shops, restaurants, simulated phone calls, arguments with parents, etc., situations with which they could identify and which they might find useful when travelling.

Textbooks during the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s reflected this view of foreign language learning. At lower school levels they had previously contained constructed texts written by source culture authors, based on specific language problems. With the increased focus on communication, they were now full of constructed dialogues as examples of what people might say in specific situations.

Another aspect of the communicative approach which took longer to appear in textbooks was the focus on authentic texts. Definitions of authentic texts and their use in foreign language learning were debated widely (Widdowson, 1979; Little et al., 1989). To begin with they were predominantly factual texts and teachers and textbook authors treated them mainly with the aim of teaching language and not as representations of culture, but gradually the view that authentic texts represent the voice of a culture gained ground in the classroom. As far as literary texts are concerned, however, Kramsch's view (1993: 8) that "language teachers seem constrained to teach these texts for their information value only" is still predominant.

The introduction of sociocultural competence as an aspect of communicative ability was the start of regarding culture, not only as "information conveyed by the language" but "as a feature of language itself" (Kramsch, 1993: 8). Changing foreign language classroom practice, however, takes a long time.

Cultural competence and the shift from declarative to procedural knowledge

In order to define and clarify the concept of sociocultural competence in FL teaching, Byram (Byram 1997: 5) introduces the following categories:

- *savoir*: knowledge of self and other, knowledge of interaction;
- *savoir-comprendre*: skills – interpret and relate;
- *savoir-être*: attitudes – relativising self, valuing other;
- *savoir-apprendre/faire*: skills – discover and/or interact.

These four categories show a shift of focus from teaching to learning and from declarative to procedural knowledge (Neuner, 2003). It is no longer just a matter of gaining knowledge and developing skills, but also a matter of the learners' attitudes to the foreign culture and interaction.

What is made clear in Byram's definition of the first category, *savoir*, is that not only is knowledge of the foreign culture important, knowledge of one's own culture has also become an aim in foreign language learning. The learner and his/her culture are part of the learning process. In the chapter on autonomy in this publication, I discussed two constructivist theories of learning: the individually-based theory of personal constructs by Kelly, and Vygotsky's social constructivist theory of interaction as a prerequisite of language learning. Byram's *savoir* includes both. In the context of developing cultural competence, we need to regard these two views, not only related to individual users of the language, but to individuals representing two cultures. Kelly's view that we anticipate events (Kelly, 1953) can here be seen as our individual expectations of the foreign culture or as our expectations as part of a cultural community. In Vygotsky's terms, where language is developed through interaction, we are here dealing with interaction both between members of the same cultural community, or, in a wider sense, interaction between two cultural communities. Through this interaction, we develop cultural competence and awareness. By realising that individual learners are part of a cultural community and by enhancing knowledge about that community, learners may become better equipped to encounter the other. It also makes it easier for the individual to distinguish between what are national cultural stereotypes and what are individual stereotyped views that might have to be combated.

Knowledge of the other is of course included in the first category. As stated earlier, knowledge about the target culture has always been an aim in foreign language teaching and learning. In order to gain knowledge about the target culture as well as one's own, we might have to ask: what does a cultural community consist of? Kramsch identifies three layers of such a community: what she terms the social or synchronic layer, the historical or diachronic layer, and the imagination. The former two constitute what is called the sociocultural context. The third one she defines as follows (Kramsch, 1998: 8):

> Discourse communities are characterized not only by facts and artefacts, but by common dreams, fulfilled and unfulfilled imaginings. These imaginings are

> mediated through the language, that over the life of the community reflects, shapes, and is a metaphor for its cultural reality. Language is intimately linked not only to the culture that is and the culture that was, but also to the culture of the imagination that governs people's decisions and actions far more than we may think.

Knowledge of one's own as well as the target language culture consequently entails much more than the traditional background or *Landeskunde*. It must include oral and written communication with all aspects of the other culture. This indicates that we are not only talking about knowledge about the other culture, but also knowledge through the other and through interaction between the two. The *savoir* category also includes knowledge of interaction between two cultures.

Savoir-comprendre states skills for interpreting the other and relating the two cultures. Again the interactional aspect is emphasised. The learner interprets both as an individual with his or her pre-knowledge and experience and as a member of a cultural community. Any encounter with the other includes a process of interpretation and relating, whether it is face-to-face with an individual representative of the target culture or an authentic text used in the classroom. Although misunderstandings are unavoidable, such encounters require knowledge of both cultures if communication is at all to be possible.

Savoir-être involves the learner's attitudes. Learning a foreign language also means developing, if not positive, at least accepting attitudes towards the other. In order to do this it is necessary to analyse values and stereotyped views in the foreign language classroom, both individual ones and stereotyped views of cultural communities. Many foreign language teachers, curricula and textbooks seem to believe that cultural awareness is an automatic result of foreign language learning and that positive attitudes and tolerance develop alongside knowledge and competence. Experience has shown that this is not the case. Attitudes have to be consciously worked on in the foreign language classroom, they do not automatically occur as a result of language learning and knowledge about the foreign culture (Fenner, 2003). It must be one of the teacher's tasks to get such views out in the open, to create tasks which require the learners to express them orally and in writing, and then to challenge them. Only through specific classroom procedures is this possible, procedures which are aimed at analysing and reflecting on one's own views as well as challenging them.

Byram's categories are the basis of the classification used in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. As mentioned earlier, the 2001 edition of the *Framework* presents each *savoir* under the heading of a "general competence". On the one hand, this might seem unfortunate in that it is easy to interpret "general

competences" as an addition to and not as an integral part of language learning. On the other hand, the term might serve to show these competences have been treated specifically thus given emphasis. Included (Council of Europe, 2001: 101ff.) in general competences are:

- *savoir* – declarative knowledge, which includes: knowledge of the world, sociocultural knowledge, intercultural awareness;
- *savoir-faire* – skills and know-how, which include practical skills and know-how and intercultural skills and know-how;
- *savoir-être* – "existential competence";
- *savoir-apprendre* – ability to learn.

It is the first three which are of interest to this discussion.[5] In the 2001 edition of the *Framework*, the concept "cultural" has been replaced by "intercultural", both relating to skills and awareness. Based on a constructivist view of learning (Kelly, 1953) and the realisation that the foreign language learner encounters the target culture from a stance founded on his or her habitus and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1994: 12-14), the term "intercultural" has gradually replaced the term "cultural" in foreign language learning and teaching. The learners encounter the foreign culture as members of their own cultural community, and the encounter thus implies two cultures.

The development from cultural to intercultural emphasises a development of the view of culture in foreign language learning away from a focus solely on the target culture towards regarding it as an interrelationship between two cultures: one's own and the other. This was inherent also in Byram's categories, but it has now been made specific by the changed terminology. In order for learners to step back and reflect on a culture different from their own, they have to be consciously aware of the culture of which they are an integral part. Awareness of differences as well as of similarities between the native culture and the target culture is essential for the development of intercultural awareness. While learning a foreign language the learner brings his own culture into the communication process with the foreign culture. Intercultural awareness can consequently "be seen as an interdependent relationship between cultures which constitutes a dynamic enrichment for self as well as the other" (Fenner, 2000: 149). Communication is an open-ended process dependent on the context and the situation in which the communication takes place. Without knowledge and understanding of both native and target cultures, intercultural communication is hardly possible.

Communicating with the other means entering into a dialogue where one has to be willing to adjust one's own attitudes and perspectives in order to understand the other,

5 The third category, savoir apprendre, is discussed in the chapter on learner autonomy in this publication.

even if a complete understanding can never be achieved (Rommetveit, 1992; Fenner, 2000). Bakhtin (1984: 293) defines dialogue as follows: “To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth.”. It is this type of dialogue which is required in the classroom if intercultural awareness is to develop. Intercultural encounters can be seen as negotiating meaning in a process where meaning “is constructed between [the two participants] as a kind of ideological bridge, is built in the process of their interaction” (Bakhtin and Medvedev 1985: 152). In order for the participants to understand each other, or at least establish what they do not understand, openness towards the other is necessary. Discussing ideological bridges, Kramsch (1993: 228) argues that “[w]hat we should seek in cross-cultural education are less bridges than a deep understanding of the boundaries”. Building ideological bridges in the Bakhtinian sense, however, does not mean blurring differences, but attempting a temporary, contextual understanding of both self and other. Both cultures in the encounter must also be regarded as dynamic and polyphone; any culture is “a living mix of varied and opposing voices” (Bakhtin, 1984), and learners have to acknowledge this also when it comes to their own culture.

According to Ricoeur, it is through interaction with others that we experience our own identity, not through introspection (Kvalsvik, 1985). The aim of *savoir-être* can only be achieved through a learning process based on reflection on and understanding of the other as well as of self. It is an ongoing process where students develop not only as language learners but as human beings, or in Ricoeur’s words (1969: 11): they “extend [their] existence” on the basis of “le mode de cet être qui existe en comprenant”.

In 1997 Byram introduces the concept “intercultural speaker” or “locateur culturelle” (1997: 4) in order to describe foreign language learners as “interlocutors involved in intercultural communication and action”, stating the importance of developing critical thinking “about one’s own and other cultures and their taken-for-granted values and practices” (ibid.: 10). Developing critical thinking is dependent on reflection, that is a meta-level of language learning, which is often sadly lacking in many foreign language classrooms where the focus of teaching is solely on language skills.

Learning a foreign language is not merely a matter of becoming proficient in the language, but also of developing personality. In a study (Byram et al., 1997) related to the development of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, the authors challenge the assumption that the ultimate aim of language learners is to become indistinguishable from native users:

> [L]anguage learners should not be trained as ersatz, native speakers, but should develop as intercultural personalities, bringing the two cultures into relation and becoming more mature and complex people as a result.

Seeing intercultural awareness as an integral part of foreign language learning indicates that one of many aims is the development and enrichment of the student's identity. This is a dynamic process. While learning a foreign language, the learner brings his own culture into the communication process with the foreign culture, whether it is in reading a foreign text or in speaking to a representative of that particular language community. It is not only a matter of negotiating meaning, but of interpretation in the hermeneutic sense. Interpreting the meaning of texts or personal encounters also means interpreting oneself: "… in the hermeneutical reflection – or in the reflexive hermeneutic – the building of the self and the meaning (*sens*) are simultaneous" (Ricoeur, 1992: 55).

It is a dialectic and dialogic process where the learner is influenced by the foreign culture at the same time as he/she is influencing that culture (Foucault, 1983). This cannot be done passively or by the teacher presenting learners with knowledge about the foreign culture. Foucault (in Falzon, 1998: 37) states that:

> The idea that the other can simply reveal or disclose itself to us, without any work whatsoever on our part, is ultimately unintelligible. There can be no access to the other without our actively organising the other in terms of our categories.

Reorganisation of categories entails change and developing identity in the learning process. Developing intercultural awareness means being confronted with one's own as well as the foreign culture, and in Kramsch's words (1993: 231) the goal of developing such awareness "is not a balance of opposites, or a moderate pluralism of opinions but a paradoxical, irreducible confrontation that may change one in the process".

The workshop participants' views

At this point it is interesting to introduce and discuss some of the principles worked out during group work at the project workshop. How do teacher educators in Europe regard culture? Do they still see culture primarily in terms of cultural knowledge as a backdrop to language learning like many of their language teaching colleagues or do the principles indicate views where culture and language are two aspects of the same thing?

The first set of principles is concerned with views on the relationship between the two cultures:

1. Intercultural awareness is based on both one's own and the target culture.
2. There is no single culture for any one person.

3. Students' cultural capital and experiences have to be considered.
4. Begin with pupils' own experiences of the target language community.
5. Intercultural awareness develops through emotional experiences.

The above statements show that foreign language teacher educators are fully aware of the interrelationship between cultures, one's own and the target culture. There is also an awareness of learners being members of different cultural communities within their own language community. This entails a view that any culture is polyphonic and it questions the view of a national culture as homogenous. The principles show that the way one works with culture in the classroom is important for the development of cultural awareness. This is clear, for instance, in points 3 and 4, where the starting point for teaching is the learner's pre-knowledge. In practice this implies that the teacher has to discover the individual's knowledge through various classroom procedures in order to build on existing knowledge. It also entails a form of teaching which takes the individual learner into account.

The last point is interesting, but needs questioning. Clearly emotions come into all aspects of language learning. A negative attitude towards a foreign culture has to be investigated as it impedes motivation. Such an attitude has to be challenged by both the teacher and by peers. On the other hand, positive experience will function as a motivating factor. As teachers have little control of learners' previous experience or any experience outside school, it is an important point to discuss in relation to intercultural awareness. It is, however, difficult to accept that intercultural awareness should be left solely to emotional experience. Certainly awareness is, to a large extent, the result of teaching and learning procedures in school. The learners' personal engagement is necessary, but emotional engagement is not enough. As teachers and teacher educators we need to insist that intercultural awareness is also developed through intellectual experience, an intellectual experience which can balance emotional experience. In some cases, where the emotional experience is positive, it needs to be enhanced. If the emotional experience has been the cause for developing negative attitudes and stereotyped views towards the target culture, it needs to be reflected upon, discussed and challenged.

Another set of principles deals mainly with approaches to developing cultural competence in the classroom. The following examples show some ways in which teacher educators see this done:

1. Provide contact with people from the target language community
2. Identify stereotypes and question these
3. Objective discussion of target culture
4. Value-free/non-prejudiced comparison of own culture and target culture

5. Find the common denominators of both cultures
6. Establish clashes between the two cultures and work on them (emotionally as well as intellectually)
7. Reflection and awareness-raising of own identity
8. Emphasise tolerance
9. Avoid prejudice and stereotypes
10. Guide the learner from perceiving and discussing the target culture to accepting it
11. Guide the learners from facts via tolerance to acceptance.

Several of these principles show that the participants take the interrelationship between cultures as a matter of course. Some of the points also include cognitive processes to promote intercultural awareness. The first one states the necessity of contact between individual representatives of the two cultures. Face-to-face contact is not always easy to provide, but virtual contact can be provided in most foreign language classrooms. It needs to be stated that encountering written texts as well as multimodal texts also provides contact between the two cultures. In addition such contacts increase the scope of cultural encounters in that texts can provide diachronic communication, for example by reading texts written in the past.

Points 2 to 6 indicate classroom procedures. Regarding points 3 and 4, it might be difficult to see how this is at all possible if we regard the learner's culture as part of the intercultural communication. Not even teachers can put their values aside and be purely objective. What type of material, for instance, could be used to present objective views of the foreign culture? Factual texts are rarely objective, not even in textbooks, and fiction makes no attempt at being objective. Their main interest is precisely that they present a personal voice of a culture. What can be done, however, is to provide learners with different values and subjective presentations and then discuss them, hoping that an informed and more balanced view will be the result.

In point 7 reflection and awareness-raising are emphasised in relation to the learner's own identity. This must also include one's own identity as a member of a cultural community and in relation to the foreign culture. Learners need to see the possible enhancement of personal development through learning a foreign language. It widens the personal horizon in the encounter with the horizon of the other during a process of communication where attitudes have to be adjusted and schemas have to be reorganised (Gadamer in Hellesnes, 1988; Rommetveit, 1992; Foucault in Falzon, 1998).

The two following points, 8 and 9, can perhaps be seen as slightly moralistic. When teachers have to face prejudiced views from the learners, it is not sufficient to inform them that tolerance is necessary. This has to be worked on over time. Prejudiced views need to be questioned and discussed. Avoiding stereotypes is, consequently, not the

answer. As stated above, they have to be brought out in the open and discussed, and one has to look for and, if possible, explain causes of such views. This is true both of stereotypes in one's own culture as well as in the target culture.

The two final points are related to the foreign language teacher's role as guide and resource person in the classroom. Points 10 and 11 seem deceptively easy, but are in practical terms very difficult. A number of classroom procedures can support processes from facts, perceptions and discussions to accepting attitudes, but it is beyond this paper to go into these. The most important thing for the foreign language teacher to be aware of is that developing positive attitudes is not an automatic result of language teaching, and it is not even an automatic result of reflection and discussion of one's own and the target language cultures.

This discussion of the workshop participants' views on intercultural awareness and teaching culture indicate a clear acceptance of the implications of learners as members of cultural communities encountering another cultural community. The principles also show that the participants knew a lot about classroom processes regarding the development of intercultural awareness as an integral part of language learning. How these processes are recognisable in specific tasks and procedures in the classroom is less clear. The materials collected by the participants before the workshop showed very few examples of such procedures. Activities and tasks in textbooks are still primarily related to knowledge about the foreign culture and sociocultural behaviour. There were, however, two main exceptions: literature and human rights teaching. Both topics are given separate sections in this publication and will only be discussed very briefly here.

The role of literature in promoting intercultural awareness

Historically, literature has played a central role in culture teaching in secondary and tertiary foreign language education. It represented a large part of cultural knowledge to be gained by learners. With the natural approach and later the audiolingual approach, its role in lower secondary classrooms was reduced, while upper secondary foreign language teaching was less affected by new approaches. CLT did not to any great extent influence the stronghold of literature at higher school levels. At primary and lower secondary levels, however, literature lost out even more than before. Although the focus was on authentic texts, these were often concerned with facts and everyday life, or what was termed "real life" situations. "Real life" referred to life outside school and primarily non-fictional texts.

This seems to me a strange distinction. For learners, school is an important part of real life and texts in the foreign language classroom, both factual and literary, must be seen as representations of real life, as any cultural artefact. As stated earlier, Kramsch (1998)

defines people's imagination as one layer of culture and this layer can be accessed through reading literary texts. Literature must be seen as representing the personal voice of a culture (Fenner, 2001) and thus should make up a considerable part of the content of foreign language teaching. It constitutes an important part of the knowledge, *savoir*, to be gained as a basis for developing intercultural competence and awareness.

The introduction of the communicative approach turned the focus from the teacher to the learner and to the learner's use of the target language. As I have discussed in the chapter on learner autonomy, this ties in with constructivist and social constructivist learning theory, where the individual learner's anticipation and construing of events need to be considered, and where spoken interaction between learners is essential for developing both language and thinking (Kelly, 1953; Vygotsky, 1991). CLT was originally, however, less concerned with the content of classroom communication. As long as learners produced meaningful, context-relevant language through activities, the content and quality of the meaningful and situational language was less important.

Along with a shift of focus from teaching to learning came a shift in literary theory towards receptionist theory and the learner's text (Fish, 1980). This has resulted in an altered attitude to teaching literature in the classroom. From methods largely based on New Criticism and structuralism, the focus in many classrooms has shifted to approaches based on hermeneutics and the individual's interpretation of the literary text as a basis for classroom reflection and discussion. With the view that the aim of reading literature is not only to discover the author's intention or the accepted meaning of a literary artefact or even the teacher's interpretation of it, the literary text has again become important in foreign language teaching and learning. Teachers cannot compete with the cultural influences learners are exposed to outside the classroom, like music, television and other forms of entertainment. For the development of cultural awareness, it is important that teachers do not feel they have to compete, but can use and add something to the outside influence. Many young people do not read extensively outside the classroom, and hence foreign language educators can assist the enhancement of the learners' cultural capital by spending more time on reading, reflecting on and discussing literature as the personal voice of a culture (Fenner, 2001) in the foreign language classroom and can thus help the learners' development of cultural awareness and identity (Fenner, forthcoming).

A nation's culture is related to artefacts as well to the way people perceive those artefacts. Literature is often regarded as "high culture", certainly when we talk about classical texts. Although we see learning partly as an individual activity, it is also a shared activity. This is precisely what makes learning a language in school different from learning languages outside of school. There are overall aims of *Bildung* and personal development in most European educational institutions and language teaching

plays an important part in this educational project. The aim of *savoir-être* in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* can also be interpreted as *Bildung*. In my article on autonomy in this publication, the content of foreign language teaching and learning was discussed, using Klafki's three categories of *Bildung* theory: material *Bildung*, formal *Bildung* and categorial *Bildung* (Aase, 2003), where the first is related to the content or the material used in the classroom, and the second to approaches and ways of working. The third one relates to using examples from the cultural heritage of a nation to involve learners in their developmental process as educated individuals and members of a cultural community with certain shared values. With the grammar-translation method the focus was on material *Bildung*; with the communicative approach the focus shifted to formal *Bildung*. When focusing on intercultural awareness, a balance has to be established where a shared, dynamic cultural heritage in itself is important. Learners of foreign languages need to see themselves not only as individual language users, but also as carriers of and participants in a common cultural heritage. Learning a foreign language means being socialised into a culture, and this socialisation process entails participating in the cultural heritage of the target language community.

What we have called post-communicative language teaching, in order to distinguish it from the communicative teaching of the 1970s and 1980s, needs to take into consideration the fact that both cultural knowledge and competence are important in foreign language learning. As part of the work on intercultural awareness, literature has edged its way back into foreign language teaching. In order to become a member of a different language community one has to know that community's cultural heritage and its present and past cultural expressions. These are not only important as examples of language use, but have to be recognised as having an inherent value of their own.

At this point, it might be interesting to see how the participants at the workshop regarded literature. Some working groups chose to pay special attention to this aspect of culture. As far as the role of literature in developing intercultural competence is concerned, the following principles were put forward by the participants at the workshop:

1. Intercultural awareness is also developed by means of literature.
2. Authentic texts provide an authentic situation of language use.
3. Literary texts should be used to promote linguistic and social meaning.
4. Choose texts that are enjoyable, interesting, motivating, challenging and capable of extending the students' interests.
5. Challenging texts should be chosen to develop critical thinking (ironic texts, parodies, texts displaying intertextuality).

These principles clearly state that literature has a place in foreign language teaching related to the development of intercultural awareness because it is authentic and because it carries social and linguistic meaning. The third point can be interpreted as fairly instrumental, where literature is used to provide examples of language use and social meaning and not for its own value. The fourth point is related to enjoyment and motivation, reasons often given for using literature in foreign language teaching. Extending learners' interests is furthermore a valuable aim in foreign language learning, but it is only a procedural one. The last point about challenge and literature as a means for developing critical thinking are also valuable aims, but on its own it is fairly instrumental. One would like to pose the question of whether literature cannot be seen as an aim in itself when used in foreign language learning. The above principles seen as a whole, however, cover multiple reasons for using literary texts in the classroom to promote intercultural awareness.

A second list of principles is related to procedures of teaching literature:

1. Communication with a text from the perspective of the pupil's own identity and in order to promote personal development.
2. Pupils choose their own texts.
3. Reading literature means dialogic communication and negotiation of meaning.
4. Literature is approached through open questions.

The list presents statements which are easy to agree with. The first one states a fact which according to learning theory discussed in this and the previous chapter on learner autonomy is a matter of course. The learner cannot approach a text with anything but his/her own identity as the starting point, identity understood as both habitus, cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1994) and previous experience. The uncertainty in this situation is whether the teacher really understands and accepts the consequences of such a starting point for teaching, which implies that he/she has to be familiar with the learner's knowledge and personal and literary experience. The second part of the first sentence implies aims of literature teaching, and again it is easily acceptable that promoting personal development is a worthy aim. The question that arises here is whether this is sufficient. Is reading and learning from literature only a matter of personal development?

A literary text in the foreign language classroom should give readers the opportunity to respond personally from their own perspective. If the learner's own perspective was the only one focused on, however, there would be little awareness-raising related to the target language and culture. The learners must be led to understand that their perspectives are limited and monocultural unless they have gained knowledge about the target language and culture. In traditional FL teaching views of culture were

monocultural in that they focused solely on the target language and culture, whereas today there is a danger that there is too much focus on the individual learner's personality, identity and source culture understanding. Unless there is knowledge and an understanding of both cultures, there is no dialogue between the two and it is difficult to obtain the necessary outside and critical perspective of one's own culture as well as the target one, which must be a requirement for intercultural awareness.

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) and human rights teaching

As part of intercultural awareness in foreign language learning and teaching, there are two recent and strong developments that need to be discussed briefly at this point, although they will also be treated separately in this publication: CLIL and human rights teaching. Both movements prove the importance of content in foreign language learning. As I have previously discussed in this chapter, it is not sufficient to focus on sociocultural behavioural competence; learners also need to gain knowledge about society and about a number of school subjects in the target language. In educational institutions where *Bildung* has been emphasised this has always been an aspect of foreign language teaching and learning at secondary school level and a purely instrumental view of language teaching has been frowned upon. What is new is that content is also focused on at lower levels of education.

There are, however, traps that teacher educators, teachers and textbook writers need to be aware of in the recent development of CLIL. One is an immersion in factual texts where specific language issues are forgotten; another is that too much focus is put on learning vocabulary as was seen with early ESP (English for specific purposes) teaching. It is an instrumental fallacy to believe that knowing vocabulary within a specific subject area enables learners to really understand the subject. Another question which has to be posed is who is going to teach these various subject areas: is it the foreign language teacher or is it the teacher who knows the subject? The foreign language teacher will never have the same insight into the field of knowledge in question as the subject teacher, while the teacher of the specific subject will never have the same insight into the foreign language as a qualified foreign language teacher. I am not trying to say that foreign language learning should not deal with a wide scope of content matter, only that one has to be aware of the fallacies and not lose sight of the fact that foreign languages as school subjects have their own values and that teaching them has to be recognised as a specific qualification.

As far as human rights are concerned, these have been a part of curricula in all subjects in many European countries for a long time. It is, however, not difficult to see the need to focus on these subject areas in foreign language learning in, for instance, the new

democracies of Europe. Both CLIL and human rights teaching emphasise the importance of content in the process of developing intercultural awareness as well as emphasising the interdependence of language and culture. The aim of teaching and learning through discussing human rights extends the development of self to include the development of communities, or in Starkey's words (2005: 66): "Learning a new language gives access to potential new identities. This challenges any notion of citizenship as associated primarily with monolithic national identities."

Again we need to be aware of the dangers of promoting a specific content area as the best way to learn a foreign language. Foucault's term "oppressor" is used to make us aware of the role we automatically take on in communication with the other and it is, therefore, an obstacle to understanding of and insight into the target culture. Automatically we will try to persuade the other of our own views and impose our own values on the target culture. Foucault compares this attitude to the role of colonial powers as oppressors. Although there is no disagreement about the values of human rights, we need to be aware of the role of the oppressor if we try to impose them on others through foreign language teaching and learning. We have as teachers, teacher educators and textbook writers dealing with young, impressionable learners a certain obligation not to use our influence to preach moralism. Young people need to learn the difference between right and wrong and to respect others, both as individuals and as members of a cultural community, but we need to be careful not to fall into Foucault's category of the oppressor. Intercultural awareness is based on a dialogue with the target culture. Such dialogue includes communicating with the past, both one's own cultural past and that of the target culture, whether it is a cultural heritage we are proud of or not. What Starkey, as quoted above, calls "potential new identities" will always be founded on old national identities if we accept the notion of interculturality.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced the development of the view of culture in foreign language learning, in particular its development since the introduction of the communicative approach. It has discussed how the acceptance of sociocultural competence as an integral part of communicative competence entails a paradigmatic change in the view of culture teaching and learning from declarative knowledge to procedural knowledge. Furthermore, it has argued that the gradual change of emphasis from cultural competence to intercultural awareness is both a result of new language learning theories and a result of the extensive work carried out by the Council of Europe within this field, although the categorisation of "general competences" used in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* does not necessarily reflect the multiplicity of this work.

In this chapter I have also tried to promote the role of literature in the foreign language classroom and, as part of this, analysed and discussed the workshop participants' views on culture and literature as an integral part of foreign language learning. The following chapter in this publication explores in more depth the need for literature in the FL classroom. Finally two recent trends in post-communicative language teaching and learning, CLIL and human rights teaching, have been discussed briefly and a few emerging problems and questions have been raised as an introductory note to the chapters in this publication which deal extensively with these issues.

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Integration of citizenship, human rights and language education

Ruxandra Popovici

Introduction

Whilst the topic of human rights education may be considered of great importance by most educators, it is not commonly regarded as falling directly within the scope of the foreign language classroom. The proposal that I would like to put forward in this chapter is that language educators need to be aware of the special potential of the setting provided by the language class to contribute to education for democracy and human rights, which is vital for the peaceful progress of humankind.

I will begin with an analysis of the challenges we face in our contemporary world and in the second section formulate two goals of education that I believe essential in relation to these. The third section will focus on those aspects of language learning that have a direct connection with citizenship and human rights. I will then make an attempt to identify aspects of the citizenship and human rights class that students and teachers of languages are best equipped to handle and can benefit from. In this connection, the role of the language teacher will be briefly examined. Furthermore, special attention will be given to English as an international language.

In the second part of this publication, two case studies will be presented to illustrate the topic, which were either presented at or emerged from the ECML workshop.

Challenges of the 21st century

The overriding phenomenon that people come up with when asked about features they associate with the beginning of the 21st century is globalisation with its key concepts: complexity, incertitude, identity, responsibility (Cogan, 2000). Rapid changes happen in all domains of life. Information and communication technologies break time and space barriers and make the world a completely different environment from that of previous decades. These technologies challenge both modes of working and modes of living. The globalisation of the economy, free trade and mobility of workforces are both acclaimed and rejected, and held responsible for scarcity of resources, economic stagnation or decline in some parts of the world, but also for economic prosperity in others. Internationalisation of education goals, standards, and even systems in some cases raises the controversial questions of reliability, validity, quality assurance and competitiveness.

Deterioration in the quality of the global environment is a threat to all people throughout the world. Global migration across borders, whether for economic, social or political reasons, has intensified. This has led to refugee movements and the spontaneous establishment of new multiethnic nations. Political and sociological studies show that there is practically no culturally homogeneous state.

More than in the past, opposing, often conflicting, processes characterise recent years. At the same time, people are searching for their identity in a world that tends to become more homogenous. "All different, all equal" is a common slogan of human rights organisations worldwide, but reality looks very different.

There is growing tension between global communication networks and the individual's private space. The gap between prosperity and poverty is increasing. The rise of nationalism and of the value of national identity are accompanied by the need for openness to pluralism and diversity. Monocultural relationships are being gradually replaced by intercultural and multicultural ones. Global efforts to maintain peace have increased as a result of the multiplication of wars and armed conflicts in many parts of the world.

This is, at first glance, the "wider" reality of the interconnected forces surrounding us which influence us and which we ourselves are inevitably shaping. These global concerns in conjunction with the learners' environment and immediate reality are necessarily reflected in our classrooms and we cannot ignore them in order to follow pre-established plans. By doing this we would defeat one of the very purposes of education, that of preparing students or rather helping them prepare for life beyond the classroom.

Responses to the challenge of preparing students for life

The first response comes relatively quickly to the mind of those educators who, from experience, know that a fixed system of knowledge is a solution restricted to a limited time frame and space, and, as shown before, these do not correspond to the world we live in. Learning should enable us to cope with existing and rapidly shifting reality, to anticipate what might happen and to find viable and complex solutions to complex situations. Learning generates knowledge, development and progress, and changes our own selves in the process. "Learning is a survival strategy that entails risks and promises returns. It demands the ability to tolerate frustration and confusion; … to be uncertain without becoming insecure" (Claxton, 2001: 15).

The natural learning capacity of human beings can and needs to be enhanced. We are born to be learners but it takes education to develop our learning powers confidently in

a beneficial way for ourselves and the others. Specific policies, programmes and methods for learning to learn and autonomous learning have been formulated and applied in schools in recent years. Students need to develop the ability and the motivation to become learners not only to fulfil the instrumental and social needs of acquiring knowledge and skills, but also to be in harmony with their wish to develop. According to Wells and Claxton (2002), education at this point in history is essentially about the development of a mind to learn.

The second response, not unrelated to the first, which I would like to propose here, is the urgent need generated by present times to develop within our students the skills, values and behaviours of learning to live together.[6] This initially straightforward concept can best be explained by analysing what it entails. Sinclair (2004) identifies the goals that can be achieved through consistent "learning to live together" programmes: conflict prevention and resolution, tolerance, respect for the health of one's fellows and of the environment, and also learning for intercultural communication. When reconstructed, its entire complexity and power can be seen. "'Learning to live together' … [is] the synthesis of many related goals, such as education for peace, human rights, citizenship and health-preserving behaviours" (Braslavsky, 2004: 1). On reflection, it becomes obvious that education for democratic citizenship, often used as an overriding concept for the thematic fields mentioned above, brings learners as close as possible to addressing confidently the political, social, economic and cultural challenges of our world today. It is worth showing, albeit briefly, that the concept of "citizenship" has moved away from the close association with nation state and nationality, into "democratic citizenship", which expresses the idea of living harmoniously in respect of diversity and the rule of law at local and wider levels.

More recent studies propose the concepts of "multidimensional citizenship" (Cogan, 2000) and "cosmopolitan citizenship" (Osler, 2005), both in connection with the ability to make explicit connections between local, national and global concerns and to engage in democratic processes at all levels. Cosmopolitan citizenship "will enable learners to recognise our common humanity and provide a sense of belonging to a global community" (Osler, 2005: 20). This new concept of citizenship builds on human rights, the internationally agreed basic standards for a life lived in dignity, which allow individuals and communities to develop fully. In order to achieve its goals, education for democracy and human rights should not be left to happen spontaneously. There must be strategic thinking and the necessary will to develop systematic programmes at all levels and in all fields of education; this entails taking a whole school approach and establishing links with the community at large.

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6 Delors et al., "Learning the treasure within: report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century", Paris, UNESCO, 1996.

Language education and education for democratic citizenship and human rights

Language education is an essential part of education for citizenship and vice versa. This holds true for all subjects in the curriculum. But what makes the relationship between education for democratic citizenship and language education special? The two domains share issues such as identity, cultural heritage, communication, understanding and participation. The use of one's language and the freedom of expression are stated in key documents on human rights and citizen rights as being among the rights of every citizen. Language education policies are seen as a priority area for the activities of the United Nations and of its constituent bodies, such as UNESCO, as well as for the Council of Europe. Similarly, Council of Europe institutions specifically concerned with language education policies such as the Language Policy Division and the ECML adhere to the Council of Europe recommendation which states that "education for democratic citizenship is fundamental to the Council of Europe's primary task of promoting a free, tolerant and just society, and that it contributes … to defending the values and principles of freedom, pluralism, human rights and the rule of law, which are the foundations of democracy" (Council of Europe, 2002: 2).

A significant aspect of learning a language different from one's own involves reaching beyond the co-ordinates and framework of your own language and culture into the expression of a new language and culture and even a new conceptual framework. This is not a unilateral process but a complex and interactive one, "… a dialogue and therefore part of a communication process mutually influencing participants" (Fenner 2001: 6). Without aiming to develop intercultural competence in our language classroom, this "dialogue" cannot happen. This ability to know and understand "the other" as well as ourselves and recreate both "source" and "target" cultures in the process is perhaps the most significant aspect that distinguishes first language acquisition from learning a different language.

Discussing the moral and political dimension of language learning, Michael Byram (2004: 1) reinforces that "[l]anguage teaching should not be just the development of skills and communication but the place where people are encouraged and given the opportunity to take a critical view of the ways in which other people and they themselves live in the societies". These considerations lead directly to the idea that modern language education is probably the most efficient "site" for democratic citizenship and human rights, to use the Council of Europe term. One reason is that "… the content of language teaching has for long been flexible, including literature, cultural awareness, media studies, and the debates of topical issues" (Starkey, 2002: 20).

Learning another language is also an interdisciplinary exploration. The opportunity given to learners to access other subjects and domains, such as history, science, geography and environment, enriches their perspective on life, has a positive influence on their thinking capacity and helps them discover for themselves the principle of interdependence, which is basic for citizenship education. In addition to content, education for citizenship and human rights and language education share certain pedagogical principles. The pedagogy of the language classroom is not only conducive to education for citizenship and human rights but can be seen in itself as a representation of their principles. Interactive and participatory methodologies, learner-centeredness principles, exposure to a variety of tasks and methods to cater for different learning (and teaching) styles and encouragement of free expression of opinion are democratic human rights principles in their own right.

We have seen so far that the stringent need for citizenship and human rights education has been generated by the world we live in and that we, as teachers, cannot neglect these aspects, which are central to the growth and development of 21st-century learners. We have also examined the huge and unique potential of language teaching to contribute to education for democratic citizenship and human rights.

At this point it may be useful to emphasise some aspects central to citizenship education which we can include or develop in the language class. By doing so, it will become more obvious how the language class can benefit from incorporating more specific citizenship and human rights education content and methodology. These aspects can be considered equally by language teachers, teacher educators, materials writers and curriculum designers. This list should not be seen as in any way prescriptive, nor is it complete. It includes pedagogic principles, methodological approaches, teaching methods, curriculum aspects and activity types, in an attempt to encourage reflection rather than provide clear categorisation.

Some aspects of a citizenship and language class

- a flexible, process syllabus which can be discussed and negotiated with the students. This motivates them and creates a sense of responsibility on their part;
- the systematic and recurrent introduction of a variety of topics and issues in the area of citizenship and human rights such as identity, human dignity, conflict, violence and peace, rights and responsibilities, and equality and discrimination. The occurrence of such topics in texts (factual and fictional), in discussions and activities, will gradually develop values and attitudes of respect and protection of rights;
- analysis of facts and situations seen from different perspectives and coming from different sources. Students become aware of different points of view, of the

complexity of natural and social phenomena. They can themselves formulate ethical principles applicable to other spheres of their activity;

- use of debates on human rights issues as a way to teach free and confident communication, and to develop students' cognitive skills such as analysis, synthesis, enquiry and critical thinking;
- reflection on controversial issues to help learners reflect critically, accept other points of view and defend their opinions in a robust and non-aggressive way;
- experiential learning by which students engage in role play and simulation activities and get a better understanding of and sometimes different perspectives on certain issues;
- active learning by which students are asked to reflect critically on their task, on the processes by which the task is carried out, on their role in the group, on their performance and on ways to improve their achievement;
- vicarious learning by which students can make judgments and develop attitudes while observing other people's actions and behaviours;
- exposure to "rights in conflict situations", to encourage creative problem solving, divergent thinking and the value of calm and unbiased consideration towards a "win-win" situation;
- tasks that require conflict resolution and mediation skills. Students learn to listen actively, to give and take feedback, to control their emotions and form an unbiased viewpoint;
- multiple-alternative situations in order to prepare students to reflect and evaluate critically and make informed choices;
- activities relating authentic case studies to the students' personal experience and context. Personalisation activities enhance motivation and retention and help internalise learning;
- tasks that develop students' commitment to taking appropriate action (for example, letters, planning campaigns, fund-raising programmes) for the protection of human rights. Decision making and social strategies are required. Students' commitment to participation goes together with an empathic and responsible attitude and enables them to make decisions and evaluate future consequences of present actions;
- project work activities in lessons to encourage students to plan, organise, research, evaluate and present the results of their task and to give them the chance to use their specific abilities and talents. As a result, they develop planning and organisation strategies, self-study and "learning to learn" skills, interpersonal skills and self-esteem;
- opportunities for projects outside the classroom, both at school and outside-school levels. In addition, this type of activity will develop students' research skills and help them to interconnect with the wider community. Projects which require teachers and students to work together and projects which build on the content and

pedagogy of other subjects are powerful in enhancing the school ethos and in establishing the spirit of communities of enquiry and experimentation.

These tasks and activities are likely to cater for most of the students' learning styles, abilities and interests. Their motivation and self-esteem will generate learning and successful performance, and will assist students in gradually attaining self-actualisation, the highest level condition for a person's fulfilment (Maslow, 1970).

A closer examination of the suggestions above shows that the learning outcomes of each activity are in the areas of (meta)cognitive skills, action and social skills, values, attitudes and behaviours. These fields form the working framework for citizenship and human rights education, in which all these aspects are developed in conjunction. Citizenship and human rights education addresses students as "whole persons". If we consider Brown's criteria (2000: 1) for success in communication in the second language class: total commitment, total involvement and total physical, intellectual, and emotional response, the tight link between and mutual benefits of the two fields of language and citizenship become clearly apparent.

The role of the language teachers in promoting citizenship and human rights education

Language teachers have the necessary background and tools for playing a central role in promoting citizenship and human rights values. They can draw on their own valuable intralanguage, interlanguage and intercultural experience as language learners themselves, while helping students establish the relationship with the target language. Many language teachers are open to new ideas and share the values of democratic practices. However, if they are to take more specific steps in this direction, language teachers have to endeavour to gain an insight of the concepts of citizenship and human rights, to analyse the principles behind them and engage fully with the methodology of citizenship education (Brown and Brown, 2003: 4). They will also have to be aware of the specific needs of their own students and be sensitive to the local culture if they want this new approach to be successful, which means being valid and coherent at individual, community and society levels.

For in-service and pre-service teacher educators who want to engage with these new ideas, the challenge is to enable teachers to reflect pertinently and critically on the connection between classroom practice and citizenship and human rights education principles, and the eclectic combination of theories and theoretical approaches that are generally seen to support them: cognitivism, multiple intelligences theory, social constructivism and humanistic psychology.

Finally, the teachers need to be themselves motivated and committed to overcoming prejudice and discrimination, to supporting democratic practices through responsible action. By broadening the context of their language lesson, the teachers will develop personally and professionally and will be well equipped to support their students through the same process. If language teachers, educators, researchers and policy makers are committed to this educational perspective, they should work together to plan and design a coherent framework for citizenship, human rights and language education policy to cover teacher education courses, curricula, instructional materials and classroom methodology.

English as an international language

The new and growing status of English as international or global language needs a separate and thorough discussion, which cannot be completed within the boundaries of this article. However, a few considerations on the characteristics and the teaching of English as an international language will shed more light on the topic under discussion.

Educationalists and linguists are all agreed that the one main educational goal of the international English classroom is the development of skills for global communication and multicultural competence. English is gradually being recognised as a global language not necessarily on the grounds of numbers of speakers but of numbers of countries that people using it belong to. Another attribute of English as an international language is that it is widely used as a communication tool between non-native speakers belonging to a diversity of nations and cultures. As a consequence, discussions of its role have acquired a moral and political dimension.

The complexity of the phenomenon is revealed by the existence of diverse views in relation to its effects. McKay (2002: 24) expresses her concern that English proficiency is related to economic resources and that lack of access to English leaves many people at a disadvantage. A quite different concern is the fact that international English is not represented by a specific culture. In contrast to this, other views see international English not as a variety of English, but the expression of its scope and goals, and consequently recognise the existence of several cultures supporting it, including native English-speaking cultures and the wide variety of cultures that non-native users of English belong to. It follows from this view that teaching English as an international language means teaching values and attitudes that help students connect the international, national and personal dimensions with an understanding of and respect for linguistic and cultural diversity.

The challenging role of teachers of English is to enable the dialogue between the source culture (students' own language and culture), the target culture ("English as mother

tongue" cultures) and cultures of other speakers with whom the students are likely to communicate in English. It follows that the international English class is a site for democratic citizenship and human rights almost by definition. The two fields share the same culture of learning and, very significantly, share almost completely their goals and content. Consequently, teachers of English need a background in human rights and democratic citizenship as they are responsible for guiding the development of democratic global citizens and intercultural speakers.

Conclusion

Globalisation and increased interdependence are undeniable realities of our world. "Organisations, people and events over which we may have little influence affect our everyday lives" (Osler, 2005: 19). Only by preparing young people to know and understand the world and its different contexts, to analyse it critically and to be committed to promoting democratic practices and taking action against the infringement of rights can there be hope for a better world free of injustice, violence and prejudice. Teachers have a huge and important responsibility in this respect and the language class can act as a model for this type of education.

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Social and cultural awareness as overruling goals in foreign language course design

Ruth Pappenheim

In spite of Europe's long multiethnic and multilingual tradition, the need for European citizens to develop awareness, understanding and appraisal of Europe's and the world's cultural richness continues to be a core issue for peaceful coexistence amongst various social and cultural groups. As Hugh Starkey (2002: 29) has stated:

> Citizens in a democracy need intercultural skills for living in communities where cultural diversity is the norm. They need critical cultural awareness to understand the world around them and challenge injustice, complacency, social exclusion and unwarranted discrimination. The construction of a peaceful, democratic and multicultural Europe requires plurilingual citizens.

Thus, plurilingualism can be considered as a necessary condition for communication amongst diverse cultural groups. However, it is important to consider that multilingualism does not automatically guarantee the formation of a tolerant attitude. In fact, I have known more than a few cases of multilingual individuals who have lived in intercultural environments and still display discriminatory or intolerant behaviours. Although the experience of learning a new language does broaden horizons and allows for access to knowledge of different countries and cultures, it does not necessarily lead to an understanding and acceptance of cultural and social diversity. Such issues need to be consciously addressed in the design of language teaching and teacher education courses. Hence, social awareness and intercultural competence should systematically steer the process of acquiring a foreign language.

Integrating language and content towards an awareness of global citizenship

One of the most salient contributions to language teaching in recent years is the content-based approach called content and language integrated learning (CLIL), which aims at providing opportunities, within relatively "natural" environments, for students to acquire a foreign language whilst genuinely involved in dealing with topics of their own interest, rather than focusing primarily on the language as such (Marsh, 2002, 2005). However, the main development of CLIL has taken place in the academic environment in terms of an additional aspect of language courses. Contrary to Marsh's

position (2002),[7] it is my claim that the aims of CLIL, namely providing students with an opportunity to get involved in activities related to thought-provoking topics connected to the students' real world and interests, can and should be achieved within language courses and should not only be constrained to additional spaces. As a matter of fact, the ultimate goal of language education is envisaged as the development of both communicative and cultural competences for an effective, meaningful and open-minded social performance, especially, but not exclusively, in intercultural relationships. Correspondingly, participation in content-based, social and communicative processes should be the essence of language courses at all levels.

Antonio Roldán's paper in this publication illustrates how human rights can be a feasible and relevant issue in the context of foreign language teaching at the beginner's level at school. Here I will show, in the light of my experience in intermediary and advanced Spanish courses in tertiary education, how topics related to social and cultural awareness can be introduced not only in order to have interesting topics to read, write and talk about but also to provide an opportunity to foster tolerance and respect towards different people, their ways of life and their values.

This paper has been written with the conviction that language courses at different levels should allow for discussions that transcend the constantly repeated topics in language courses. Thus, foreign language courses at any level can be an occasion for students to enrich their knowledge of the world, broadening their horizons and developing positive attitudes towards otherness. It is my purpose to show that language courses can be viewed as opportunities to develop both knowledge and skills towards an integrated acquisition of linguistic, communicative and intercultural competence. I will also show that there are ways to provide space to develop awareness for real-life issues such as cultural diversity and multiplicity of living conditions. Thus, content-oriented language teaching can mean much more than merely providing a "working language"; language courses are the ideal space to reflect and develop communicative competences on cultural and ethical issues, for which there is seldom space in other subject matters in formal education.

Rather than "integrating language with non-language content" (Marsh, 2002) as separate items, it is our focus to start foreign language teaching units with the perspective of communicative interaction having a social purpose in mind. Accordingly, it is my suggestion that the starting point for curriculum and syllabus design be comprehensive interactive processes that allow involvement in oral and

7 "Whereas the hallmark of this methodology is an integrated, process-oriented approach to language teaching, the requisites for success require exposure. Improving the quality of language teaching would not, itself, provide opportunities for greater exposure."

written communication about issues related to the students themselves, their immediate environment and the outside world. Thus, for example, social and cultural awareness as an overruling concept can be a cohesive element for the design of teaching units: "understanding other people's way of thinking" and "expressing one's own opinion on other people's way of thinking" can be established as general teaching goals. This, in turn, allows for a specification of learning objectives in terms of social, intercultural and communicative competences in the target language. The ultimate goal of this approach is to generate teaching units as global interactive processes, as a kind of "project work" around a general topic coherently subdivided into more specific topics. Students will thus be involved in a series of activities that will make a coherent whole, since they are all linked together as components designed for the achievement of a common goal. Students will be actively involved by participating in oral and written communication about themselves, their immediate environment and the outside world. The selection of the language issues to be taught (for example, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling) is a second step in curriculum and syllabus design, and is conceived as a range of the "language tools" necessary for the performance of the selected communicative acts in accordance with the communicative topics and goals, as well as with the student's level of language performance (*Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*).

Foreign language courses centred on social issues: language teaching units for levels B2 and C1

Infinite ways of designing a language course around social and cultural awareness could be thought of. Decision making on the contents of a course with this focus relies partly on one's perception of the relationship between language, society and culture. In discussions of cultural awareness in the context of foreign languages, cultural differences between one's own culture and that of the target language arise as the main concern. However, the various concepts of culture – and hence cultural awareness – are much broader. It is my view that the focus on foreign language teaching should not be restricted to a view of intercultural competence conceived as the knowledge and skills attained as you get in contact with another language as such. This is actually part of a broader social competence that is intimately related to communicative competence both for reception and for production (Halliday, 1978; Bourdieu, 1991; Hymes, 1966; Duranti, 1997). Thus, to develop social sensitivity implies the enhancement of a series of social, cultural and communicative competences, in which language skills play a definite role. One of these competences is empathy,[8] namely, the competence of understanding other people or, as it has been stated by Geneviève Zarate (Zarate et al., 2004), an understanding from a different cultural perspective. This implies the ability

8 For an interesting discussion on empathy see: www.illinoisleadership.uiuc.edu/eci-u/cluster/cluster3.asp

to hear and understand not only what other people say but also their intentions as they communicate and their reasons for doing so. It also entails willingness to understand other people's backgrounds, their viewpoints, the way they experience life, etc. This competence is necessary for effective communication, not only with people from other cultures but also with those with whom we share the same culture. Meanings and intentions are conveyed with reference to contextual cues as well as in association with other meanings and connotations. In linguistic anthropology this exchange of semiotic meanings has been referred to as indexical meaning, that is the connection between semiotic elements and their context (Duranti, 1997). This effort to understand and use other ways of communicating (empathy) is a clear pathway for enhancing respect for people of diverse backgrounds.

From this perspective, the intimate relationship between culture and society is, by nature, always present in a language course (Krumm, 2003). As a matter of fact, a language course can be seen as a cultural manifestation in itself, since, from a semiotic perspective (Levi-Strauss, 1963), culture is communication. Correspondingly, for a language course to be an intercultural experience, it should allow for multiple indexical meanings, namely the learning of linguistic communication connected to multiple internal and external contextual references. It is equally important that the interaction in class allows for diverse real or simulated dimensions in interaction, so that participants can experiment with the language in association with diverse social practices. Furthermore, language learning can be the experience *par excellence* to develop empathy by means of a conscious effort to perform a series of communicative functions inherent in class interaction, such as apologising, encouraging or politely showing disapproval, using the linguistic and interactive resources of the target language (Zarate et al., 2004: 115)

Let us now turn to a practical consideration of the approach proposed in this paper. With this purpose in mind, I will illustrate ways of designing content-based curricula and syllabi around topics related to social awareness and human rights issues in the light of my courses, Spanish 2 and Spanish 3, at the Institut für Romanistik at Vienna University.

Developing sensitivity to otherness in a foreign language course

In order to achieve the ultimate goal of enhancing students' sociocultural and communicative competence in Spanish, I have designed the course Spanish 2, which aims at achieving level B2 in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, around the topic "the human condition". With the purpose of offering an opportunity to reflect on a wide range of subjects, I have tried to include in this course as much variety as possible in terms of specific topics, types of readings and types of

tasks, referring mainly but not exclusively to the human condition in Spanish-speaking contexts. The course is divided into four projects, namely sets of systematic co-operative tasks aimed at dealing with a specific subtopic.

The first one is a discussion on different kinds of people. This topic has been selected to stimulate awareness of otherness, considering people's values and limitations, their lifestyles as well as their aims and motivations in life. Thus, in order to enhance social sensitivity, our starting point is a reflection on people and their conditions. The project ends with a discussion around the question "What is the difference between ordinary people and 'exceptional' people or 'different' people?" After being confronted with readings on exceptional people and people with disabilities, students have expressed, in subsequent activities for oral and written communication, multiple convictions and criticisms, such as the following:

- there is no such thing as an ordinary person. Everybody is special;
- people with disabilities also have special qualities. Society does wrong in labelling them as "abnormal";
- I am aware of my difficulties in getting along with disabled people.

After having approached the aim of understanding other people from a rather intellectual point of view (through academic writing and discussions), the second project aims at "putting students into other people's shoes" in order to express their feelings and interact using Spanish as their means of communication. Nobel Prize winner Gabriel García Márquez's short story *Sólo vine a hablar por teléfono* (I just came to make a phone call) has proven to be an appropriate reading for this endeavour. The story, which is about a woman who ends up being incarcerated in a mad house as a consequence of misunderstandings, is an excellent text to deal with the issue of communication barriers. After reading and analysing the story, groups of students are assigned a section of the story for which they have to write a script and then act it out in front of the class. In an effort to use their own words in the target language to express feelings and ways to get things done, students actually get to experience the foreign language as a means of expressing their emotions and getting around in society.

The third project also revolves around a work by García Márquez: the chronicle *Shipwrecked sailor,* a breathtaking account of a true story. The aim of this project is to enhance students' linguistic and communicative competence by developing a topic-centred glossary of terms related to nature, physical actions and physiological and psychological sensations. Individual students are assigned to work on a summary of one of the chapters of the book (consisting of 14 short chapters), and the summaries are then used for collective narration of the whole story in class. With the help of an e-learning platform, the glossaries elaborated by the individual students are then shared.

This collectively created glossary is then used as a basis for the creation of a self-invented story (individual work). In this project, the linguistic and communicative aims seem to be more salient than in the previous ones. However, the general topic of the course, the human condition, is as strong as in the other units of the course. The project ends with a discussion on how people like the shipwrecked sailor become heroes because of an accident, a debate that entails thinking about human nature and the influence of society.

The struggle for life in the setting of the Caribbean is again the topic of the fourth and final project. But this time it is not a struggle against nature; it is the struggle for economic survival, where the sea and life in a harbour lead the protagonists of the novel *Ilona llega con la lluvia* (Ilona arrives with the rain), by the Colombian writer Alvaro Mutis, to unexpected ways of life without socially predetermined goals. A comparison of the book and the film leads students to interpret the characters of the novel, thus penetrating the motives for decisions and actions of people who lead a very different kind of life from that of "ordinary people" in a European context.

Focusing this course on a social issue rather than on the foreign language as such does not mean that accuracy and appropriacy in the foreign language are pushed into the background. On the contrary, parallel work on grammar, vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation is carried out as a way of supporting student's performance in their participation in the projects. Thus, for example, for the first project, work on adjectives and the subjunctive are pertinent grammatical elements to support students' work in describing people and expressing their opinions, while the use of verb tenses in narration is an essential grammatical topic for the other three projects. There is not enough space within the limits of this paper to demonstrate the correlation between social issues and the linguistic and communicative aspects pertaining to the tasks developed around those issues. I will restrict myself to illustrating syllabus design in connection with this approach by giving a brief presentation of the aims and objectives of the first unit:

Aim

By being confronted with readings about people catalogued as "disabled" (different) and "outstanding" (special), students will gain awareness of their own way of looking at various kinds of people and will consider the social implications of labelling people.

Communicative objectives

Enhancing competence in the four language skills to perform the communicative functions of:

- describing people (physical features, personality, skills, values, lifestyles);
- narrating anecdotes, experiences and life stories;
- exchanging opinions on people, their qualities and lifestyles.

Language tools

- attributive and predicative adjectives; vocabulary related to people; and euphemisms and their connotations;
- use of the subjunctive and the indicative in the expression of concepts, opinions and viewpoints;
- use of verb tenses in narratives.

It becomes clear in the light of this example that the typical tasks of a foreign language course, such as describing people, can be used to enhance social awareness as part of intercultural competence through thought-provoking activities and topics.

Developing sensitivity towards human rights in a foreign language course

Let us now consider an example of how human rights issues can be dealt with as the ultimate goal of a unit at C1 level. In this case, the goal is to enhance participants' cultural competence in the sense of developing an understanding and respectful attitude towards other people and cultures, as well as developing critical thinking with regard to educational issues. Based on the reading of three important contributions from Spanish-speaking thinkers, students find in this unit an opportunity to reflect and exchange ideas, in class and on an e-learning platform, on the issue of educating people towards cosmopolitan citizenship, which implies openness towards other people and cultures. Students are engaged in a debate on a specific issue related to the general philosophical ideas found in the readings, such as religious tolerance at school, after which they write an essay related to the three readings, the discussion in class, and any other input they may want to add.

The following excerpts from students' papers show the kind of results obtained in this unit:[9]

- It is clear that education is the most important investment a country can make. Our educational level determines our pathways in life. Gómez Buendía says that what best expresses what we are is our way to perceive education, which means that our education is part of our identity. Education is always present in our daily lives.

9 These texts are excerpts from students' essays in Spanish. The English translation is mine.

Rigoberta Menchú also refers to the importance of education as the utmost responsibility of a country.

- Education should enable you to acquire sensibility so as to understand other realities and respect other people's conditions. The more educated you are, the more humble you should be.
- The prototype of a citizen without enough education is a businessman who travels to a different place every week and always demands the same kind of service: a multinational hotel following the same standards, the same food and an English-speaking staff, at least. Unfortunately, the most dominant aspect in globalisation is an economy that produces businessmen and businesswomen without humanist education and without healthy humbleness. They think that understanding economy means understanding life. This shows that they do not understand anything.
- There are people that do not even think about other people's languages and there are unfortunately also people that do not respect these things. The problem is that it is not easy to change other people's old ways of thinking. If people do not learn to think differently, it is almost impossible to teach them to be more honest. That is why it is very important to teach solidarity to young people … If we all learnt to respect each other and to show an interest in other people, our future would be wonderful!

Conclusion

It has been my purpose in this paper to show that by means of a curriculum and syllabus design focused on aspects of intercultural competence such as social and cultural awareness it is possible to integrate language knowledge and skills, communicative competences and social and cultural competences for the implementation of a language policy for mutual understanding and the observation of human rights. Conceiving culture as communication allows infinite possibilities for approaching cultural and social competences in relation to indexical meaning, that is the use of language to establish contextual reference, which is present at all levels and manifestations of human language, ranging from phonology to large discourse units, such as the referential meanings contained in a whole book.

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Promoting intercultural awareness through literature in foreign language teacher education

Smiljana Narančić-Kovać and Martina Kaltenbacher

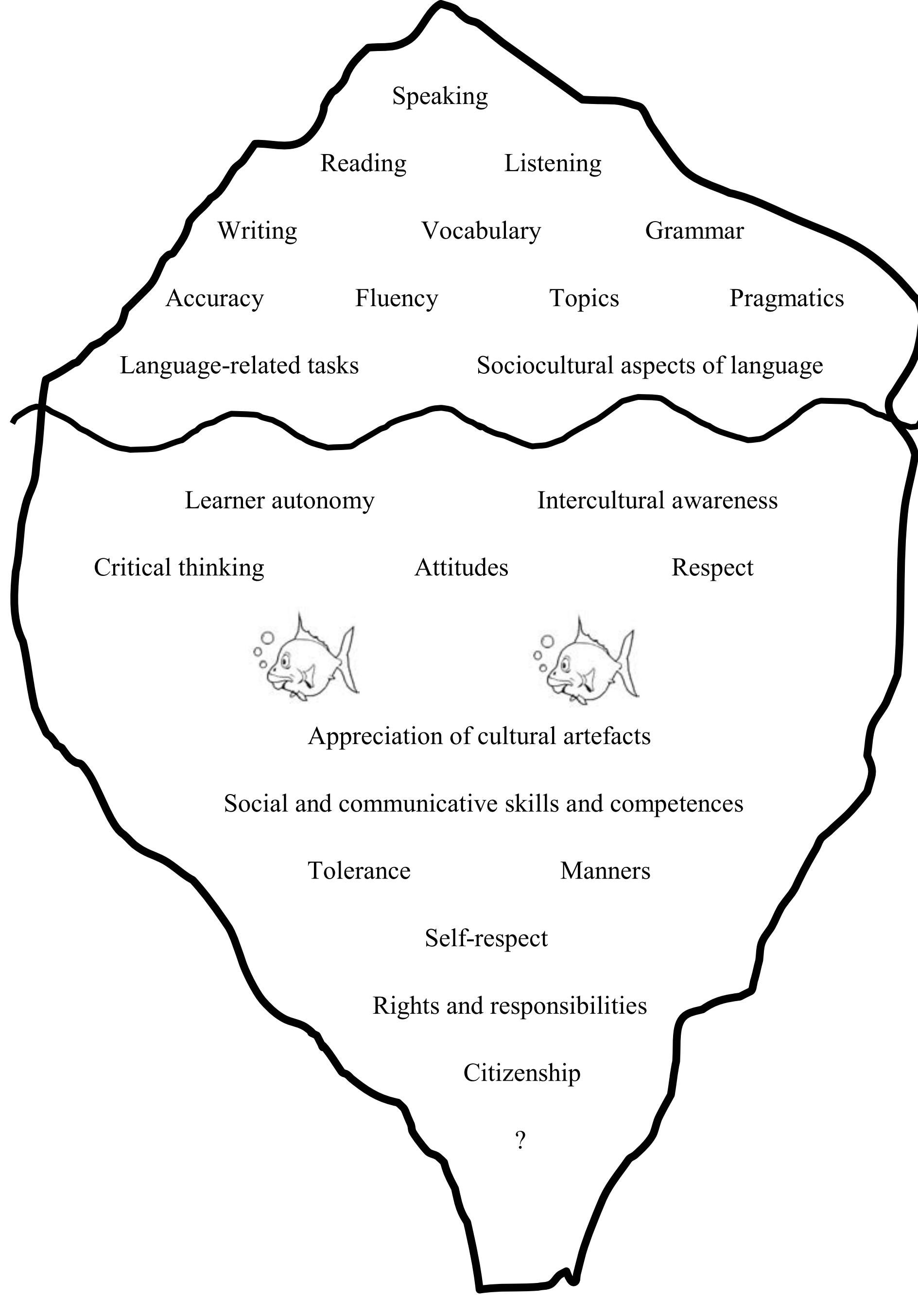
Literature can be, and often is, seen as a means of learning a foreign language. Literary texts are accordingly employed in foreign language classes to practice pronunciation, learn new vocabulary, study grammar, enhance learners' accuracy or fluency, develop the four skills, etc. However, literature can never be reduced solely to its text level and become mere language teaching material. Its potential includes developing personal and social skills as well as culture-related and literature-related aspects, which supersede mere foreign language teaching. Raising intercultural awareness of foreign language learners is a case in point. Literature largely changes the context and the scope of foreign language learning; it re-defines foreign language teaching, shifts its focus towards new goals and makes it more relevant in terms of the complex needs of contemporary learners as participants in global communication – hence the necessity of including literature in foreign language teacher education.

Learning and teaching a foreign language is a complex process. Even viewed as mere language learning, it can be compared to an iceberg (see Figure 1). The comparison reveals that through teaching certain linguistic skills and items of knowledge, we also teach additional skills that are "below the surface", and we may even address attitudes. These latter skills may be more relevant for personal educational and social development than the "surface skills" themselves, but the success of an individual foreign language learner also largely depends on them.

Below-the-surface skills are always present in foreign language teaching, whether we are aware of them or not. Just as in the case of an iceberg, they keep the surface part afloat, and they offer a foundation, which gives the whole structure stability. It is, therefore, important for the foreign language teacher to be aware of the components below the surface. They may not show in someone's performance, but they support it. It seems that good foreign language teachers not only need to develop awareness of the below-the-surface aspects of foreign language learning, but also need to find ways in which their teaching will encourage development of both surface and below-the-surface skills to achieve success.

Literature helps to direct learning towards desired goals. In a way, literature is a double blessing in this context, as it enables teachers to address issues such as intercultural awareness, learner autonomy, critical thinking, citizenship, rights and responsibilities, etc. simultaneously with more strictly foreign language learning issues such as skills, accuracy, vocabulary or pragmatics.

Figure 1: The iceberg of learning and teaching foreign languages



A prerequisite of using literature is choosing the appropriate piece of literature for a particular group of foreign language learners. Teachers should be able to apply criteria that include linguistic, literary, educational and cultural aspects in choosing a text for their class. They also need to be able to judge the historical and problematic or thematic relevance of a piece of literature for the immediate educational context.

Accordingly, teacher education needs to cover the basics of literary theory, an overview of the history of literature, however brief, an insight into contemporary literature, and an overview of children's literature in the targeted foreign language. In addition, it needs to include various aspects of teaching literature in general and of using literature in teaching foreign language in particular. The aspects of literature to be covered in teacher education depend on the ways in which literature may contribute to foreign language teaching and learning.

The status of literature in foreign language learning and teaching

The position of literature in foreign language teaching is nowadays firmly established – at least in general. A number of books, articles, papers, even conferences have been dedicated to the topic. However, Croatian experiences show that teachers do not use literature often enough in foreign language teaching except with young and very young learners. The texts are mostly nursery rhymes, traditional folk tales and fairy tales. Some picture books are also popular. Sadly, literature is not used as much with teenagers and adult learners (teachers complain about the lack of time) unless it is included in the coursebook they use. On the other hand, in Germany, literature is rarely read at elementary and intermediate levels, but is an absolute requirement at advanced stages.

Resources

Teachers who use literature more widely in foreign language teaching largely rely on textbooks or resource books prepared specifically for foreign language contexts. Several books are fairly popular. As a rule, they include authentic literary texts such as fragments of longer texts or entire shorter texts, poems or stories, and various activities prepared for the foreign language classroom. They often include some "language work", ranging from vocabulary enhancement to writing skills. The texts are sometimes organised thematically into units, so that the literary textbooks resemble foreign language coursebooks (for example, McRae and Boardman 1984; Preston 2003). Some of them approach literature more indulgently, encouraging readers to explore the "overall meaning" of the texts and eliciting personal response, connecting the texts to learners' everyday situations (Collie and Porter Ladousse, 1991); others rely more on literary terminology and history (Gower and Pearson, 1986). Several

books suggest and discuss various types of classroom activities based on literature, also providing specific examples and lesson plans (Collie and Slater, 1987; Carter and Long, 1991; Lazar, 1993). Some are predominantly practical and offer guidance in understanding selected texts in addition to various tasks and activities based on those texts, whether focusing mainly on their literary features (McRae and Pantaleoni, 1990), or reading comprehension, vocabulary and pragmatics (Pervan, 2005). Other books emphasise educational (methodological) concerns and analyse suggested activities connected with specific texts (Brewster et al., 1991; Ellis and Brewster, 1991).

Graded readers and simplified texts are sometimes confused with literature. In fact, they are adapted and shortened, one may even venture to say commercialised, versions of authentic texts. They should be considered teaching materials rather than literature. Sometimes fiction written specifically for readers whose language levels or reading skills are not completely developed, for instance young children, also functions as good literature. Examples include *I can read books* by Arnold Lobel and *Beginner readers* by Dr Seuss.

In rare cases teachers choose literary texts and introduce them into foreign language classes, preparing activities themselves and encouraging learners to participate actively. It seems that the need for such an approach has already been recognised in new teacher education programmes in several countries, so that future teachers can be better prepared for the task and more willing to try.

The role of literature in foreign language learning

The above-mentioned resources reveal that literature seems to be an addition to the "more serious" work of teaching a foreign language. Sometimes literature is considered to be interesting and relaxing, so it is used for fun and enjoyment. On the other hand, it is frequently employed to facilitate specific aspects of foreign language learning, such as reading comprehension, or to help learners improve their communicative skills. Occasionally, it is used to prompt or contextualise other activities, or elicit certain responses. Classes share and discuss literary texts to help establish and improve co-operation. Literature is also used to learn about target language cultures, and, at times, it is read to be interpreted, analysed and appreciated simply for what it is.

The significance of theory in literature-related foreign language teaching

As far as the theoretical foundations of reading literature in foreign language classes are concerned, it is perhaps best to look again at some of the above-mentioned books. They combine various theoretical approaches to literature with foreign language

teaching practice, which is often reflected in their subtitles. Thus, for instance, McRae and Boardman (1984) refer to their integrated language and literature approach focusing on literary use of language, which can be identified as a kind of practical criticism based on close reading (Peet and Robinson, 1992: 18-20). Reader-response criticism is also frequently discerned (Collie and Slater 1987; Collie and Porter Ladousse, 1991). Approaches to literature are sometimes described as "creative" (Bassnett and Grundy, 1993; Carter and McRae, 1996), interactive (McRae and Pantaleoni, 1990), or as promoting cultural awareness and critical thinking (Preston, 2003). In some cases multicultural, intercultural or cultural, as well as historical and literary-specific contexts are emphasised (Čaňková, 1997; Lazar, 1993; Preston, 2003).

What all the cited books have in common is a largely flexible approach to literature: generally, they promote reading for enjoyment, connecting texts with personal experiences and establishing dialogue with texts and with peers in the classroom. It can be inferred that despite some theoretical steps towards literary analysis, foreign language teaching promotes reading in terms of reader groups rather than in terms of theoretical analysis. On the whole, literature in foreign language teaching seems to be present more practically than theoretically.

Literary theory seems to be quite elusive in foreign language teaching, or, at least, not really intentionally applied as a consistent framework in any of the analysed textbooks, partly because literature also relies on the theoretical contexts of foreign language teaching. For instance, Carter and Long (1991: 177) give "high priority to language-based, student-centred approaches to literature teaching", thus putting the concerns of foreign language teaching methodology in the foreground, and not an approach to literature itself. Although they discuss some theoretical approaches to literature, it is obvious that their interests lie primarily within the scope of foreign language learning and teaching. They talk about "language" and "students", not stories (novels, poems) and readers.

In a similar way, with an increasing interest in such issues as intercultural awareness and learner autonomy, which arises in the realm of foreign language teaching, literature is again adopted to support respective multicultural and strategic approaches in the foreign language class. Due to its dialogic nature and interpretational potential, literature corresponds with the need to establish an exchange of ideas, a dialogue, which lends itself well to the task of raising learners' awareness – whether of themselves, their own learning strategies, learning styles, etc. (learner autonomy) or of a community, that is of various intercultural issues (intercultural awareness). Literature is not only rich in its underlying ideas and attitudes, but also in open questions. It mediates both meanings and perspectives. Therefore, it incorporates problems to be solved, controversial issues and paradoxical situations at various levels of

interpretation, just as any intercultural or multicultural context does. Literature demands a thinking reader: reflection precedes interpretation. As such, if offers opportunities for a dialogue that is appropriate for a foreign language class: a dialogue that needs to be founded on communication (Fenner, 2001: 23).

Teaching practices and teaching materials for foreign language classes based on literature frequently include typical steps in their suggested lesson plans when a dialogic approach is adopted. Ada's creative reading method (as described in Wink, 1997: 125ff.) is a good example of how theory of literature is subordinated to an educational model of reading in educational contexts. The method comprises the typical steps of general literature classes, but is also relevant for a description of the common foreign language classroom practice focused on reading. Its four phases: descriptive, personal interpretative, critical and creative, can easily be applied to foreign language teaching. The first step refers to understanding a piece of literature at the text level, a procedure that is dialogic in itself (Fenner, 2001: 24), and which, further, allows for a student to demonstrate his/her understanding in a task familiar to any foreign language teacher and learner: reading comprehension. Both reflection and discussion are involved: interpretations need to be explained, negotiated and acknowledged. The second phase is almost inevitable in foreign language classes: personal response to the text. If well conducted, such a discussion mediates personal feelings and experiences, and, by validating them, leads to self-awareness and respect for oneself and others, which has implications for the development of intercultural awareness as well. The third step of the creative reading method involves comparing and contrasting the outcomes of the former two phases: the ideas, attitudes, etc. established through the interpretation of the text on the one hand and the students' personal responses (feelings, ideas) on the other. Although this step is perhaps less represented in common teaching practice, it is particularly useful in dialogic relationships in the foreign language teaching/learning process, especially in situations where intercultural awareness or the skills of critical thinking are to be developed or enhanced. It involves considering logical issues, factors involved in a problem, possible alternatives, etc. Finally, the creative phase involves various projects, which are popular both among teachers and learners, and useful for the aims and goals of certain teaching units. The creative phase mediates the outcomes of the dialogue.

The consideration of the position of theory in foreign language teaching practice reveals that it respects two theoretical realms: the realm of literary theory to a lesser extent, and the realm of educational theory to a greater extent. The emphasis seems to be on the teaching itself, or rather on teaching methodology.

Methodological aspects

Endeavours to understand, interpret, and critically and creatively establish a dialogue with a piece of literature in a foreign language class are necessarily aimed at

developing learners' literary competences rather than at addressing typical foreign language tasks. However, it is exactly in this way that teaching literature in the foreign language context best supports intercultural awareness, learners' problem-solving strategies, creativity, and their critical thinking and reading skills, in addition to other "below-the-surface" issues. In the process, learners' "above-the surface" linguistic competences and skills, as well as accuracy and fluency, largely benefit.

Factors to be considered

We propose a model comprising several factors to include separate methodological aspects and issues concerning literature in foreign language learning and teaching. It might apply to all categories of learners. The model comprises general objectives, advantages and outcomes, methodology and activities and criteria of text selection.

General objectives of literature in foreign language learning are frequently identified with and thus restricted to various foreign language competences and language-related tasks. They are legitimate objectives, but they are best met if not addressed directly, but indirectly through interpretation and creative activities with texts. Accordingly, the general objectives should also include understanding literary conventions and learning about them, because they help learners understand literature better. More emphasis than before should be given to developing learners' critical thinking skills, critical reading skills and, perhaps even in close connection with them, their creativity. Another set of goals includes developing language awareness (understanding "how language works") and inferring pragmatic meanings. Further, literature in foreign language learning should support learner strategies. As literature is a carrier of culture and cultural perspectives, developing cultural awareness is another legitimate goal. This is an open list, and it does not exhaust the potential of literature in the least. However, one of the most important goals of introducing literature in teaching in general, and in teaching foreign languages in particular remains cultivating learners' delight in books so that they will appreciate reading as a valuable activity and get into the habit of reading and thinking about their reading.

Regarding advantages and outcomes, reasons for including authentic literature in foreign language classes have frequently been listed in answering the "why" question: Why use literature in foreign language teaching? They include its cultural content and its cultural and historical relevance; it "represents the personal voice of a culture" (Fenner, 2001: 16). Some authors mention that literature expands language awareness and offers an opportunity to use a foreign language in a meaningful context. They also point out that literature helps develop literacy with young learners and establish and sustain reading habits in a foreign language. Literature is praised because it provides the opportunity to repeat texts with younger children, thus helping them to remember

various elements of spoken discourse. Some authors stress its learning potential, its potential for individual development, personal growth, and the fact that it educates the whole person, which also leads to higher self-esteem. Several authors emphasise that literature is authentic, motivating, etc. Other authors mention that it offers imaginative, communicative, social experiences, or that it encourages interaction (Ellis and Brewster, 1991: 1-2; Narančić Kovač, 1999: 257-260; Fenner, 2001: 16; Clandfield, 2004).

One of the most important aspects of foreign language literature is that it provides an authentic context for foreign language use in addition to being authentic itself. In many respects native and non-native speakers encounter a specific piece of literature in the same way. They are both personally and fully involved, and they focus on the message rather than on the medium. Their linguistic competence is in the background, and their literary competence "steps" forward. In reading literature and responding to it, learners use their English (German, or any other foreign language) for a real purpose, not as a simulation of a real situation, the latter being common and inevitable in a foreign language class. The poems *Flint* by Christina Rossetti or *Deaf Donald* by Shel Silverstein will primarily appeal to learners as pieces of literature, regardless of their language. A similar situation and a similar context of foreign language use is provided by the Internet. Learners apply their linguistic foreign language competence in real communicative situations with a real communicative purpose in their encounter with either of the two sources (authentic literature or the Internet). Their immediate purpose is not "learning a foreign language", but reading real literature, performing a real task. (Narančić Kovač and Rajić, 2001: 204).

Literature may also help with the problem of classroom or language anxiety and may be a suitable means for inviting the participation of shy or introvert persons, or of those who do not like to share their personal information or circumstances with the class and the teacher. The personal response elicited through literature may be shared or not. The point is to have it – it can remain private; it is the aim and the accomplishment in itself.

Furthermore, quite a few open questions can be asked and discussed related to stories or poems. Hence, there are no wrong answers; that is, no mistakes, and if there has been any anxiety or fear, it is dramatically reduced. Besides, literature is useful when we want to avoid the embarrassment of personal questions in situations when everyday circumstances are discussed – it is often easier to talk about fictional characters than about ourselves. Mihaljević Djigunović (2002: 136) also suggests preparing a short recitation of a literary text to be performed to a supportive audience as an activity suitable to fight foreign language anxiety. One way or another, literature offers a way out of frustration.

Potential outcomes of using literature in foreign language classes include raised levels of problem-solving skills, encouraging learners' personal development and autonomy.

Higher self-awareness and frequent sharing not only of literary texts, but also of reading experiences and personal interpretations result in co-operative skills, tolerance and, eventually, in positive motivation for foreign language learning.

Methodology and activities that are commonly successful in using literature are mostly based on the dialogic nature of a literary text. Open-ended questions about texts are in that respect the best way for the teacher to encourage successful reading and achieve any of the goals intended. Creative tasks need to be emphasised, as they deepen and expand the dialogue that has been initiated with reading and later sustained through discussion and analysis. A change of narrative perspective brings into focus aspects that tend to be neglected if there is no experimentation with the text. A simple task like transforming a prose text into a poem or vice versa reveals unexpected features of the original.

Criteria of text selection focus on the appropriateness of the texts for specific learners or groups of learners. The most demanding one is deciding which text would be interesting to learners; that is, it is important to find a text with a good balance of old, familiar aspects and new, challenging ones, because literary texts are not universally interesting or motivating. They should be neither too "difficult" nor too "easy", but pose an intellectual problem appropriate to their readers. Literature comprises texts of varying complexity in terms of both language and content, so it is possible to find appropriate authentic literary texts to be read and appreciated by learners of any age group and of any level of foreign language competences.

Literature with various age groups

These general aspects of literature in the context of foreign language teaching and learning are, of course, expanded with specific demands when introduced to different groups of learners, such as age groups. Thus, specific age-related aspects will vary depending on which group they focus on. For instance, with very young learners (0-6/7) the selection of texts will be restricted to those that children can enjoy without actually reading. These will include action rhymes, games, songs and other short nursery rhymes, simple poems, picture books with quality illustrations and perhaps an appropriate version of a folk tale or a fairy tale.

With young learners (7-11/12), literature offers the opportunity to encourage free and creative use of a foreign language through dramatisation, acting, art, movement, games, etc. Important methodological guidelines include silent participation, using visual and other clues in understanding a text, avoiding long explanations of structures and using new words without the need to translate or "learn" by heart every single vocabulary item.

In addition to the above, literature helps lower secondary schoolchildren (12-14/16) appreciate and experience humour, parody, nonsense, and also the idea of intertextuality (as a kind of dialogue among texts or, eventually, cultures). Literature can make it easier for a teacher to raise sensitive or personal issues with this age group, such as the problems of friendship, family and growing up in general. The selection of genres can be much wider with them than with the previous group, and it can be even wider with young adult learners (15/16+). Literature can help this age group explore various moral and existential issues and controversies. In addition, for instance, poetry can be popularised through music. The teacher may guide learners in developing not only their interpretative reading skills, and their understanding of literary conventions, but also their critical thinking skills.

At all these levels, literature is tightly interwoven with culture. Indeed, literature mediates various cultural and intercultural meanings and facts. Some of them are more, others less obvious, but they are inevitably included in good literature. Therefore, literature is one of the most appropriate mediators of complex cultural and intercultural issues and of supporting intercultural awareness.

Literature as a means of promoting intercultural awareness

Definitions of culture

The terms "intercultural awareness" and "intercultural competence" have become increasingly important in foreign language teaching. Corbett (2003) even sees the intercultural approach to language teaching as a necessary step forward from the communicative approach. Since any communication takes place in a social and cultural context, it has become evident that it cannot be enough to promote the four skills and the ability to communicate information. To negotiate meaning we also need to be aware of the social and cultural function of a particular communicative situation. For the purpose of this article the two terms are sometimes used synonymously, although, strictly speaking, intercultural awareness is a prerequisite for intercultural competence or skills.

If we want to understand in what way reading literature can promote intercultural awareness we need first of all to consider what we understand by the term "culture". For a long time culture was – and to some extent still is – understood as the visible and audible cultural products of a country (culture with a "Big C", Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993). In the tradition of the German subject of *Landeskunde* or the French *civilisation* teaching culture thus consisted of conveying pieces of information on the target country's works of art, literature, music, etc. The teaching objectives remained at a purely factual level. It is obvious that the above-mentioned teaching approach cannot be based on this understanding of culture alone.

Culture in the wider sense of the word is thus seen as people's ideas and beliefs, but also their behaviours and habits, and it refers to national culture as well as to other cultural groups within one nation – or across one nation for that matter. Some writers have used metaphors to clarify this idea. Thus Hofstede (1991) refers to culture as "software of the mind" with culture being the collective as opposed to the universal (largely biological) and individual (unique) mental programming. In analogy to Freud (the conscious, the preconscious and the unconscious) culture is also often compared to an iceberg with the cultural products and artefacts above the surface and the vast amount of culturally determined behaviour, ideas and beliefs below the surface. Most of our culture – according to that metaphor – is subconscious, is what we take for granted and usually do not question. The only time we actually consciously reflect on this "culture with a small c" (Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993) is when there is some kind of conflict or clash. In his checklist for culturally influenced behaviour, Brislin (1993) makes it clear that such clashes affect us not only cognitively but also very much at the emotional level. Intercultural awareness and competence thus mean much more than just knowing about (a) culture. It means realising that and knowing how people's thinking and behaviour are largely ruled by their cultural makeup, and possessing strategies of successfully acting and reacting in intercultural contexts.

Which competences are involved?

Several attempts have been made to break down the term "intercultural competence" into categories. One way of looking at it could be using the sub-skills suggested by the teaching guidelines in the Berlin *Rahmenplan* (curriculum) for foreign language. It distinguishes between four major target competences for any foreign language learner: *Sachkompetenz* (dealing with information, gaining knowledge), *Sozialkompetenz* (being able to co-operate and communicate), *Methodenkompetenz* (gaining learner autonomy by possessing learning strategies and study skills) and *Selbstkompetenz* (gaining learner autonomy by reflecting – and knowing how to reflect – on the learning process). Using these categories for the development of intercultural awareness/competence, the model could look as follows:

- *Sachkompetenz*: possessing knowledge about the target culture;
- *Sozialkompetenz*: being able to function within a multicultural communicative setting;
- *Methodenkompetenz*: possessing skills and strategies to become aware of and cope with cultural differences and clashes;
- *Selbstkompetenz*: being prepared to reflect on one's own worldview and being able to accept and possibly integrate a "foreign" perspective into one's own *Weltbild* – understanding of the world.

How can literature be used to raise intercultural awareness and competence in EFL students?

It has already been shown that literature is used in various ways in the classroom, often with a focus on language acquisition or creativity. To develop the above-mentioned skills, literature can of course also be used to gain *Sachkompetenz* – an additional means to obtain information about a foreign culture. Thus Boyle's novel, *The tortilla curtain*, may very well be used to explore the situation of illegal immigrants or to gain information on some geographical features in California. At a more complex level, students could also, on the basis of a wider definition of culture, analyse culture-related behaviour of the protagonists, for example by comparing their ideas, beliefs, or gender role-behaviour.

Sozialkompetenz could be furthered at two levels: students could discuss their personal responses to the situations depicted in the book, thus becoming aware of the way in which such responses can be similar – or different – and developing empathy, an important prerequisite for intercultural awareness. They could also analyse the verbal and non-verbal communicative behaviour of the protagonists and find out why they so often fail in their attempts at successful communication. By analysing communication strategies used by the characters in the novel, like body language, eye contact, proximity (the distance that is kept between speakers), turn-taking, directness, etc., learners can use these as examples to develop their own *Methodenkompetenz.* If this process has made the students aware that their own (emotional) reaction to some of the depicted incidents is also culturally determined, they have made an important step towards *Personalkompetenz* by allowing for the possibility of multiple perspectives and thus maybe readjusting their own value system.

It is obvious that reading literature is a first-rate way of developing intercultural awareness/competence because it not only works at a cognitive but also, often very subtly, at an emotional level. Apart from the factual knowledge about the other culture that can be drawn from it, literature enhances personal response by providing gaps (*Leerstellen*) that the reader has to fill with his/her own culturally-determined imagination. Thus the reading process becomes a constant interaction between text and reader, sometimes leading the reader to reconsider his/her own attitudes and beliefs. But literature can also promote empathy by giving the reader the chance to look into the characters' minds, sharing their thoughts and perspectives. And since often enough, as is the case in *The tortilla curtain,* we have several characters dealing with the same situation in different ways, the reader becomes aware of the fact that reality, including his/her own, is a person's very individual, but culturally determined, construction.

The awareness of the potential literature has in promoting intercultural awareness should therefore be developed in teacher education, along with other issues.

How to incorporate literature into foreign language teacher education?

As stated before, the goals of literature teaching within teacher education programmes are widely dependent on the roles literature plays in foreign language learning. Accordingly, future teachers need to develop competences that will enable them to become competent teachers of literature within foreign language teaching. On the other hand, as students of a foreign language, and as persons who are still being educated, they may themselves experience literature within their foreign language courses and appreciate its benefits for their personal fluency or accuracy, for learner autonomy, for their own intercultural awareness, etc.

Aspects of literature within the education of foreign language teachers

The need to include an overview of literary theory, although not an extensive one, has been established by this analysis of the status of literature in foreign language teaching. It seems that many teachers are at a loss when it comes to understanding the theoretical foundations of their encounters with literature. Because of that, most of them act instinctively or adopt ready-made materials. A better understanding of literary theory behind the suggested activities and tasks in "recipe books" might help teachers gain self-confidence and might also help them use literature more freely and creatively. Theoretical issues would also help them understand what the class is actually doing with a text when they interpret it, and help them choose the best approach for a particular text and a particular group of learners. Basic literary terminology in the foreign language in question is another possible topic. The understanding of various ideas about the nature of literature may open new possibilities of using literature for foreign language teachers and may help them consider how they themselves see literature before they bring it into class. It may also help them appreciate different ideas and establish a real dialogue based on literature, which would involve not only the text, but also the readers and the teacher, who would then find it easier to be the mediator.

An insight into contemporary literature and into the history of literature may be helpful in that it would support future teachers in building up a personal treasury of texts for use in class. In the process, they might also get to understand some literary conventions, differences of various genres, etc. Again, they are not bound to be literary scholars, but it may help if they feel confident about some important matters. Of course, the selection of topics, themes and texts themselves is a sensitive issue that needs to be given careful consideration by teacher educators. For instance, the main features of literary genres and their change in history might be a more welcome theme for this group of students than a subject like the detailed history of the Victorian novel.

The majority of future foreign language teachers will be teaching children. It may therefore be particularly useful to them to study various aspects of children's literature

in the targeted foreign language. It is perhaps of greater interest than a knowledge of mainstream literature. Areas involved may include a historical overview, the most important genres, the conventions and various other aspects. A number of relevant topics that reflect the context of children's literature may be offered for consideration, such as literacy, censorship, literary awards, illustration and book design, educational aspects, etc. Several issues could also be covered that are related to fiction for children. They include subversiveness, parody, the relationship between traditional oral literature (folklore) and authors' literature, the role of imagination, the idea of fantasy, intertextuality, etc. An understanding of some of those issues might help future foreign language teachers appreciate quality literature, choose texts appropriate for their classes, and design tasks to improve learners' literary competences and enhanced understanding of literature in general.

Future teachers need to understand the role literature may have in supporting various educational theories and in facilitating the accomplishments of several educational tasks. Students also need to understand which goals of foreign language learning literature may facilitate, and which tasks can be accomplished through literature. They need to develop an awareness of the importance of literature for developing "below-the-surface" skills, such as critical thinking, social and communicative skills, emotional intelligence, behaviour, citizenship, etc., which are fundamental for successful foreign language learning in general. Among them, intercultural awareness stands out. In this connection, students may find it helpful to get acquainted with main cultural theories, with various ways in which "culture" is interpreted, with methods that lend themselves to raise awareness of "self and other" in their future students and in ways of helping them to deal with whatever critical incident they may come across when exploring a foreign culture. They might also be interested in the ways in which literature can improve intercultural awareness in their future students. The respective methodological issues of foreign language teaching could then be addressed and discussed.

Other methodological or practical teaching problems concerning literature might also be considered, including some mentioned above, in the section on methodological aspects. Teaching strategies based on literature and on designing creative foreign language activities may be particularly interesting issues. Students might find it useful to understand the importance of the potential of literature as authentic language material, as well as the role literature may have in resolving certain individual problems learners might encounter, such as being shy, or having foreign language anxiety, etc.

Apart from all that, literature can be used to help students master certain skills themselves. An example of integrating both aspects of literature in teacher education – learning about literature in teaching a foreign language, especially with respect to developing intercultural awareness, on the one hand, and achieving certain educational

goals through literature and reading for enjoyment on the other is offered on pages 170-174 in the form of a seminar designed for a pre-service group of students. Two additional examples of teaching materials based upon authentic literature follow on pages 175-181.

Conclusion

In conclusion it can be stated that literature needs to have a special place in education programmes for foreign language teachers because it has proven to be invaluable in various and diverse educational situations. Raising foreign language learners' intercultural awareness stands out as the area in which literature is particularly successful. Future teachers need to learn how to teach literature in a creative and flexible way, so that they can employ literature appropriately, and so that they are able to fully realise its potential in foreign language learning and teaching.

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Teaching grammar and the question of knowledge

David Newby

Despite the fact that in many countries a great deal of classroom time and self-study is devoted to the learning of grammar, it appears that very little theoretical consideration is given in teacher education programmes either to the nature of the grammatical code which is to be acquired by learners nor to theories of how grammar is learnt in school-based contexts. As stated earlier in this volume, the theories of Krashen are given prominence by many teacher educators, yet since they contradict very strongly ways in which grammar tends to be taught in many European countries, it is unusual to find teacher educators who advocate the implementation of Krashen's views when it comes to the teaching of grammar. Alternative theories, such as cognitive views of learning, did not figure in the pre-workshop survey of theories. Whilst the label "communicative" was invoked, largely to refer to the format of certain classroom activities, teacher educators at our workshop did not, on the whole, see communicative grammar as offering a coherent approach to the learning of grammar.

In discussing grammar, I shall focus on two questions simultaneously: firstly, what kind of approaches to learning and teaching grammar can be proposed which are in line with theories and principles of "post-communicative" teaching and views of learning? Secondly, is it possible to find a common theoretical core which links grammar to what, on the surface, would appear to be a quite different area of teaching/learning-related topics dealt with in this book, such as learner autonomy and cultural awareness? The first question is linked to the "coherence of principles" part of the project title; the second question relates to "cohesion of competences".

In order to do this, I shall focus on the general issue of knowledge and, in doing so, shall make use of the three *savoir* categories used in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*: *savoir*, *savoir-faire*, *savoir-être*. So far these categories of knowledge have been applied to the area of culture (see Anne-Brit Fenner's chapter on "Intercultural awareness" in this volume); I shall suggest that they are applicable, though in somewhat different ways from culture, to examining both the theory and practice of the teaching and learning of grammar. Figure 1 shows the terms and corresponding approaches which will be referred to in following discussions.

Figure 1: *Savoir* and grammar

Types of knowledge	Approaches to grammar
Savoir	Traditional grammar
Savoir-faire	Communicative grammar
Savoir-être	Cognitive grammar

Knowledge

As can be seen from the above chart, the word *savoir* is present throughout. That is to say, knowledge, its storage, utilisation and acquisition are at the core of all theories of learning; without knowledge there can be no language and consequently no language-based communication. It follows that what is at issue is not whether knowledge is necessary, but what we mean by knowledge and what role different types of knowledge play in language use and in learning processes. It should be added that, in keeping with the general consensus of linguistics over the past few decades, language in general and grammar in particular will be seen, on the one hand, as a cognitive phenomenon – that is to say, our concern will be with questions of how grammar is stored in the human brain, processed and utilised – and on the other, as a social phenomenon – grammar is part of a more general linguistic code, the aim of which is to communicate messages between human beings who form part of speech communities. The knowledge which we are concerned with is that of grammar rules, though the word "rule" must be interpreted as it is seen by linguists and means generalisations about regularities that underlie the grammatical system and which steer language use. That is to say, rules represent an abstract cognitive construction and should not be regarded as a set of prescriptive statements, which is how some pedagogical grammarians and teachers tend to see them. In discussing the teaching and learning of grammar I shall consider four knowledge-related aspects:

1. categories of grammatical knowledge, that is how does the human brain categorise grammar?
2. the storage of grammatical knowledge in the brain;
3. how can we optimise the efficiency of learning processes in order to aid the acquisition of knowledge?
4. what might be the quality and outcome of the acquired knowledge? How will it serve learners and will it meet their communicative needs?

The first two of these questions fall primarily within the discipline of linguistics, though they are of great relevance for language learning; whereas (3) and (4) are largely the concern of methodologists, though in devising pedagogy they must draw on theories deriving from both linguistics and cognitive psychology. In focusing on knowledge we are entering complex, and indeed controversial, linguistic and pedagogical territory. As we shall see, it will throw up a plethora of theoretical issues and accompanying terminological distinctions, which are often confusing. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss each one in great detail; however, it is hoped that the brief snapshot that will be given will cast some light on theoretical issues which underlie different approaches to the teaching and learning of grammar, and indeed other aspects of language too. I shall then consider these issues with regard to three

general approaches to grammar: traditional grammar teaching, communicative grammar and cognitive grammar.

Categories of grammatical knowledge

A fundamental issue which needs to be addressed when taking a generally cognitive view of grammar is: what is the nature of the grammatical categories stored in the mind? This in turn leads to the question: what actually is grammar? To pose this question might seem to lead us into very deep and theoretical linguistic waters, far away from decisions that have to be made in the classroom. Yet it is a question which needs to be addressed in teacher education since how we view the phenomenon of grammar will impact directly on important aspects of grammar teaching such as objective setting, rule formation and methodology.

In recent years linguists have debated the question of whether language represents a special module within the mind, as claimed by Chomsky and the generative school, which will entail that language is analysed largely in isolation from other aspects of human cognition and in its own specifically linguistic terms, or whether language should be seen as one type of a more general human intelligence which works along similar lines and in tandem with how information of all types is perceived and processed, the position taken by cognitive linguists. Lee (2001: 1) describes the difference as follows:

> The main feature that distinguishes Cognitive Linguistics from generative grammar has to do with the place of meaning in the theory. In the generative model the structure of linguistic expressions is deemed to be determined by a formal rule system that is largely independent of meaning. By contrast cognitivists argue that linguistic structure is a direct reflexion of cognition in the sense that a particular linguistic expression is associated with a particular way of conceptualising a given situation.

One of the outcomes of this simple but actually far-reaching dichotomy can be observed in the mainly structural view of language, which is reflected in a Chomskyan syntactic view of grammar and based on the concept of universal grammar, and a semantically oriented grammatical description, such as that proposed by Langacker (1987), which is based on general categories of human thought. The former is likely to take as its main unit of analysis the sentence and will investigate how syntactic structures are generated. The latter will take as its starting point general notional categories – such as time or space – and will investigate how human beings channel their perceptions of the world into language categories and map them onto meaningful utterances.

As far as language learning and teaching is concerned, studies of second language acquisition seem largely to operate in a structural framework. This can be seen by frequent references in research studies to grammar in terms of "form-focused" instruction (see, for example, Spada, 1997), morpheme acquisition, etc. Amongst pedagogical grammarians, while lip service may occasionally be paid to a semantic view of grammar, for example in Leech and Svartvik's *A communicative grammar of English*, the organisation of which is based on general semantic categories, it is difficult to perceive much coherent grammatical theory behind pedagogical grammars and methodologists' statements about grammar instruction.

The apparent lack of interest in grammatical theory is somewhat strange since this area has direct and immediate consequences for two important areas of grammar teaching: the setting of grammatical objectives and the specification of grammar rules, a task which many school curricula and textbooks and all pedagogical reference grammar books address. As far as objective setting is concerned, a generative, syntactic view of language is likely to lead to grammatical objectives being specified in terms of structures and morphological forms; a cognitive view is likely to lead to objectives being specified in terms of notions, functions and processes.

The nature of grammatical knowledge

The second knowledge-related question concerns the nature of the storage of grammatical knowledge. Two pairs of categories will be discussed here.

The first is linked to Chomsky's concept of "tacit" – that is, unconscious knowledge – which is how the grammatical knowledge of native speakers' first language is characterised. That is to say the knowledge of grammar rules, or grammatical competence, which steers performance is unconscious; the user has no direct access to this competence. This view of grammatical storage has had an indirect but nevertheless strong influence on discussions of grammatical rules and foreign language methodology and finds expression in the distinction between "implicit" and "explicit" knowledge. One line of argumentation put forward, in the form of a syllogism, by those applied linguists and methodologists who seek to stress the similarities between L1 and L2 acquisition, runs as follows: "natural" (namely, first language) use is steered by tacit or unconscious knowledge; L1 and L2 acquisition operate according to similar principles; therefore, conscious knowledge of rules and explicit teaching of grammar contradicts natural acquisition processes and are of little use. Such views have fanned the belief that overt grammar teaching is not beneficial and that a conscious and explicit, as opposed to implicit, knowledge of grammar should be avoided in pedagogy.

The second pair of terms, which has also had an influence on grammar teaching, is that of "declarative" and "procedural" knowledge. These are defined by Anderson (1990: 219) as follows:

> Declarative knowledge refers to knowledge about facts and things; procedural knowledge refers to knowledge about how to perform various cognitive activities.

The distinction is sometimes shortened to the formulation: "declarative knowledge is knowing that or what …"; "procedural knowledge is knowing how …".

The way in which I shall use the term "declarative" in this chapter needs a note of explanation. In keeping with a psychological view of language, declarative knowledge may be implicit or explicit. For example, if, in a controlled experiment, native speakers are asked to make a judgment of the acceptability of two utterances such as "I am used to getting up early" and "*I am used to get up early", they will "know" that the former is acceptable and the latter not. However, the vast majority will not be able to explain that the "to" is a preposition not part of an infinitive, and that consequently it must be followed by a nominal phrase, which in this case is a gerund. Thus, native speakers possess implicit declarative knowledge. (The technical term "declarative" is unfortunate since it does not necessarily mean that it can be declared!) Explicit knowledge, on the other hand, refers to the ability to explain a generalisation using metalanguage, which is what grammar books, many teachers and some students might do.

The declarative – procedural knowledge distinction is important in language teaching since it provides a knowledge-based distinction between competence and performance and in turn supports a rationale of specifying the aims of learning grammar in terms of performance, rather than mere competence. This is an essential basis for both the skill-based approach of CLT and the "action-oriented" approach which can be found in the descriptors of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*.

The acquisition of grammatical knowledge

How language in general and grammar in particular are acquired clearly represents a vast theoretical area. For the purposes of the necessarily brief discussions of this chapter, I shall focus on one aspect of grammar acquisition: the question of how grammatical rules may be internalised. Three aspects of this knowledge-related question will be considered.

The first concerns the distinction made famous by Krashen (1981) between "acquisition" and "learning". The former corresponds to unconscious knowledge,

reflecting the view of "tacit" knowledge referred to in a previous section, and the unconscious nature of much of first language acquisition; the latter is described by Krashen as a conscious, explicit process – for example, using explicit rules in teaching or learning grammar. For Krashen, it seems that "acquisition" is the natural, effortless goodie; learning the boring, pedagogical, unsuccessful baddie.

The second aspect relates to the route by which knowledge may be acquired. Here we are looking at the terms "deductive" and "inductive". If a deductive route is taken, a rule is first given by teacher or textbook and on the basis of this explicit knowledge the learner is given controlled practice to consolidate the rule and aid internalisation. An inductive route, on the other hand, will take as its starting point examples of language, often accompanied by a task which requires learners to interact with language and which has the aim of helping learners to form generalisations about the functioning of a grammatical item. The deductive route is at the core of much of traditional grammar teaching, whereas an inductive route, in which learners become aware of rules through their interaction with language, is often favoured in more recent approaches.

Finally, I shall consider four general types of activity which learners may engage in and which serve as a means to facilitate the process of internalising grammatical rules. I shall identify four activity types, which are listed below:

1. explication (by teacher, grammar book, etc.) – using metalanguage, for example, making statements about grammar and using terminology and labels; also using charts and diagrams, etc.;
2. exemplification – giving selected texts (sentences, dialogues, etc.) which serve to provide a focus on typical, and possibly prototypical, examples of the use of a grammatical item or items;
3. exploration – giving students tasks and awareness-raising activities, for example to discover a grammar rule;
4. utilisation – a "learning-by-doing" form of elucidation; students are given activities, grammar games, etc. which require them to use a particular item or items of grammar while performing a more general communicative task.

It should be stressed that these activity types are not mutually exclusive. All types may be found in one and the same classroom and they may be seen in some cases as complementing each other.

The outcome of grammatical knowledge

A final distinction that needs to be discussed is linked to one made initially by Chomsky: that of competence and performance. Competence can be defined as the

underlying knowledge of concepts and rules that are stored in the minds of speakers. Performance will be defined as the process of utilising language knowledge in an actual context in order to encode a meaningful message. As far as grammar is concerned, the category of performance will enable us to see grammar as a (knowledge-based) skill. It follows from this that the aims of teaching grammar need to be defined both in terms of knowledge acquisition and in terms of skill development. The aim of learning grammar is not to be able to transform one sentence into another nor to fill in the gaps in a sentence – what I term "cul-de-sac" methodology – but to attain a level of competence which enables speakers to process contexts and to encode messages in ways that are meaningful, appropriate and accurate. Teaching methodology must be geared to facilitating this aim.

There is, however, another aspect to the question of outcome. In the section on "categories of grammatical knowledge" I referred to the generativist versus the cognitivist view of language and said that a cognitivist view sees language in terms of one kind of information processing and not as a separate module. It follows from this that any theory of language use and acquisition, including grammar, must also take into account other types of thought processes which are not normally associated with language. In a previous chapter, reference has been made to constructivist theories: the view that language users and language learners construct meanings and interpretations of events based partly on personal schemata, perceptions and experience. If we take a general constructivist view of human cognition, this will require us to incorporate any view we may have of language within a constructivist framework. At first sight, this might seem to confront us with a dilemma. After all, the very notion of grammar rules entails recognising the existence of linguistic generalisations shared by all members of a speech community; on the other hand, a constructivist view stresses the individuality of perceptions and knowledge structures. I shall return to this question in later discussions of cognitive approaches.

Summary

In this section I have opened up the debate on different approaches to grammar teaching and learning by stating knowledge-related categories upon which, in my view, most of the controversies concerning grammar teaching hinge and by referring to some of the pedagogical means which facilitate knowledge acquisition. The relationship between the various categories are summarised in the figure below. The purpose in compiling such a table is to show that different methodological techniques (means of knowledge acquisition) will result in different types of knowledge. I am not suggesting that any technique is superior *per se*; however, by analysing systematically the relationship between methodology and knowledge acquisition in tandem with learning style preferences, teachers might get a clearer picture both of learning processes and of how the aims of teaching grammar might be achieved.

Figure 2: Aspects of knowledge acquisition

Activity types: means of knowledge acquisition	Nature of knowledge		
	Storage		Route
Explication – learning by understanding	Declarative	Explicit	Deductive
Exemplification – learning by observing	Declarative	Implicit	Inductive
Exploration – learning by reflecting	Declarative	Explicit	Inductive
Utilisation – learning by using	Procedural	Implicit	Inductive

↓

Outcome of learning
Competence ± performance

In the next section, I shall analyse some of the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches on the basis of these knowledge-linked categories and shall also incorporate the *savoir* concepts referred to earlier.

Approaches to grammar learning and teaching

The three general ways of approaching grammar – traditional grammar teaching, CLT and a cognitive approach to be discussed – are all based on the belief that language pedagogy has the potential to influence the acquisition of grammar in a positive way. My analysis will follow the four parameters referred to in the above discussion: categories of grammatical knowledge; the nature of grammatical knowledge; the acquisition of grammatical knowledge; and the outcome of grammatical knowledge.

My reasons for focusing on these three approaches is that they seem to me to represent those most commonly applied in the teaching and learning of grammar across Europe. It should be added that it is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide a comprehensive analysis of each. Rather, certain salient features of their rationale and methodology, mainly with regard to the aspect of grammatical concept formation, will be discussed.

Traditional grammar – *Savoir*

The term "traditional grammar" reflects sets of practices with which many teachers will be familiar from their own learning and which, at the time of writing, continue to play a

dominant role in many classrooms throughout the world. Some accounts refer to these practices as "grammar-translation" but it would be more accurate to characterise them as "grammar-vocabulary" since translation is just one exercise type, which may or may not be used.

At the centre of a typical lesson will be a single and specific grammatical objective, usually defined as a form (present progressive, passive, etc.) in accordance with a structural view of language. The methodology follows what methodologists call a "PPP" progression: presentation-practice-production. The teacher will "present" the new form together with one or more of its meanings or uses and this will be followed by a rule or explanation of the form and or meaning. Then come exercises designed to provide controlled practice (drills, fill in the gap, transformation of sentences, etc.), first to consolidate the rule that has been given and then to test the learner's grasp of what has just been presented. Intensive practice should eventually lead to production of correct language.

It would seem to me that, whilst having served generations of language learners, including, no doubt, readers of this chapter, traditional grammar is rather limited as providing a means of support both in terms of knowledge acquisition and of skill development. Indeed, many of its "practice" exercises seem to test grammar rather than to teach it or to support learning. Its chosen means to support concept formation is largely explication and it relies heavily on explicit declarative knowledge. I would argue that whilst this may lead to a certain grammatical competence, it does not do much to facilitate performance. Moreover, its strongly teacher-centred orientation and lack of interaction between learners do little to pave the way to the independent encoding of ideas and exchange of language, which are essential to grammatical performance. Whilst learners acquire a body of information about grammar or *savoir*, this is not "quality knowledge" in the sense that it remains at a declarative level and does not pave the way to performance. Whilst this level may have certain uses, it needs to be supplemented by other types of approach.

Communicative grammar – *Savoir-faire*

As stated in my earlier chapter on CLT, in post-communicative discussion of CLT it is sometimes forgotten that the initial impetus for this approach came from linguists who took a broadly functional, rather than structural, view of language. The notional-functional axis, which was essential to this form of language description and to the setting of objectives, is today rarely invoked. Whilst speech functions continue to play an important role in CLT, the notional tag seems largely to have been confined to the garbage can (see Newby, 2000a, 2000b). This is a pity, since a notional approach to language categorisation is essential in defining grammatical objectives from a speaker-

based, semantic perspective, which is, in turn, a prerequisite for embedding grammar in a communicative methodological framework. Whilst there is some evidence from textbooks that grammar is sporadically described in terms of meaning, rather than form, a common scenario, which CLT has unwittingly spawned, is for textbook writers and teachers to take a structural-functional approach to grammar. In other words, much of grammar continues to be taught in a traditional way, whilst certain elements are treated more “communicatively” when packaged as language functions – for example, certain modal verbs in requests and offers.

It terms of language storage, a functional view of grammar does, of course, feed into procedural knowledge, since communicative methodology in general is performance oriented. Moreover, proponents of CLT usually advocate an inductive approach to the acquisition of grammar, which is in tune with the certain learner-centred principles at the core of CLT. At first sight, a functionally-based, performance-oriented, *savoir-faire* view of grammar seems to meet the general goals of the communicative classroom – to be able to communicate authentically in actual contexts. But let us throw a little spanner in the *savoir-faire* works.

In the area of cultural studies, much is made nowadays of the *savoir-faire* goal, the ability to behave appropriately in different cultural contexts. Particularly in domains such as languages for commercial or business purposes, emphasis is quite rightly placed upon learning how to behave in situations such as meeting business partners, taking part in negotiations, etc. Also, at a school level, it is of course important for students to know how to conduct themselves appropriately when visiting or living in another country. However, many educators would not regard appropriate behaviour as the ultimate goal of teaching culture: a surface awareness of how to behave, they would argue, does not necessarily entail having a deeper understanding of the values held by other cultures nor does it require students to think about differences between their own and other cultures in a more profound way. Similarly, being able to use speech functions, in which grammar is embedded, does not mean that students internalise the type of knowledge which is required to encode their own thoughts into the target language. Grammar learning and teaching needs to operate at a deeper level if this competence is to be acquired.

Cognitive grammar – *Savoir-être*

Underlying much of second language research into language acquisition towards the end of the 20th century was the belief, or agenda, that second language acquisition processes resemble to a considerable degree those which operate in L1 acquisition. As stated above, this view underlies the popular, and perhaps popularist, theories of

Krashen. In recent years, however, various applied linguists and methodologists have expressed reservations about the L1 → L2 hypothesis. Some of the reasons stated are:

- for secondary-school age learners of a foreign language, for whom the critical period of language acquisition is over, language learning is qualitatively and quantitatively different from first language acquisition;
- unlike infants acquiring their first language, school learners can make an active contribution to their own learning since they have at their disposal a metacognitive awareness of learning processes and can adopt strategies to facilitate their own learning;
- a modular, nativist view of language and language acquisition fails to take into account the cognitive resources available to learners, which are active in both language use and language learning;
- language pedagogy can play an important role in facilitating school-based learning.

These premises underlie what might be called a cognitive view of language learning, although it should be stressed that there is no unified approach which campaigns under this banner, in contrast to the situation at the outset of CLT. Some influential applied linguists who have used the cognitive label in proposing learning models are O'Malley and Chamot (1990), Johnson (1996) and Skehan (1998). Some aspects of the relationship between cognition and 2nd language instruction can be found in Robinson (2001). An extensive account of my own "cognitive + communicative" model, on which the ideas in this section are based, can be found in Newby (2003).

Three general cognition-related aspects which cognitive approaches focus on are:

1. Learning processes – unconscious mental processes which the human brain employs in order to facilitate the learning of new information.
2. Learning styles – a learner's personal sensory and cognitive preferences for perceiving incoming stimuli and processing and organising information (see Riding and Rayner, 1998).
3. Learning strategies, which will be defined here – in order to distinguish them from (1) – as deliberate and conscious measures taken by learners to make their learning more efficient.

It is the first of these categories which will be the subject of this brief discussion.

The purpose in focusing on learning processes is that by identifying processes that are active in the human mind when human beings acquire new information, materials developers and teachers can use the resulting insights to support and activate appropriate processes when designing, selecting or using instructional tasks and activities. In order to analyse learning processes, cognitivists tend to turn their backs on

theories of language acquisition supplied by linguists and to look instead to insights from cognitive psychology which relate to human learning in general, rather than to language in particular.

Whatever the theoretical starting point, models of learning, and indeed of pedagogy, often see learning processes in terms of a series of stages. In traditional grammar teaching, it is common to talk about “presentation-practice-production”. Krashen’s acquisition-oriented model identifies the stages of “input-intake-output”. A cognitive model might identify stages such as the following:

- awareness – focusing of perceptions and releasing mental energy to process incoming information; this requires learners to register salient information and to recognise certain patterns or features;
- conceptualisation – restructuring existing knowledge, making hypotheses and generalisations about the items of language which are being given focus;
- proceduralisation – the process of transferring knowledge to long-term memory; the stage during which declarative knowledge becomes procedural knowledge;
- performance – the ability to utilise knowledge stored in the brain in authentic contexts.

It should be added that these stages are not separate, but to some extent overlapping. Moreover, they are to be seen as operating not in a linear, but a cyclical fashion. Nevertheless, it is useful to represent them initially as discrete stages in order to enable a systematic analysis of learning processes and corresponding pedagogical activities.

It will be seen that unlike the traditional PPP, which simply describes methodological stages, the above ACPP cognitive model takes a learning and learner orientation as its starting point and seeks to identify what might be termed “natural” learning processes. By natural, I do not mean naturalistic – that is, based on first language acquisition – but deriving from processes which underlie all types of human learning, whether they be incidental or intentional, occurring in non-pedagogical settings or school-based. When applying the model for the learning of a foreign language in school, teachers need to consider what tasks and activities can be used in class to provide optimum support to each cognitive stage.

A cognitive approach is not a method: it does not prescribe how to teach, but it does help teachers and learners to consider methodological options in a more systematic way. For example, I earlier mentioned certain “learning by …” options (see Figure 2). These are directly linked to the stage of conceptualisation since “learning by …” refers to how new items of grammar become internalised. This may occur through explication – the explanations of traditional grammar; through exemplification, whereby learners

induce rules by observing how grammar is used; through exploration – that is, by means of discovery or awareness-raising activities; or by utilisation – for example, by playing certain grammar games which requires learners to use items of grammar to communicate meaning. For learning to take place, conceptualisation is an essential stage; however, how it is best achieved will depend on learning-style preferences of individual learners. Nevertheless, a cognitive view of learning is likely to give preference to exploration (awareness-raising) and utilisation (learning by doing) activities since the former aid the process of reflection, which is at the heart of cognition-linked methodology, and since the latter will help point learners in the direction of performance, which is the overall goal of learning grammar.

One advantage of identifying learning stages is that it enables teachers to take a much more systematic view of both learning and grammar methodology than is often the case. For example, it is easy nowadays to find a plethora of "communicative" grammar exercises and activities (for example, Ur, 1988; Rinvolucri 1984). What is not so easy, however, is to know how such activities contribute to learning processes. After all, there are many different types with different learning aims, which are usually not stated and often, in my experience, not analysed by teachers who use these activities in terms of the learning principles behind them and their efficiency with regard to learning. The stage model will help us to decide what exactly might be the learning aims of a particular activity: is it an activity which supports learning or does it simply test what the students are supposed to have learnt (an alarming number of grammar exercises seem to fall into the latter category)? Does the activity help concept formation? Is the aim to proceduralise what has already been more or less conceptualised by the learner? Do we provide activities which feed into performance and cross the bridge between competence and performance (in traditional grammar the link between practice and production often remains a pedagogical no-man's land)?

What is missing from the ACPP model is the category of "input", which is usually understood as the language provided to the learner by the teacher, textbook or other source. In traditional grammar teaching, based on a synthetic "item-by-item" syllabus, this may be a single grammar point (form, notion, pattern, etc.), embedded in a text. Krashen, who would no doubt reject a synthetic syllabus, nevertheless famously regards "comprehensible input +1" (from the teacher or text) as a prerequisite for the next stage of intake.

A cognitive view, however, would claim that both these orientations take far too narrow a view of input, since they limit it to what Chomsky termed "primary linguistic data"; that is to say, the language which learners hear or read. What needs to be included in any cognitive learning model is a more comprehensive and better defined understanding and specification of the input, not only of that provided by the teacher

but also of the input which learners themselves bring into the learning process; in other words, knowledge structures which are well developed in school learners and which consist of both linguistic and general cognitive resources. Krashen's "input + 1" is essentially teacher-oriented in that it represents a static, and perhaps even structural, view of what the teacher believes the learners know. In contrast, a cognitive approach will see input as a dynamic and complex process, which may well include a learner's supposed existing grammatical knowledge but which will go well beyond this. Some important linguistic and cognitive resources are summarised in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Input

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Input from teacher/textbook, etc.</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Known language + new language + context = comprehensible input + 1</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Input from learners</th></tr>
<tr><td>Linguistic resources</td><td>Cognitive resources</td></tr>
<tr><td>• General knowledge of language(s)
• Knowledge of L1
• Knowledge of L2</td><td>• Schematic constructs
• World knowledge
• Pedagogical knowledge</td></tr>
</table>

Linguistic resources

Since learners are already highly competent users of language, they have a "general feel" of how language in general works. Here I am not thinking necessarily in terms of language structure in the narrow sense, as advocated by proponents of "universal grammar", but in a wider sense. For example, learners know that language is used to communicate messages; that language is used to express the ideas, perspective and standpoint of the speaker; that language exchanges are assessed by speakers and listeners according to how and whether meaning has been communicated. It should be added that, on the one hand, this knowledge often lies latent within the minds of learners and, secondly, that many pedagogical grammar exercises tend to flout these general principles of language use by reducing grammar to a kind of "linguistic or pedagogical mathematics" which bears no relation to authentic use. As a result, it seems to me that learners often experience "alienation" when doing grammar activities. It is important that learners feel that they are doing "language-like" things with grammar and not engaging in tasks which contradict their natural feeling for how language in general works.

As far as the learner's first language is concerned, the universal grammar agenda held by some linguists has led certain theories of second language acquisition to play down

the differences between L1 and L2 and consequently the influence of the latter over the former. Cognitive approaches, however, tend to recognise that in learning a foreign language – I use the term deliberately to contrast with second language – means acquiring a new conceptual system which differs in some ways from that of the first language. This will result in pedagogy in a stronger focus on language awareness exercises which help students to gain a greater understanding of both their first language and the foreign language and which may highlight both similarities and differences.

Cognitive resources

The importance of not only linguistic but also cognitive resources applies, on the one hand, to the use of language and, on the other, to the learning of language. As far as the former is concerned, one important difference between a cognitive approach and many purely language-based approaches to use is that the former recognises the importance of forms of cognitive organisation within the brain, on the basis of which perceptions of thoughts and events are conceptualised, categorised and structured and which help human beings to make sense of the world. Both thinking and using language are inextricably bound up with the process of conceptualising and categorising; being able to use a foreign language entails not just dealing with language at a sentence level but learning how to encode one's own experiences and perceptions of the world into that language. It therefore follows that pedagogy needs to provide activities which support learners in the task of encoding their own experiences into language.

As far as learning is concerned, at the heart of a cognitive approach is the view that learning does not consist merely of an incremental increase of knowledge items, but requires learners to restructure existing knowledge on the basis of new experiences. This means that pedagogical activities should give learners the opportunity to reflect on and activate their own knowledge whenever new grammar is to be learnt and, if appropriate, to formulate grammar rules in their own terms. It is one of the aims of discovery and language-awareness activities to provide such opportunities to the learner.

The comments made concerning both linguistic and cognitive resources clearly tie in with a constructivist view of language learning referred to in other chapters of this publication. One consequence of taking this view of learning grammar is that learning a language entails learning how to represent situations through one's own eyes and that "I" should be in the centre of classroom activities. In many grammar exercises, however, it is almost as if the learner's own self is excluded from the process of language use. For example, students are given exercises to fill in or transform, in which the situation and vocabulary have already been decided upon by teacher or textbook

author and all they are allowed to do is to add the missing grammar. Continually working with other people's ideas can have a negative effect on learning since it blocks the process of construction, which is an essential part of language use. Allowing learners to express their own ideas and feelings and make use of their own knowledge and experience in exercises, which is sometimes referred to as personalisation, is important if we are to see language in cognitive terms.

Two important pedagogical principles emerge from this. Firstly, the role of "existing knowledge" must provide a framework, and allow for templates, into which new knowledge can be embedded and interpreted. Secondly, students must be encouraged to carry out a process of "hypothesis-testing and revision" since this represents an important cognitive learning process, through which learners are able to reconstruct their knowledge of the foreign learning system they are acquiring.

How do the above ideas fit in with the concept of *savoir-être*? The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* translates *savoir-être* as "existential competence" but interestingly, neither culture nor language are referred to directly under this heading. *Savoir-être* is characterised as follows (Council of Europe, 2001: 105):

> Selfhood factors connected with their individual personalities, characterised by the attitudes, motivations, values, beliefs, cognitive styles and personality types which contribute to their personal identity.

By adopting a cognitive view of grammar use and learning we are expanding the "selfhood" concept to include not only cognitive styles but also cognitive processes and constructions which learners will make use of in both learning and using grammar. The outcome of learning a new grammatical item will be not merely another box ticked off on the checklist in the syllabus but an increased ability to perform acts of communication, expressing thoughts that are generated by the learner in an extended range of contexts. How these somewhat abstract ideas can be put into practice is illustrated in the set of activities in Section B of this publication.

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Theories and principles – Conclusions

David Newby

Cohesion and coherence

Our project began with the task, both abstract and ambitious, of examining modern language learning and teaching in order to see if we could detect unifying theoretical strands which link such apparently disparate areas as learner autonomy, intercultural awareness, human rights teaching, language acquisition and grammar. To do this, we decided not to focus on the classroom as such, where principles, while omnipresent, are often hidden behind classroom practice, but to address the level of teacher education, where theories, approaches and principles are usually dealt with in a more overt way. It was our intention that in the course of the project various insights would crystallise which might serve as defining characteristics of the "cohesion of competences" which we were seeking.

Coherence of principles

What was apparent from the outset was that in order to identify cohesive strands, it was necessary to focus first on a theoretical level and explore theories which lead into the subject areas dealt with in this publication – human rights, literature, intercultural awareness, grammar, etc. – since a pattern of cohesion does not necessarily result from links between either the content or the methodology of teaching these subjects *per se* but learning-related theories on the one hand and language and communication-related theories on the other, upon which teaching feeds. Thus, it is at the level of theories and resulting principles that we must first dig deeper in order to find a theoretical coherence which will underlie various subject areas.

As stated elsewhere in this publication, theoretical coherence was relatively easy to identify in times when the communicative approach monopolised discussions of language learning and teaching. The single label of "communication" was one which could be applied with reference to relevant theories of language, to aims of learning, to classroom methodology and to a more limited extent to learning theory. In post-communicative times, however, recognising theoretical coherence requires us to cast our net more widely to harvest relevant theories and resulting principles. In the following I shall attempt to weave in some of the theoretical strands which have been referred to in this section of the publication and indicate how they may form a coherent network.

Goals of language learning

The impression sometimes arises amongst language teachers that over the past few decades methodologists have constantly discovered new areas with which to burden their teaching load, which is in any case already crammed into an inadequate timescale. There is not doubt that there is some truth in this, though rather than seeing these "new areas" in an incremental way, it is perhaps more useful to see developments in modern language learning and teaching in terms of a broadening of goals and an accompanying extension of goal parameters.

As has been well documented, the arrival of CLT in the 1970s did not challenge the linguistic goal of grammatical competence, but sought to embed the concept of competence within a more comprehensive communicative competence, thus additionally redefining language learning aims in terms of skills and performance. Post-communicative developments, while in no way dispensing with the importance of communicative competence, have embedded this competence in what the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* terms *savoir-être* or "existential competence". Van Ek's phrase "optimal personal ability", cited by Anne-Brit Fenner in her chapter on learner autonomy, expresses this general goal very succinctly. As has been stressed in various chapters in this volume, this personal ability embraces culture, learning and language – it will be remembered that the term "personalisation" was used in connection with grammar, intercultural awareness and learner autonomy. Thus, we can now identify a wider palette of goals: grammatical competence, communicative competence and existential competence, which, as defined in this volume, are not separate but might be viewed rather as concentric circles.

Learners

We have seen in all contributions to this publication a consensus towards "learner-centred" forms of pedagogy, reflecting a general trend which has gathered momentum in post-communicative language education. However, within this consensus somewhat different views of the role of the learner are apparent. For example, it could be argued that the very guided approach to dealing with "reported speech" described in Section B is quite at odds with the principle of choice, which is a central tenet of learner autonomy. Nevertheless, it seems to me that certain general principles emerge from all discussions concerning the learner's role.

The first concerns the familiar cognitive-affective dichotomy which is often invoked in discussions of learning. Anne-Brit Fenner states in her chapter on intercultural awareness that "emotional engagement is not enough" and stresses the importance of "intellectual experience". This view seems strongly to contradict so-called humanistic approaches, which held sway towards the end of the 20th century. It might also be

remembered that Krashen famously speaks of the “affective filter” which will influence language learning. Strangely, he does not refer to a “cognitive filter”, which seems to me of even greater importance. For example, in my chapter on grammar, I spoke of the alienation learners might experience when performing grammar exercises which I referred to as “linguistic or pedagogical mathematics” and which bear no relation to authentic use or the learners’ conception of what language is used for. It is clearly apparent that the focus on cognitive, rather than affective, processes is becoming much stronger among researchers. It could be argued that this has been the case for a number of years. Surely, this is exactly the area that learner strategy training focuses on. However, what I am referring to is at a deeper level than the “bag of strategy tricks”, to which this area is often reduced. I am referring to all cognitive processes, both conscious and unconscious, which learners bring to bear, intentionally or incidentally, when engaging in learning activities. The centrality of cognitive processing is an important starting point for most of the views expressed in this publication and the nature of its role in learning is a vital element in both a cognitive approach to learning and constructivism.

It is only by focusing on this important core of learning theory that we can be more explicit about profiling the contributions that learners can make to their own learning on the one hand and about stipulating appropriate classroom pedagogy on the other. It is a central tenet of learner autonomy that learners are credited with the potential to make responsible decisions about their own learning based on reflection. Yet as far as theories of language acquisition are concerned this is not a view that appears to be widely held by applied linguists. In discussions of grammar, I spoke about what might be termed a “back-to-the womb” view of the learner, which is a logical extension of acquisition theories which seek to equate first and second language acquisition. “Natural” acquisition theories not only draw false parallels with first language acquisition, but ignore the cognitive resources which learners have at their disposal. This view is clearly at odds with an essential tenet of classroom learners at the heart of learner autonomy. We therefore need theories of language acquisition which do not see it merely as something that happens given the right conditions, but as something that needs to be and can be actively worked on by learners, and to do this consciousness of the learning process is essential.

A further parameter shift, by no means new, concerns the role of the classroom which comprises the pivot of school learning. Whereas the communicative approach saw the learner essentially as a user of language, post-communicative teaching has restated the fact that language learning is not merely a question of simulating the contexts and processes of the outside world, but, as Anne-Brit Fenner points out, acknowledging that the classroom represents a very real world for the learner. Authenticity is no longer a vicarious state but one which can be embedded within classroom learning situations.

Learning theory

One surprising result of the pre-workshop questionnaire was that relatively little attention appears to be paid to specific learning theories in teacher education. As pointed out in the introduction to the publication, the two common denominators with regard to learning theory were CLT and Krashen's natural approach. Yet, the view that is expressed in various chapters of this publication is that CLT, whilst providing important theoretical impulses in other areas, is weak on language acquisition theory. Moreover, whilst Krashen's views may have an immediate surface logic and, due to their simplistic nature, are usually found teachable by language educators and accessible by student teachers, they are diametrically at odds with the various theories of learning proposed by the authors of this publication.

It may well be that the apparent paucity of learning theory in teacher education programmes is a fairly realistic reflection of the state of the language acquisition art among applied linguists, at least until very recent times. For those who sought learning theories from within linguistics, a general "natural acquisition plus learning styles and strategies" appears to represent the tenor of much research.

Whilst no single theory is proposed by all authors, there are certain common aspects that can be identified. Firstly, it can generally be stated that the narrow search for relevant theories within the confines of linguistics, which has reflected the modular view of language and corresponding theories of acquisition commonly proposed by applied linguistics in recent years, needs to be expanded to take on board more general learning theories emanating in particular from the direction of cognitive psychology. Example of these are the cognitive approach proposed in the chapter on grammar and in particular the closely related personal and social construct theories which figure in several chapters. Constructivism in its various forms is at the core of principles relating to apparently diverse areas such as learner autonomy, intercultural awareness and grammar.

Teachers

Our project description referred to an "integrated approach to language learning and teaching based on a new educational role for language teachers". Few teachers of a certain age would dispute that the role of teachers has changed considerably over the past few decades. This role may have social dimensions such as the increased democratisation of society and the corresponding change in student-teacher relationships. However, what this publication is concerned with is essentially the educational-didactic role of the teacher. It is, of course, relatively easy to relabel the teacher's role with a few buzz words: mediator, facilitator of learning, participant in the learning process, etc. However, the role of the teacher needs to be seen in a coherent

relationship with theories and principles of learning. For example, the "scaffolding" role referred to in several discussions is a direct result of social theories of learning.

Cohesion of competences

What is meant by the phrase "cohesion of competences" is that topic areas such as those which form the chapter headings of this publication should not be seen as discrete subjects, but the methodology of dealing with them in class should be seen as reflections of common principles. This rather abstract concept is perhaps best illustrated by one or two concrete examples taken from what, on the surface, seem to be quite different topic areas, grammar and intercultural awareness.

In both the chapter on intercultural awareness and on grammar the importance of seeing the other culture and the other language as potentially alienating systems, which are accessed through the learners' own cultural and linguistic capital, was stressed. Moreover, in discussions of culture the importance of reflecting on one's own culture and value systems as a prerequisite for understanding other cultures was emphasised. Similarly, with regard to grammar, my definition of input included the learners' own cognitive and linguistic resources, part of which is their knowledge of their own language. Thirdly, the process of reflection was emphasised with regard to both subject areas.

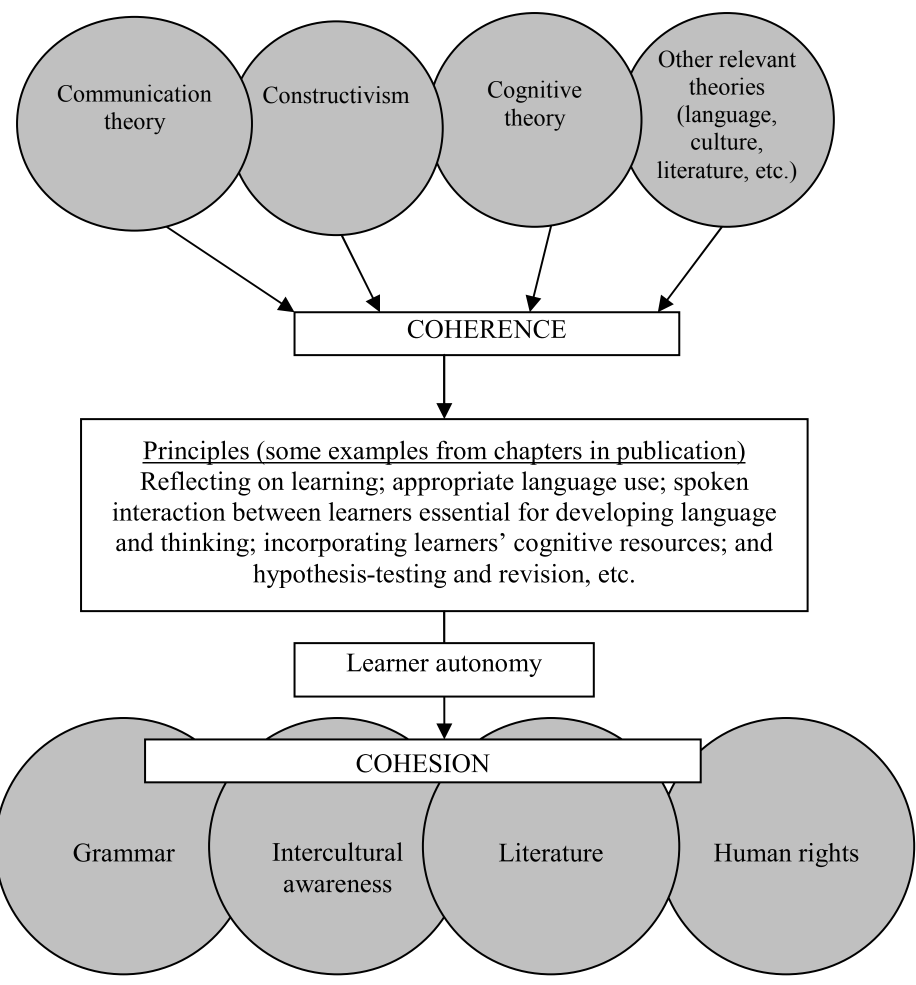
Concluding comments

As Anne-Brit Fenner states in the introduction, the title of the project was seen as a question rather than as a statement, a question which subsequently became a quest to find the coherence and cohesion we were seeking. Figure 1 attempts to represent diagrammatically what we have discovered in the course of the project and what we have attempted to illustrate in this publication: on the one hand, the relationship between theories, principles and practice and, on the other, the coherent strands and cohesive links we have perceived.

The terms in the diagram refer specifically to our project and publication. It should be pointed out that however strongly the authors may have advocated theories in the course of discussions, we would not maintain that these theories necessarily represent the modern orthodoxy. However, in committing ourselves to certain theories we hope to demonstrate the importance of taking theories as a basis for methodology and classroom practice and indeed taking a stance on these theories since, as is illustrated in Section B of the publication, teaching modes and activities derive directly from principles arising from theoretical beliefs. There is no such thing as theoretically neutral methodology. Similarly, the topic areas referred to in Figure 1 are those which

were selected by workshop participants as providing a special focus of interest; clearly, any other area of language learning and teaching could be added.

Figure 1: Coherence of principles and cohesion of competences



What the diagram and our project as a whole seek to stress is the importance of principles based on theories. It is easy for teacher educators to spout terms such as "communicative", "learner autonomy", "facilitating learning", etc. Yet, they will remain superficial and ill-defined if they are not traced back to the learning theories with underlie them and learners will be at the mercy of modern dogma if they are not

given the opportunity to reflect on and critically assess their tenets. It is important for teacher educators, methodologists and teachers to commit themselves to theories, or aspects of theories, which they believe will provide a sound theoretical basis for their teaching. It is only from these theories that coherence of approaches can be achieved. This coherence will, in turn, provide a set of principles which can guide teaching procedures. In Figure 1, learner autonomy has been placed at a separate level, since, while not a learning theory as such, it refers to a set of principles, the core of which are, in the eyes of the authors of this publication, a *sine qua non* for language learning. Finally, cohesion of a variety of language and language-related competences can be seen as the result of adherence to principles of theories, not only of language and learning but also of cognition and culture. It should therefore be possible to see “grammar methodology” or the “methodology of teaching literature” not as separate didactic competences but as manifestations of common principles, which apply to all aspects of language learning.

What the diagram does not show is the importance of mediating theory in teacher education in ways that provide for an understanding of the theory-practice relationship by allowing students to experience, engage with and reflect on, not only the theories themselves, but on their implementation. It is this important issue which will be at the centre of attention in Section B of this publication.

Section B: Applications, mediation and implementation

The role of reflection in pre-service student teachers' understanding of communicative language teaching

Jacinta McKeon

This study looks at how a group of student teachers' understandings of communicative language teaching (CLT) developed over the course of their pre-service training. It focuses in particular on the theory-practice link and the significance of reflection on developing their understandings. The main sources of data are student teachers' portfolios and reflections which they completed as part of their pre-service teacher education course.

In part one I describe the student teachers' understandings of second language teaching when beginning their training; in part two I track how their understandings have developed over the course of the programme and how these understandings link up with their classroom practice, and in part three I focus on the link between theory and practice and reflection.

The Higher Diploma in Education at University College Cork (a postgraduate professional teaching training course) consists of a number of foundation courses, a methodology course which has two elements – a component on second language pedagogy and a language-specific component applying pedagogy to the teaching of a second language, for example, French, German, Irish and micro-teaching sessions . The general framework follows the principles of CLT. One of the main aims of all the various elements outlined above is to develop student teachers' understandings of CLT and the ability to apply these understandings to their classroom practice.

Student teachers' understandings of second language teaching as they begin their training

Lectures and tutorials do not begin in University College Cork until early October, however, many students start teaching in the second week of September. Therefore, their teaching that is done in September and early October provides some insight into student teachers' understanding of second language teaching at the beginning of their pre-service training and before they have been exposed to any theoretical input. As a tutor to nine of the students, I visited them in early October 2001 and observed them teaching for approximately forty minutes each. In general the approach of the student teachers was traditional: there was limited use of the target language as the language of the classroom, they relied on the textbook and followed it closely, grammatical items were presented often without a truly meaningful context, lessons were teacher-focused with very little pair work and there was seldom a focus on culture.

Reflective portfolios

As part of the Higher Diploma in Education all students compile a reflective portfolio which is an essential part of the course. The portfolio consists of, among other things, five entries in which student teachers reflect on five key aspects/moments/incidents, etc. of their training which they select, describe, analyse, reflect upon and evaluate in terms of their future classroom practice. A close reading of some of these entries has provided me with further insights into their thinking and understanding of CLT at the outset of their training in September/early October 2001. I will discuss in particular the use of the target language as the language of the classroom and teaching grammar communicatively.

Using the target language

One student explained in a portfolio entry, entitled "Targeting the target language as the language of the classroom", that her use of the target language was limited in September because she had no personal experience of learning through the target language and the response from teaching colleagues was negative. She was, however, surprised at her pupils' willingness to use the target language as the language of the classroom:

> … I started the Higher Diploma in Education course with the perspective that is was impossible to teach 12/13 year olds, with no prior knowledge of learning a foreign language, through the target language itself. … I consulted with the Head of the German Department and also the Head of the French Department in the school and spoke with friends of mine who had either limited or wide and varied experience in the field of language teaching. The general reaction I received was negative, cynical and disbelieving that any such task was possible.

Another student mentioned in one of her portfolio entries, entitled "En français, s'il vous plait", that she had difficulty using the target language when she first started teaching in autumn, 2001, as she felt it would frighten the learners and she lacked confidence in her own use of the target language:

> Also I had the idea that I would intimidate or frighten the students by overusing the target language. In addition, I was not used to speaking French or German aloud and I did not have the confidence to do this in front of 30 students.

In another entry from this student, entitled, " It's time to change", she highlights how her own experience of learning French and German, which she described as being

traditional, hampered her in her attempts to teach communicatively and in particular to teach through the target language. Having described the approach to the teaching of French and German in her secondary school she says:

> It is no surprise therefore, that when I began this year, I had some problems coming to terms with this "communicative approach" to teaching a language as I had never been at the receiving or learning end of it. It was a completely new experience to me. In September, I began teaching as I had observed during my school years, which was from the textbook. Once I started attending college and receiving supervisions, I realised that my approach needed to change dramatically.

Through discussion at tutorials, reflections from portfolios and classroom-based research assignments, it is evident that for many of these student teachers their own experience of learning a second/third language strongly influenced how they approached teaching at the beginning of their training course. This influence is evident in relation to use of the target language as the language of the classroom and also in relation to form-focused instruction.

Approaches to grammar

I will now focus on student teachers' approaches to the teaching of grammar at the beginning of their training. A number of students chose to write a portfolio entry on their attempts to teach grammar communicatively. When reading these entries one is struck by the similarity in student teachers' descriptions of their approaches at the beginning of their teaching practice: student teachers wrote up grammatical structures on the blackboard, pupils had to write these into their copies and learn them by heart. There was a lot of drilling of structures, and translation from the L1 to the target language was used to test the structures.

When student teachers describe their initial approach to the teaching of grammar, they link it again and again to how they have been taught a second language themselves. In an entry entitled "It's time to change", a student, although recognising the ineffectiveness of the approach to the teaching of grammar she experienced, uses the same approach herself:

> As I had rote learned the rules and verbs during my years in school, I knew how boring and ineffective this method was and did not want to use it with my students. I was eager to teach them grammar communicatively. I had made my first mistake in September, when I taught the verb *être* even though they had no way of using it – they didn't even know enough vocabulary to put a

> sentence together at that stage! As a result they did not use the verb and subsequently forgot it.

Another factor that influenced student teachers' approach to grammar in the initial stages of their teaching practice was the textbook they were using. In the following extract from an entry entitled, "Teaching is linear but learning is not: form-focused instruction", a student teacher discusses how the textbook she used in teaching French was less supportive than the textbook she used in teaching German, in terms of teaching grammar communicatively:

> At the beginning of the year, I found it was much easier to have the communicative needs of my students as the starting point in German class rather than in French class. The reason for this was the different approach taken in the two textbooks. … In one of the first chapters of X [a textbook] the verb *être* is dealt with using the most uncommunicative of approaches. It is introduced in isolation with no context which could be meaningful to the students. Of course, as a beginning teacher, I felt I needed something "concrete" from the textbook to base the lesson on and so I went into my class reciting, getting them to recite and write out the verb *être* in the present tense. Needless to say, it was not a very successful lesson. It did not take me long to realise how nonsensical this was.

In relation to the teaching of grammar their own experience of second language learning is the main influence they cited on their approach to teaching grammar in the initial stages of their training.

Summary of portfolio analysis

In summary, the following factors were mentioned as influences on the extent to which student teachers began teaching through the target language:

- whether they had role models from their own learning of a second language;
- their level of confidence in using the target language;
- the degree of support from colleagues within the school context;
- concern about a negative response from their pupils.

And in relation to the teaching of grammar:

- the influence of their own experience of learning a second language;
- the textbook they were using;
- lack of knowledge about CLT;
- lack of confidence in applying theory to practice.

The development of student teachers' approach to the target language

In the following extract from a student teacher's portfolio reflection on the use of the target language, which was written over the course of the Higher Diploma in Education and submitted in April 2002, we learn about the different ways in which she approached this subject. She realised the need to improve her own classroom language use, to plan in detail and to communicate with her pupils and thus develop their thinking and attitude to use of the target language as the language of the classroom. Her thinking has become more complex and this has resulted in a change in her classroom practice:

> During the year in UCC from the feedback from supervisions, micro-teaching sessions, methodology sessions and a visit to the college from Ernesto Macaro,[10] I realised how important it was that I greatly increased my use and encouraged the students to use the target language also where possible. Firstly, I myself had to return to basics and practice using the language myself and listening to tapes. For every lesson plan, I wrote out everything that I intended to say in the lesson. This was time consuming but needed to be done in order to achieve a result. I told students of how I intended to use the target language as much as possible from then onwards and I asked the students also how they felt about using it as the language of the classroom. The feedback was positive and the students began to get excited at the prospect of this. We had a few lessons, where at the beginning, I would introduce some phrases. The students would listen carefully and try to figure out what I was saying. In turn, I would use gestures and change my tone of voice. Using this method for introducing the target language proved both enjoyable and effective. The students soon understood me and were able to respond competently.

She concludes:

> I believe the use of the target language to be vital to communicative language teaching. The change in my classroom and pupils is evident since I increased my use – it motivates them, attracts their attention and increases their interest in the subject.

The next extract is taken from a portfolio entry of a student teacher who was very successful in teaching through the target language. From her entry, one learns how her thinking developed: initially, she understood the main purpose of teaching through the

10 Dr. E. Macaro, Department of Educational Studies, University of Oxford, taught a group of students exclusively through the target language.

target language was to provide comprehensible input. Her understanding developed and in time she came to realise the importance of target language use by learners themselves in creative and spontaneous ways:

> In the following lessons I introduced German as the language of the classroom. Students must have thought that I had changed into an authentic German overnight as now language use in the classroom had increased in October to 80% as opposed to 35% for the month of September. From this point on, greetings and farewells from me to students were made in the target language and also reciprocated by students in the target language. Classroom directions … were all carried out in the target language, I repeated phrases and made gestures and carried out the action myself if students still failed to understand, then repeated the phrase in German ensuring that students now understood. I introduced an element of fun in the use of German in the classroom and so I started with some classroom management games such as Simon says ….

The development of student teachers' approach to form-focused instruction

A reading of their reflections points in particular to their having understood the idea of teaching grammar in communicative contexts. Their discussions on this matter suggested many had really been able, both in terms of theory and practice, to understand the pedagogical implications of presenting grammar in context:

> At the beginning of the year, in my scheme of work, I had had for example, the "er" verbs as an aim of one lesson. I realised that this wasn't at all communicative. Therefore I changed my aim to teaching the students about hobbies. Most of the verbs used when talking about hobbies are "er" verbs, so I was able to give the students a rich input of the grammar item first of all, without their knowledge, then I got them to focus on the verbs inductively. It was only after this that I gave them any rules … Also in German I realised that the grammar item to focus on would come from the topic we were studying ….

This student teacher's thinking has gone beyond the notion of just putting grammatical items into a meaningful context to an understanding of the need to provide learners with lots of meaning-bearing input from which learners build their internal representations of the grammatical system. The extent to which students' understandings developed related to their different starting points. In some cases it seemed that if students had a very traditional experience of second language teaching,

they found it more difficult to embrace a communicative approach to language teaching as they lacked a model on which to build a more progressive approach. Some students who were in a difficult school environment where classroom discipline was a problem felt introducing pair work or using the target language as the language of the classroom would add to the discipline problems. It was only when classroom discipline improved that they felt willing to take more risks and introduce a more communicative approach.

Some students had to use a more traditional textbook and particularly in the first few months this influenced their approach until they developed the necessary understandings, skills and familiarity with other language learning resources to modify and supplement the textbook:

> At the beginning of the year, I definitely taught like I had been taught in school. I followed the textbook, even though I knew it wasn't what I wanted to do with the students. I didn't know how to break away from it.

The links between theory, practice and reflection

Often in the past the theory-practice link was thought of as a one-way process in which one started with theory and moved from there to practice. As a practising teacher and now as a language teacher educator, I always had a strong belief in the need to understand one in the light of the other. As a German language teacher, my understanding of theory had hugely influenced my classroom practice and as I gained more experience as a teacher, my classroom practice influenced and nourished my theoretical understandings. In my design of the second language pedagogy element of the Higher Diploma in Education, I had placed a strong emphasis on the theory-practice link, highlighting the synergistic nature of the relationship, and encouraging student teachers to examine their practice in light of theory and current research findings and to approach classroom practice with a theoretical perspective in mind. At all times theory and practice were presented as interlinked.

When I started to consider how the student teachers' understandings of CLT were progressing during their training, I wanted to learn more about the way in which the one influences the other. From reading 56 assignments, in which student teachers were asked specifically about their developing understandings, it is clear that a combination of increasing knowledge and experience in the classroom combined to develop understanding. It is not always clear which was the more important for any one student. For some students it was evident that classroom practice was the source of a change in their understandings but for others it was a deepening understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of CLT. The stage in their development as language teachers was also a factor. At the beginning of their training, most students lacked knowledge of CLT and

therefore at this point theoretical knowledge was very important. In order for their understandings to develop, they needed to reflect on their attempts to apply the theory to practice and to reflect on how elements of their practice related to theories of second language learning. The following quotes point to the interplay between a variety of inputs, namely lectures in second language pedagogy, classroom practice, micro-teaching sessions and tutorials:

> Learning about the communicative approach to form focused instruction in college along with researching the area and especially practising it in my classes has allowed me to develop a clear and deep understanding of this issue.
>
> However, I realise now, through practice, how effective and successful the communicative approach to the teaching of grammar can be.
>
> As I have implemented pedagogical strategies advised by my supervisor and exemplified in course literature, I have developed a deeper understanding of a communicative approach to form-focused instruction.

In my work as a teacher educator, I have come to realise what a wonderful source of insight student teachers' portfolio reflections are for me on how they were conceptualising second language teaching at the beginning of the course and how their thinking changed as they completed various entries. I am always very excited by the "window of insight" that this process presents to me. As my student teachers became more conscious of their understandings of second language teaching and learning through having to openly discuss their entries, the rationale for including various topics and their analysis of their successes and failures in their teaching and in their pupils' learning, I became more knowledgeable about how they were thinking and the kinds of things that seemed to push their thinking forward. I wanted to examine more closely the nature of their developing understandings and it became clear that a fruitful way forward was to think in terms not just of the theory-practice link but the theory-practice-reflection link.

Conclusions

As beginning teachers in September 2001, with no formal theoretical understanding, their practice was greatly influenced by their own experience of learning a second language. Their personal theories of teaching related to their experiences as learners in primary, secondary and tertiary level. Their awareness of their practice was limited as they had no real opportunity to reflect on their practice in a structured manner. Some talked about not wanting to teach as they had been taught but finding themselves doing just that. Their teaching approach could be described in most cases as more traditional

than communicative. Their knowledge of CLT was very limited and contained many misconceptions. In summary, there was an absence of reflection, a traditional approach in the classroom and a poor or non-existent understanding of actual theory. By March/April of 2002, there had been a development in all the above. It is clear that theory, practice and reflection contributed to the development in their thinking and their classroom practice but what was the interplay between the three?

At times, a development in their understandings occurred because of something that had happened during their classroom practice: (1) in relation to their pupils' responses; (2) their increasing confidence in teaching through the target language, which resulted in a greater commitment to principles of CLT; and (3) having taught grammar in context and experienced the improved quality of learning on the part of the learners, some student teachers came to a deeper understanding of this aspect of CLT. At times it was a discussion that followed a supervision where a theory-practice link was made explicit and key advice provided a way into developing further an aspect of classroom practice.

The reflection that was part of the portfolio process helped to develop student teachers' thinking as they had to be more explicit about their practice and how it related to the principles of CLT. It involved interrogating, analysing, evaluating and reappraising their practice and in particular a communicative approach to second language teaching in the light of theories of second language teaching.

One student noted in her conclusion to her portfolio:

> Writing a portfolio entry on the teaching of grammar encouraged me to apply the theory I was reading about to my teaching practice in the classroom. I had to identify the reasons why using X [textbook] was not successful for me in the classroom, why Y [another textbook] worked so well …. The portfolio process, along with tutorials, methodology sessions and lectures enforced in me the belief that everything we do in the classroom is grounded in theory. As a beginning professional, I need to be able to back up my practice with theories of teaching. I need to give reasons behind my actions in the classroom. The portfolio has allowed me to explore my own beliefs on what good teaching consists of and to back up these beliefs by reflecting on my own schooldays, on my teaching practice this year and various key issues such as those discussed in the portfolio.

This student teacher reflected on her teaching with eight of her fellow classmates on a weekly basis. The portfolio facilitated a structured approach to her reflections and required that she share these and provide a rationale for aspects of her practice. It

provided an opportunity to integrate the knowledge and experiences of the many elements of her training course, including teaching practice. There is clearly a link here between reflection and her deepening understandings of theory and her classroom practice. In the final paragraph to the conclusion to her portfolio, another student says:

> The main discovery I have made and which is clearly underlined in all of my portfolio entries is teaching and learning are not automatic structures or concepts. They do not occur overnight or without effort on behalf of the student and the learner. Firstly, understanding is not inherent: it has to be worked at consciously on the part of the teacher and the learner.

Reflection involves bringing to consciousness intuitions, ideas, observations, etc. and in so doing, adding to one's knowledge of the teaching and learning process. These student teachers were "authoring their own learning and professional development" (Lyons, 1998) by reflecting and having to share their reflections in a open forum. It is not easy either to reflect or to develop an understanding and in the above quotation one gets a sense of the hard work that it involved for this student teacher. I would suggest the quality of her understanding, which I would describe as deep, came from reflecting over a number of months.

> All in all. I feel that in producing this portfolio, I have grasped and analysed a lot of the ideas and concepts behind language teaching which have influenced me throughout the year. It made me analyse, implement and evaluate theories which struck me during the year. I have made decisions concerning future teaching practice that I would never have made had I not taken time to fully reflect. I believe I have developed and progressed not only as a teacher but also as an individual from completing this documentation on my journey as a teacher.

In more recent times the theory-practice relationship is understood more as a cyclical one where practice can feed into theory and vice versa. It is clear from this examination of student teachers' portfolios and reflections on various aspects of second language teaching and learning that it is not just a matter of theory and practice but of reflection. Indeed, I would suggest that it is opportunities to reflect in a structured and collaborative manner which allowed student teachers to make the necessary connections between theory and practice. It contributed to their increased confidence. It provided support. It helped them develop clarity and expand their thinking and understanding.

Reference

Lyons, N. (1998), *With portfolio in hand: validating the new teacher professionalism*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Author's note

I wish to acknowledge and thank my students for sharing their insights so generously and allowing me to publish extracts from their portfolios.

Aspects of learner autonomy in the national curricula of four European countries

Nicos Sifakis, Tuuli Oder, Magdolna Lehmann and Dainuvīte Blūma

Introduction

Nicos Sifakis

The concept of learner autonomy has played a central role in foreign language education for a number of years now. The communicative language teaching movement of the 1970s and the theories of constructivism and social constructivism paved the way for different approaches to learning, focusing on the learner as language user interacting with peers. Despite the fact that learner autonomy might appear to be a simple concept, it nevertheless proves to be a complicated approach to implement in curricula and classrooms. In order to provide a comprehensive understanding of it, it is necessary to refer to the domains of psychology, sociology and cultural studies (see Little, 1991).

A great variety of terms and concepts that are related to learner autonomy, some more closely and others less so, have been suggested in the relevant literature. In addition to the general orientation of "learner-centredness" (see Tudor, 1993) various more specific terms can be found. "Self-directed learning", "independent learning", "self-regulated learning" (Entwistle and Smith, 2002) focus on different learning forms aimed at enhancing learner autonomy. "Metalearning", a broad term originally described by Biggs (1985) as the process whereby students monitor their own learning and allocate their mental resources accordingly, is related to the process of "reflective learning". Other concepts refer to different methodologies such as "problem-based learning" or "task-based learning" which may help to implement certain principles of learner autonomy. Terms such as "tandem learning" (Kötter, 2002) or "co-operative learning" stress interpersonal aspects of learning amongst learners or between learners and teachers. Finally, modes of learning using ICT tools – for example, Internet-based rather than print-based courseware, collaborative web-based learning – point to the link between technology and learner autonomy (Jones and Issroff, 2005). This proliferation of terms in the learner autonomy field underlines its importance not only for language learning but for other areas of education – for example, learner autonomy is a central concern in the domain of adult education and lifelong learning practices (Rogers, 1996).

With regard to foreign language education, it is possible to distinguish between, on the one hand, general educational aims and principles of learner autonomy, and, on the other hand, the more practical implementation of those principles. Concerning the

general educational dimension of learner autonomy, it is important to mention the following points:

- learning is an individual activity (Kelly, 1953; Fenner, 2000). It follows that individual learners have different pre-knowledge and use different learning strategies, which means that teaching methodologies are likely to lead to widely varying learning outcomes;
- learning is a personal process, but need not be a solitary activity. In fact, language learning is improved if it is organised as a social and integrated activity (Dam, 1995), through the co-operation with others in appropriately structured group activities (Larson and Christensen, 1993);
- in an autonomous learning environment, all major choices regarding learning should be centred on and controlled by the individual learner (Holec, 1981). In this sense, it is important for curriculum developers, courseware designers and teachers alike to give learners a chance to be involved in all the major decisions that concern their own learning: planning, choosing materials, approaches, techniques, outcomes and forms of evaluation. If properly organised and monitored, this involvement will motivate the learner and lead to enhanced learning;
- if learner autonomy is properly practised, learners become more skilful in learning how to learn (Ellis and Sinclair, 1989). Making learners actively responsible for their learning essentially means equipping them with the basic skills for lifelong learning (Bown, 2000), which is an essential prerequisite for becoming participating citizens (Callan, 1997).

With regard to curricular implementation, learner autonomy works at four levels:

- at the level of curriculum design;
- at the level of teacher education;
- at the level of curricular implementation, in the form of materials design;
- at the level of classroom practice, which involves both teaching, learning and assessment/testing.

It goes without saying that each level has different possibilities and constraints.[11] The following discussions will focus on the level of curriculum design. Here we present an investigation of the extent to which learner autonomy is implemented in four European countries. Tuuli Oder looks at the mechanisms which promote and hinder independence in the Estonian EFL National Curriculum, and stresses the importance of involving all interested parties, that is, students, teachers and parents, in the designing of each school's curriculum. Nicos Sifakis then presents the new Greek EFL National

11 For more specific accounts see Dam, 1995; Holliday, 1994; Wenden, 1991.

Curriculum, which is aimed at enhancing, through learner autonomy, crucial notions such as European citizenship; in this regard, the importance of learning many languages is stressed. The European dimension of the Hungarian National Core Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages is also highlighted by Magdalena Lehmann, who discusses learner autonomy in the light of the political and educational changes that have taken place in Hungary over the past twenty years. In her section on autonomous language learning in Latvia, Dainuvīte Blūma stresses the importance of actively involving the learner in all the major learning-oriented decisions and once more highlights the positive position of the Latvian educational system towards multilingualism in education.

What promotes and what hinders learner independence in the Estonian EFL National Curriculum?

Tuuli Oder

Developing the National Curriculum in Estonia falls within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Science and Education. The curriculum, covering grades 1-12, was approved by the government and became law in 1996. Its implementation began in 1997 and was completed by the end of the year 2000. The curriculum is a framework upon which schools base their individual curricula, which are drawn up by teaching staff and school supervisory bodies with the co-operation of other stakeholders. The National Curriculum provides a list of compulsory subjects and time allotted for each subject in the school timetable. It has two major sections: general guidelines and subject curricula.

General guidelines

Lifelong learning as a life skill is mentioned as an important principle, stressing that it is one of the tasks of general education to support it, although a more exact explanation of how this should be done is missing. A set of principles, for example humanism, equality, students taking an active part in and taking responsibility for their learning, etc. is listed, which should serve as a basis for the design of school curricula and subject syllabi.

The links between different subjects are manifested through the topics to be integrated into all subject syllabi: environment, traffic, security, jobs and information technology.

A list of competences that should be achieved is divided into:

- general competences (ability to guide one's own learning and actions; ability to evaluate others; ability of self-analysis and self-determination);

- subject-area competences (social, reflective, communicative, ICT, cultural and mathematical);
- subject competences (each subject curriculum specifies its own).

Four different age levels (grades 1-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12) are referred to. Here, the competences to be achieved in the learning process for different age groups are formulated again. For example:

- taking pleasure in learning (grades 1-3);
- concentrating on learning, being aware of learning strategies and using them according to specific tasks (grades 4-6);
- setting learning objectives and choosing appropriate learning strategies, being able to evaluate one's own learning (grades 7-9);
- using different learning strategies and critical thinking (grades 10-12).

Subject curricula

This part includes a list of content matter and learning outcomes of all compulsory subjects in terms of knowledge and skills. Although general guidelines give broadly formulated principles, at one point it is stressed that it is the responsibility of the teacher to design his/her own subject syllabi for each year taking into account his/her own context. The school must design its school curriculum in co-operation with parents, students and other stakeholders (*Põhikooli ja gümnaasiumi riiklik õppekava*, 2002: 883).

Foreign language teaching

The overall aims of foreign language learning are common for all foreign languages. The goal is to acquire at least one foreign language at the level of B2 according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. Learning aims, which are divided according to four age levels (grades 1-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12), are the same for all foreign languages taught in Estonian schools, as are the topics listed for teaching the four skills. The topics are also specified for four different age groups. The language structures section (grammar) is different for each language and a short list of basic grammar items (maximum two pages) is provided for each foreign language.

Learner independence in the EFL curriculum

The objectives of EFL learning are clearly stated and so is the subject content. As to the methods, techniques and activities used, role plays, group work, project work, computer-based activities, etc. are specified. There are no clear-cut statements as far as

assessing learning is concerned, since it is up to school curricula and individual teacher's subject syllabi to decide what and when to teach. Due to this, it is only possible to organise national tests for the final grades of each age group. For this reason, we have a national assessment test in grade 6 and national exams in grades 9 and 12 (the latter serving as a university entrance exam as well).

Though it is commonly accepted that it is the teacher's task to introduce various study techniques and offer choices to cater for different study preferences, this is not explicitly stated in the curriculum as being the teacher's responsibility. The fact that schools have the freedom and responsibility to compile their own school-specific curricula is a manifestation of teacher independence, since it offers them a freer choice not only in content matters, but also in the timetable. It is possible to increase the number of lessons dedicated to different subjects, for example most schools increase the number of English lessons in the timetable from the compulsory two hours to between three and four per week at secondary school level. These additional lessons enable teachers to offer students more freedom and scope to cater for individual interests and needs.

The Estonian EFL curriculum is a basic guideline, not a detailed study plan and for this reason, teachers are only given some major principles in rather general terms, for example when teaching reading, different authentic and semi-authentic text types should be used leaving the methodological interpretations to the teacher's judgment (for example, to use one text for all students or to offer choices of texts simultaneously, etc.). It is up to the teacher to make a final decision on what material is chosen, and when and how to use it in teaching.

It follows that different teaching contexts (both at school and teacher level) could lead to different learning contexts as well. For example, the schools where the number of EFL lessons is higher are more likely to devote time to the question of learner independence than those which have only the required minimum number of lessons. This is due to the fact that the teachers have extra time to devote to developing learner autonomy through specific learning activities (for example reading at home, diary writing, logs, dictionary work, etc.) that are usually rather time consuming. Whilst teachers may be very aware of aspects of learner autonomy, they may use pressure of time as a reason for choosing traditional teaching methods.

Having stated this, it is not only the time factor, but also the beliefs and professional background of the teacher that influence his or her decisions about learner autonomy development.

Conclusion

In the above discussion of the National Curriculum, it becomes clear that Estonian teachers have the opportunity to implement learner autonomy in the foreign language classroom because of the freedom they are given in deciding on structure, content and approaches to learning. In addition, the following points from the curriculum can also support the implementation and promotion of learner independence:

- the clear statement of the importance of lifelong learning;
- the importance of ICT competence is stressed;
- the emphasis on communicative competence;
- teacher autonomy in making important decisions.

The fact that lifelong learning, ICT competence and communicative competence are stressed in the curriculum causes all teachers, even those who do not actually share the belief in learner-centredness, to develop some aspects of autonomous learning because the above points are national requirements.

The considerable freedom of teachers to make important decisions is both an advantage and a disadvantage as regards independent learning. The principles of learner autonomy are not heavily stressed in the National Curriculum, but, as I have tried to point out, they are hidden in the context. It is the school curricula and the school EFL syllabi that play the key role in the promotion of autonomous learning, as there is wide scope for teacher autonomy. Much depends on the teacher who is expected to be a well-educated professional, qualified and competent enough to evaluate and foster learner independence.

It is possible to distinguish between two educational paradigms: the old teaching paradigm which is teacher-centred versus the new learning paradigm which is learner-centred. If the teacher accepts the new learning paradigm, where the learner's foreign language development is the focus of attention, then he/she has freedom to design the whole teaching and learning process, that is syllabi, lesson plans, etc. so that principles of learner autonomy can be integrated in the learning process. At the same time, the teacher who is a follower of the old teaching paradigm does not consider learner autonomy as an important educational principle and is likely to ignore it as a guiding principle of his/her teaching. So the teacher, being a key figure in the learning process, can either promote or hinder learner autonomy, depending on his/her concept of professional teaching. Consequently, it is of vital importance to implement principles of autonomous learning in both pre-service and in-service teacher education if one wants all teachers to promote learner independence.

Learner autonomy in the new Greek state-school curriculum

Nicos Sifakis

The new curriculum for the teaching of English in Greek state schools was published by the Greek Pedagogical Institute in 2003 and is electronically available (in Greek) at www.pi-schools.gr/programs/depps/. It is based on a cross-curricular approach to teaching and learning (in fact, the term "cross-curricular" appears in the title of the curriculum for all subjects) and adopts the teaching, learning and assessment principles reflected in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2001). The new courseware that is currently being developed on the basis of the curriculum should be available for implementation in the autumn of 2006.

It should be pointed out that this curriculum marks a departure from previous curricula, which were much more traditional in conception. As far as the English curriculum is concerned, it should be stressed that the curriculum strongly emphasises aspects that promote autonomous learning. In what follows, I briefly review the areas in which learner autonomy is prioritised and the ways in which this is done in the curriculum.[12]

The curriculum acknowledges the need for learner autonomy in the following ways:

- language learning should be practised in a way which ensures the "development of the learners' personality, awareness of self, emotional stability and dialectic capability" as well as the development of "a positive attitude towards co-operation and initiative-taking" (p. 353);
- it enhances the development of lifelong learning skills and strategies and a critical appreciation of new information and communication technologies (ibid.);
- it enhances the development and awareness of the concept of European citizenship and spirit of co-operation and collaboration in a democratic environment (ibid.);
- language learning should "secure access to lifelong learning and developmental skills and abilities, such as 'learning how to learn', co-operation, negotiation, decision-making, flexibility, anticipation and self-presentation" (ibid.);
- there is reference to the personal communication needs of the learner, both short-term, that is concerning personal, school-oriented and social life, and longer term, namely demands of the wider social, educational and professional domains (p. 354);
- with regard to learning, it "becomes participatory" (ibid.), "learning-centred" (p. 379) and "learner-centred" (p. 380);
- language learners are seen as creators and developers of discourse and not as "consumers of knowledge" (p. 381).

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12 All excerpts are translated from the original Greek document by the author.

The curriculum also makes explicit a number of general aims of foreign language education, which should make learners:

- aware of the wider sociocultural situation in Greece and Europe through their direct or indirect exposure to a variety of principles, values and behaviours;
- skilful in using the foreign language in their communication with people from other social and cultural backgrounds in Europe and elsewhere;
- capable of developing "learning-how-to-learn" skills through carefully created experiential tasks (p. 355).

With regard to teaching methodology, the English curriculum makes it clear that, while planning methodological activities, courseware developers and teachers should take into consideration:

- pupils' learning level, their specific interests and their competence in the foreign language (p. 379);
- the function of different teaching methodologies as a means of motivating learners to become active (ibid.);
- the importance of creating language tasks which prompt learners to work in pairs and groups and which "enhance their social and organisational skills" (ibid.);
- the possibility of individualising certain tasks, in accordance with each individual learner's learning skills and strategies (ibid.).

To achieve the above, the use of project-based work is ideal for motivating learners and helping them develop their self-awareness and initiative. At this point, the curriculum makes special reference to the implementation of new technologies, which can help learners approach the complexity of the world outside the classroom in a more authentic and motivating way (p. 379). To that end, the curriculum stresses the need to create a physical learning environment that promotes such work (pp. 380-381).

The curriculum also emphasises the collaboration between teachers and learners (p. 380). It goes on to suggest ways in which this collaboration can enhance learner autonomy, by mentioning such techniques as brainstorming, synthesis and categorisation of learners' ideas (ibid.), which aim at prompting learners into problem-solving, experimenting and applying trial-and-error techniques whilst allowing them to work at their own individual learning pace.

Another way of promoting learner autonomy that the curriculum mentions is the implementation of learner portfolios (ibid.) which can function as an additional element to the coursebook. The main advantage of portfolios is the fact that they incorporate material that is constantly changing and reflects the individual learner's personality and

learning pace. Portfolios are a means for assessment as well (pp. 381-382), which then becomes a formative process that integrates teacher assessment with peer- and self-assessment practices.

In summing up, the new curriculum for the teaching of English as a foreign language in Greek state schools is characterised by the philosophy of learner autonomy and the adoption of a large number of techniques that reflect the idea of learner-centredness. In addition, the curriculum goes on to further substantiate these principles in a lengthy section that offers more specific advice to courseware authors (pp. 670-684). It remains to be seen, of course, how far courseware and actual teaching practices will go towards putting this philosophy into practice.

Another issue that also requires attention is the extent to which teachers in Greek state schools are prepared to implement such an approach to teaching and learning. There is a great need for specialised teacher training seminars that would aim at both bringing teachers up to date with this new approach and turning them into active participants in the whole process. Academic establishments, such as the Hellenic Open University, offer postgraduate programmes for teachers, which have proved quite helpful in this regard, but it is certain that more extensive teacher education is needed.

Learner autonomy in the Hungarian National Core Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages

Magdolna Lehmann

The political and educational context of language teaching in Hungary has undergone dramatic changes in the past twenty years. In the 1980s, political change necessitated drastic reforms in the system of education. This put an end to the strong communist control over the curriculum by giving more autonomy to schools and teachers in the choice of teaching methodology as well as of materials, and contributed to the development of the present three-tier system of education policy.

However, the insecure social and political situation and the next decade of governmental policy with innovations and several versions of the Hungarian National Core Curriculum (Version 1: 1990; Version 2: 1992; Version 3: 1995; Version 4: 2003) caused a feeling of insecurity in both teachers and learners. On the one hand, a nationwide representative survey (Nikolov, 1999) has shown that governmental policy has had little impact on what actually goes on in the classroom. On the other hand, international comparative studies (PISA, 2001) have found a drop in the academic performance of Hungarian learners compared to learners in other European countries since the 1980s and this downward trend seems to be continuing today.

The National Core Curriculum (NCC, 2003) is the highest level document regulating education in Hungary. It aims to lay down common principles for all levels of education and at the same time to provide autonomy to schools in selecting their own educational content. It presents a summary of fundamental knowledge and skills to be developed and guidelines on how to spread content and developmental aspects over various phases of education. On the second level, frame curricula for the various subjects provide more detailed outlines and recommendations for schools, teachers, textbook writers and developers of national tests. Learner autonomy falls within the third level and is a matter for schools and teachers, who develop their own local curricula.

The latest version of the NCC provides some clear and specific statements on learner autonomy, and the eight key developmental tasks or cross-curricular fields are characterised by the intent to promote autonomous learning according to Holec's definition (cited in Fenner, 2000: 78), namely learners should be able to take charge of their own learning. The introduction to the NCC recognises the value of differentiation based on common foundations and claims that taking learners' interests and experiences into account is an essential educational requirement. The educational system should serve to enable learners to realise their individual potentials to the fullest possible extent and encourage educators to focus on the personal development of the individual.

Among the eight key developmental areas that should be mainstreamed through all aspects of education – national identity, European awareness and global culture, environmental education, information and communication culture, physical and mental health, preparing for roles of adult life, self-image and self-knowledge, and learning – the last two specify learner autonomy as an objective. The section on self-image and self-knowledge states that the educational values described in the NCC can only be internalised by learners if they are actively involved in naming and shaping these values, thus taking charge of their own learning. The other cross-curricular field dealing with learning encourages teachers to teach learners to learn and help them become increasingly independent in planning and making decisions about their own learning. Learners must be involved in creating the optimal external and internal conditions for learning and they need to be aware of their own role in creating these by developing a need for self-improvement and establishing a habit of self-instruction.

To become autonomous learners, they need to be aware of the means, domains and instruments of learning, for example the use of libraries and electronic resources for collecting data. They need to develop the ability to obtain and transmit knowledge which must be appropriate for use in new situations. At the same time, the NCC recommends placing a great emphasis on the learners' decision-making skills,

consideration of alternatives, risk taking and the ability to evaluate and argue, as well as on critical thinking, all contributing to the development of a higher degree of autonomy. The objectives described in the cultural domain of modern foreign languages are in harmony with these recommendations.

Modern foreign languages in the NCC (2003) are seen as key conveyors of change. The Russian Federation has ceased to be the primary and compulsory foreign language to be taught and with Hungary's accession to the European Union in 2004, all documents concerning language education "have been created to be 'euroconform', have adopted a functional-notional syllabus, and have advocated humanistic and communicative principles of education" (Medgyes and Nikolov, 2002: 203).

It cannot be claimed that Hungarian learners "have and hold the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of ... learning" in Holec's definition of learner autonomy. These aspects include determining the objectives, defining the contents and progressions, selecting methods and techniques to be used, monitoring the procedure of acquisition, and evaluating what has been acquired. (Holec in Fenner, 2000: 79). However, as Benson warns (2001), this definition is problematic, since Holec leaves open the nature of cognitive capacities necessary to take control of one's own learning. He proposes a three-level model, in which the levels of control are interdependent: learning management, cognitive processes and learning content. He emphasises that autonomy is not an "all-or-nothing concept", but a matter of degree and proposes six possible approaches: resource-based, technology-based, learner-based, classroom-based, curriculum-based and teacher-based (Benson, 2001: 50).

Taking a wide and loose definition of learner autonomy, the three main areas to be developed according to the NCC seem to promote autonomy in language learning. First, by the end of compulsory education, learners should be able to use one or two foreign languages adequately in personal, academic, social and professional contexts. Second, language learners should develop and maintain positive attitudes and motivation towards language learning, the target language, the target language culture and its native speakers, and towards any foreign languages and cultures in general. Third, language learners should be able to take individual responsibility for maintaining and developing their target language proficiency throughout their lives, and efficiently acquire new foreign languages in addition to those learnt at school.

Returning to Holec's five categories of learner autonomy, I conclude that the NCC (2003) aims to promote learner autonomy to a considerable extent; however, the prescriptive nature of the frame curriculum for modern foreign languages, determining the objectives and defining the contents and progressions for language learners, is more restrictive concerning learner autonomy. Although language learners may decide what

foreign language they want to learn and what level they wish to achieve by their school-leaving age, this choice is often restricted by local constraints, determined by local education boards and schools, as well as by peer needs. The NCC monitors the procedure of language acquisition by prescribing the levels of language proficiency to be achieved, and together with the frame curriculum prescribes language input and output at various stages of the process, thus decreasing learner autonomy in the choice of content and suitable methods and techniques. The evaluation of what has been acquired is also monitored and prescribed by the NCC through school-leaving examinations at two levels.

Teachers and local education boards are given autonomy and encouraged to select methods and techniques to be used in the classroom; however, no information is currently available on the extent to which learners are involved in the process. Nikolov's 1999 classroom observation study involving 118 English classes for students from disadvantaged backgrounds in schools all over the country found that, in spite of the various versions of the NCC, teachers had continued to teach according to their own hidden curricula, hardly affected by changing policy. The study revealed that the majority of teachers used communicative textbooks imported from Britain, but these coursebooks were exploited in more traditional ways where techniques of the grammar-translation method and the audiolingual method "mingle with ones more characteristic of the communicative classroom" (Medgyes and Nikolov, 2002: 204). Nikolov (1999) points out that most language teachers in Hungary use the coursebook as their syllabus and supplement it with materials to prepare their learners for either national or school tests. I suspect that learners do not have much say in planning their learning, but this needs to be investigated further to find out more about both learners' and teachers' opinions and practice and explore autonomy at classroom level.

Benson emphasises that fostering autonomy does not mean that learners should be left "to their own devices, but that we actively encourage and assist them" (Benson, 2001: 75) to take control of their learning in ways that are effective in reaching their long-term goals. In this sense, it is clear that both the NCC and the frame curriculum intend to foster learner autonomy in Hungary.

Autonomous language learning in Latvia

Dainuvīte Blūma

There have been good foreign language teaching traditions for centuries in Latvia with both teachers and learners being highly motivated. Also the history of Latvia greatly influenced the motivation to acquire other languages as the result of there being various ruling regimes: German, Swedish and Russian. Bordering on the Baltic Sea, Latvia had

rich opportunities for trade, sailing and communication with many countries in Europe and other countries of the world up until the Second World War. Consequently, a great number of people who knew foreign languages could use them in their professional lives.

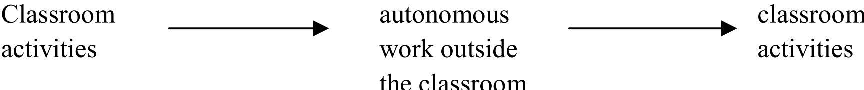
In Latvia there are opportunities for learning at least three foreign languages at school. The first foreign language is English and the pupils start learning it in grade 3. The second foreign language can be chosen freely by pupils in grade 6 from a number of options, usually German, French or Russian. Any other language can be chosen provided this is agreed on by teacher and pupils. Learning a third foreign language takes place in grade 10 and again the pupils can choose the language.

Whilst there is a strong wish to learn foreign languages and an awareness that foreign language skills widen the opportunities in the labour market, learners of all ages and levels seem to believe that learning can be achieved with minimum effort on their part and by only carrying out activities during class under the guidance of teachers.

In strictly structured authoritarian education systems little attention is paid to opportunities for autonomous learning. This was the case in Latvia for decades during the Soviet regime. The main responsibility for the results of teaching and learning lay in the hands of the teachers, who had to "transmit" knowledge, skills and competences to the pupils. The focus was on teaching, not on learning. Teachers were expected to teach everything in the classroom during the lessons. The pupils could not be "overburdened" with homework and independent learning. Opportunities for listening, speaking or writing were not offer in the closed society of this period. It was easy to measure and assess the outcomes of this type of teaching: grammar knowledge by doing structured exercises, reading and translating passages, and reproducing a fixed number of sentences learnt by heart on certain topics. These background experiences have left their impact on the process of teaching and learning foreign languages, on the roles of teachers and pupils in the teaching and learning processes, and on the attitudes and needs of learners. It is not easy for educational institutions to understand the essence of change. Nevertheless, it is clearly apparent that materials and documents regulating processes in education have started to focus on learning and learners.

It is obvious that in Latvia very much needs to be done to help teachers to cope with past experiences and to develop positive attitudes towards learning skills. One has to agree with the experience of the CIEL project on supporting independent language learning, that "independent language learning is most successful when it is integrated firmly into the language curriculum and is not just a bolt-on addition to classroom

work" (CIEL, 2000: 8).[13] In the context of foreign language learning/teaching in Latvia it is very important to combine what is happening in the classroom with autonomous learning outside the classroom and vice versa, that is to organise the work in cycles:



Tasks aimed at developing independent learning skills should be included in the everyday activities of the learners, for example, independent reading tasks, looking for information in books, newspapers, handbooks, additional materials for conversation. On the other hand, teachers should help pupils to develop their learning skills by means of guided exercises, for example learning to use dictionaries, carrying out tasks in the lessons, working on relevant homework assignments and using guided composition exercises to write essays.

In this process the individual learner's interests, learning skills, needs and abilities are of utmost importance to creating a supportive learning environment. The whole process at school must be gradual, beginning with teacher-managed activities which develop into self-managed and self-directed activities. It is necessary to develop learning skills to master a language and also, by mastering a language, to continue improving learning skills. At school it is necessary to help learners to develop such skills, as they are an integral part of independent learning. It is obvious that it is necessary to change the traditional belief that a good teacher can teach the language in a short, intensive course with minimum effort on the part of the learner, as is the case in Latvia.

Some important factors in becoming an autonomous learner include:

- awareness of aims;
- awareness of the need to learn a foreign language;
- stable motivation;
- understanding the necessity of independent work;
- autonomous learning skills;
- responsibility for one's own learning;
- management of this learning.

13 CIEL (Curriculum and Independence for the Learner) is a three-year language project funded in 1997 under Phase 2 of the HEFCE/DENI Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning. The partners in CIEL are South Bank University, University of Southampton and Leeds Metropolitan University.

Implementing these principles requires certain changes in the teacher's attitude since the move towards learner-centred approaches involves a change in the roles of both the teacher and the learners. Consequently, the teacher must take into account the learning skills and experiences of pupils. From the very beginning of learning a foreign language at school, one of the objectives is that pupils develop elements of learning skills in a step-by-step process. To assist this process, pupils should be given consultations and support rather than testing and assessment.

The standard of elementary education, which came into effect in 1998, marked a great change. Active learning is mentioned as one of the essential elements of education. Other general aims of education also point to the active participation of learners:

- self-expression and creativity;
- analytical and critical ability ;
- evaluation (moral and ethical);
- social aspects (co-operation);
- communication.

Each of these aims is oriented towards the learners' role. The learners have to develop problem-solving skills, creativity, critical thinking skills, reflection skills, and general skills, which are described as both aims and outcomes.

Communication skills, though mentioned as one of the general aspects, have particular relevance to language learning: the pupils should gain experience of language use and learn interaction in multifaceted real-life situations with communication partners in ways which are relevant to the communicative aims and context. The main focus in foreign language teaching and learning is on communication and social skills. At the same time learning processes as such and the need to acquire learning skills are not clearly stated in *The standard of elementary education*. Though the outcomes have been described in detail, it is left to the teachers' own initiative to determine how much attention is focused on developing learning skills in general and on foreign language learning skills in particular.

In the new *Standards of elementary and general education*, issued in 2004, there is a stronger tendency to focus on the development of both general learning skills and on foreign language learning skills by distinguishing a special "language learning competence (which) is the skill to use existing knowledge and learning experience to improve language skills" (www.isec.gov.lv). Competence is understood as the knowledge, experience, values and attitudes required, and the skill to use these in activities. Foreign language competence includes communicative and sociocultural competence at all levels of language use. This idea was further developed in the *Standard of foreign languages in elementary school* in 2005 (www.isec.gov.lv).

The new draft of the *Professional standard of foreign language teachers in Latvia*, developed in 2004/05, includes, amongst others, such activities as encouraging pupils to use foreign language skills in acquiring knowledge in other subjects, promoting autonomous language learning by using ICT. Special attention is paid to the teacher's duty to strengthen the pupils' foreign language learning motivation, to help pupils develop language learning skills, to manage pupils' autonomous learning and independent work and to promote the development of pupils' responsibility for their learning outcomes. Among priorities in the in-service education of foreign language teachers is the development of foreign language learning skills and learning how to help pupils enhance their autonomous learning skills.

Though the necessity of developing learning skills is mentioned as one of the strategic aims for all levels of education, it still remains a priority to give a stronger focus to the autonomous learning of foreign languages, to developing autonomous learning skills, and to implementing this process in relation to both the Latvian and European contexts.

Our experience as teacher educators and researchers shows that there are good opportunities for helping teachers develop their pupils' autonomous learning skills in general and foreign language learning skills in particular, both in initial and in-service teacher training. This is a very important aspect of professional development. We believe that it is only by involving teachers directly in the process of focusing on pupils' learning skills and by enhancing their ability to create situations and tasks for autonomous learning that autonomous learning forms will become the daily practice of schools and will make real progress possible.

Conclusion

Tuuli Oder

As can be seen from the above discussions, the concept of learner autonomy is expressed in the national curricula of Estonia, Hungary, Greece and Latvia, both as a general educational goal and as a specific aim for foreign language learning. Although it is a complicated and multidimensional notion, learner autonomy has been accepted as one of the guiding principles of lifelong learning by all the countries mentioned in this paper. The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2001), as a basis of foreign language learning all over Europe, offers a good starting point for interpreting and implementing learner autonomy in the curriculum, but teachers are given a fairly wide scope of responsibility as far as determining both materials and working methods in the foreign language classroom are concerned. The extent to which principles of autonomous learning are put into practice in the classroom, however, varies greatly from one country to another.

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Case studies of integration of citizenship, human rights and language education

Ruxandra Popovici and Antonio R. Roldán Tapia

Introduction

Ruxandra Popovici

The following studies are attempts to illustrate how the integration of foreign language learning with human rights, social and cultural competence, and citizenship education can be achieved at different school levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary, and also in different fields of language education: classroom teaching, pre-service and in-service teacher education, curricula, teaching practice and classroom materials. The overall message emerging from all these contributions is that both students and teachers can be motivated to approach issues which are not new to the world, but are new to classroom practice. The need for coherence and cohesion is emphasised as being a precondition for the success of this educational approach. If this new foreign language learning framework is to be adopted by educators and accepted by students, then principles of human rights and citizenship education need to underlie school programmes, teacher education curricula, classroom materials and teaching. Cohesion of the same principles reflected in the school policy and practice and across the subjects taught in school will help to bring about systemic change both at the institutional and individual levels.

The first case study shows an attempt to introduce human rights as the focus of English language classes to Spanish primary school pupils at level A1. The study includes a human rights-focused lesson for an English class and the results of an action research activity in which the three groups of respondents – student teachers, pupils and practising teachers – comment on the human rights content-based lesson. The thematic analysis of the answers reveals the following aspects: novelty of the subject, learners' motivation, teachers' interest and teachers' need for further training. As a student teacher points out: "We found that this kind of integration of different school subjects towards the same goals makes the learning process something rich and durable. The acquisition of non-linguistic knowledge facilitates the language learning process." And one of the pupils says about the same lesson: "The lesson was interesting, was different from the textbook".

The second case study presents two sample lessons from *Rights in deed*,[14] a human rights book for Romanian secondary school students of English at level C1. The book

14 Carianopol, M. et al. (2002), *Rights in deed*. Bucharest: Humanitas Educational and British Council, Romania.

can also be used by first year university students of social and political studies. The lesson material was extensively piloted before finalising the coursebook. The content was initially seen as strongly and surprisingly innovative and also somewhat sensitive. Topics and issues include: equality, discrimination, prejudice, poverty, making choices, the European Court of Human Rights, education, participation, freedom of religion, violence, wars and peace. The project required wide consultation with teachers and students and a flexible syllabus which gives students and teachers the freedom to agree on the content and activities they want to use.

The textbook is based on articles from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Following the publication of the coursebook, teachers were trained in the content and methodology of human rights education as the book was introduced more widely. The impact on students is considerable. The learning programme is supported both by teachers and parents. Below are some of the students' comments:

> These lessons made me understand how many prejudices I have, although I consider myself to be open-minded. The authors didn't try to protect us. They're telling the truth. I really think it is like that.
> My parents are happy that school finally teaches us about life.
> We are taught about these things too late – I am already 16.

The third contribution is a concluding article on the reasons, the needs and the ways of achieving the goals of preparing students for life, learning and creativity in a global environment characterised by diversity, pluralism and participation. The human rights and citizenship-oriented language class creates the firm foundation not only for preparing learners to cope with the challenges of an environment that changes rapidly and unpredictably, but also for enabling them to influence positively the world they live in.

Human rights in teacher education and in A1-level classrooms

Antonio R. Roldán Tapia

Introduction

Human rights may seem an unusual topic in the language classroom for both school pupils and student teachers.[15] What follows is an attempt to show that despite the apparent difficulty of the topic, it may be tailored to an A1 level, and, moreover, that

15 In order to avoid confusion, the term "learners" or "pupils" will refer to the school teenagers and "students" will refer to the postgraduates taking their teacher training course.

the topic motivates and raises student teachers' interest and should, therefore, be incorporated into teacher education programmes.

This chapter will pivot on the teaching unit that was designed and carried out during the student teachers' in-school practice, with a triangle of perspectives – learners, student teachers and teachers – providing a varied view of the content and development of the unit.

The teaching unit

Objectives:

- to raise pupils' awareness of the importance of human rights in a global world;
- to develop language skills;
- to enable pupils to acquire the language content related to human rights;
- to develop an attitude of respect for human rights in every aspect of their daily life.

Content:

1. concepts:
- notions of equality, freedom, respect for human life, etc.;
- knowledge of human rights, non-governmental organisations, etc.;
- abridged version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR);
2. language development:
- modal verbs of obligation and possibility ("must" and "can");
- specific vocabulary related to human rights;
3. language learning strategies:
- cognitive strategies: for example, formulating and communicating messages or analysing and reasoning;
- compensation strategies, such as making intelligent guesses or overcoming limitations in speaking and writing;
- social strategies, such as asking questions and co-operating with others;
4. attitudinal content:
- values of fairness, justice, respect and empathy, both in school and society;
- example of human rights taken from the UDHR.

Level

These tasks are intended for 1st year secondary school pupils – 11/12 year olds – with a limited competence in the second language. They have studied English in primary schools but progress is, for several reasons, irregular. Their grammatical competence

includes simple verb tenses (present and past), core vocabulary (home, family, school, free time activities, etc.) and structures such as: there is/are, have got, expressing the time, etc. They may be labelled as A1 level according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for languages.* Implementation of this programme is intended at the end of the second term or beginning of the third. A considerable effort has been made to simplify the language samples learners are to be exposed to.

Tasks

General aspects

First, a sequence of tasks is provided, followed by a detailed description of each task, together with the reading passages and an abridged copy of the UDHR. As may be expected, these content-based tasks as described in the unit might be supplemented, if necessary, with some specific form-focused activities for the consolidation of grammar points. There is no timing for tasks but an estimate of about three teaching periods, each lasting 55 minutes, is probable. Attempts were made to adapt the content and level to the curriculum for these 12-year-old pupils, which comprises the topics mentioned above in connection with lexical sets.

Task 1

Read the following sentences and say whether the content of the sentences represents a right protected or a right denied:

- "Hi, my name is Jacob and I'm eleven. My sister's name is Rebecca and she is six. We both go to Graham Bell Primary School."
- "This is my house. Often there is no water in the kitchen and in the bathroom."
- "This is my father and he went blind last year. He lost his job in a factory because of this."
- "My sister is Khalima and she is 17. Next year, my father will marry her to a son of his friend."
- "I go to a nice school, with pupils from many countries: I have a friend from Colombia and another from Romania. We all have to wear school uniforms."
- "In my school, there are several sports teams: only the boys are allowed to play football."

Task 2

You are going to live in a new imaginary country. In your group agree on the name of the country and its flag. Agree on three rights you want for the people in your country and on icons representing them. Fill in Chart 1 with your group decisions.

Then read the shortened text of the UDHR to see if the rights for your country are also expressed by articles in the document. Do this task first in small groups and then as a class. One example has been done for you. Fill in Chart 2.

Chart 1.

Name of the country	Flag	Rights to be observed	Icons
…		1. Example: People must have a job	
		2. …	
		3. …	
		4. …	

Chart 2.

Rights observed in your country	UDHR	
	Yes	No
Right 1	Article 23	
…		
…		

Task 3

Read the following text about an NGO that works for children and complete the activities that follow.

Save the Children is an international NGO, which works in over 40 countries to change the lives of children in need. At present, one of its tasks is to help children from the earthquake and tsunami disaster zone in South East Asia. The earthquake was the most severe in over forty years. The tsunami was a massive movement of ocean water into the countries around Indonesia. Homes, schools, cars, buses and boats disappeared in minutes.

Save the Children's main objectives in the area are: (i) the distribution of food, shelter, clean water and water purification tablets; (ii) the reuniting of children with their families; and (iii) the prevention of disease and traumas. The children need your help!

Write true or false for the following statements:

- Save the Children works in more than one country;
- Save the Children helps the whole population after earthquakes;
- tsunamis are great storms in the middle of the ocean;
- some of the things children in southern Asian countries need are water, food and housing.
- after the disaster, many children were separated from their parents.

Match these words from the text to their definitions:

(a) earthquake
(b) NGO
(c) tsunami
(d) trauma
(e) funds
(f) Indonesia

1. Money collected to support an organisation
2. A natural earth movement
3. An organisation which is independent from the government
4. A psychological illness
5. A natural movement of giant sea waves
6. A country in South-East Asia

Answer the following questions:

1. What is Save the Children?
2. Where does it work?
3. How big was the earthquake?
4. Where did the tsunami strike?
5. What happened to houses and property?
6. What did Indonesian children need most after the tsunami?

Follow-up: suggest that your learners write a letter in which they ask Save the Children how they can help.

Task 4

What is your school like? In groups, read the sentences in the chart and choose the answer for your group that best describes the situation. Then share your answers with the other groups. Together draw a diagram/graph/pie-chart/table to present the results of the survey for a poster presentation or a parents' evening exhibition.

In my school …	1 ☹	2 😐	3 ☺
pupils are safe and secure			
pupils are not discriminated against			
pupils have the same opportunities			
pupils resolve conflicts in a non-violent way			
pupils' possessions and space are respected			
pupils can express their opinions			
pupils can join clubs			
pupils can participate in activities			
pupils are treated fairly when they cause trouble			
pupils respect everyone's culture and background			

Student teachers' perception of the unit

These are the answers to a questionnaire that student teachers were given at the end of their in-school practice to help them to reflect upon the implementation of the teaching unit on human rights. The following paragraphs are collated extracts from an extended report on their school practice.

To what extent was human rights content-based teaching (HRCT) something new for you?

Considering that our English Philology Degree is not strictly oriented towards language teaching, the courses we took on methodology (I and II, a semester each) were insufficient to deal with these issues. The content of both courses was very general and content-based teaching was just one of the different methodologies that were mentioned but not dealt with in detail. This pedagogical course, which we are taking on a voluntary basis, does not initially include it. We were surprised when we arrived at

our school and our teacher supervisor introduced us to the topic, as we did not expect it. All the instruction we had had both at university and during the theoretical modules in the pedagogical course were guided towards language-oriented and communicative functions. We have learnt that HRCT is a type of content-based teaching and that type of curriculum design and organisation is still a novelty somehow.

Do you perceive any connections between CLT and HRCT?

We perceive that some connection exists but our limited knowledge of language teaching theories makes it difficult to demonstrate the relationship. When pupils learn a language according to the CLT approach, the final goal of learning is to use the language with a real purpose. When pupils learn a language according to a content-based approach, there is also a real purpose, although this is different in terms of the means that are used. In the language-content balance, CLT seems to be more oriented to language whereas in HRCT the orientation is guided to a greater extent to content.

In your opinion, can HRCT be easily implemented at school level?

We think that content-based teaching can be easily implemented when topics are not too serious and are closer to the life of the pupils. We have learnt that topics should be centred on areas of interest that are close to those of the pupil and as pupils progress in their learning, and those topics widen until they become more general.

We wonder whether this kind of content-based teaching is also implemented in other school subjects because, otherwise, we would be talking about an isolated island in the middle of the sea.

Another concern for us is whether the decision to adopt content-based teaching is an individual option for one teacher or the policy of one department or school. It may be disappointing for the pupils to change from one method to another depending on the teacher they have each year.

Regarding HRCT, we understand that it is a thought-provoking topic that somehow exceeds the potential for communication that pupils have in a second language. The teaching unit that we implemented during our in-school practice was the most basic possible and, even so, problems of understanding and production sometimes emerged. Pupils in lower secondary education can work on it if the classroom teacher has the abilities and the specific, adapted materials required to teach it, but otherwise the content may be at too high a level and the production phase frustrating.

In your classroom practice, how did HRCT work?

There were positive and negative aspects of its implementation. We should first say that these teaching sessions on human rights were inserted into our in-school practice

sessions. We did the same type of syllabus design work (content selection, activities and evaluation) as other student teachers did in their respective schools. Our work on human rights was an extra and instead of carrying out a complete design and implementation of the unit, the first stage was done for us and substituted by a number of sessions with our supervisor, who introduced us to content-based instruction (CBI) and CLIL.

In terms of difficulty, Tasks 1 and 3 were the ones the pupils found most accessible due to their language level. Task 2 was difficult; certainly not the tasks themselves but the text. Some vocabulary was really above the pupils' level of competence in the second language. Tasks 1 and 3 were more successful, partly because of the simplification of materials and because of the reading material provided in these tasks.

We found it extremely helpful that the pupils had learnt about this topic in Spanish in the social studies class and, consequently, most of the content was already something that they were familiar with. We found that this kind of integration of different school subjects towards the same goals makes the learning process enriching and durable. The acquisition of non-linguistic knowledge facilitates the language learning process in this way.

Final comments/suggestions

The experience was rewarding as our experience included both the regular activities of any teaching practice and the introduction to CBI.

School life seems to move faster than some universities do. We have learnt that many school districts are putting CBI classes into practice, and universities and initial training institutions are not providing the necessary answers in a timely manner to their students and trainees. Teachers will probably have to make a big effort in terms of training for this new model.

In terms of language learning, CBI provides a new and wide range of opportunities for the learners, but we had reservations about the appropriateness of topics such as human rights for pupils in lower secondary education. On the other hand, vocabulary seems to be one of the language teaching components that has benefited most from this type of methodology.

Human rights as school content should be incorporated as cross-curricular content and implemented in as many subject classes as possible. Human rights should not just be incorporated into lessons for the International Day of Human Rights; they should also be a long-term educational goal in schools. It should be covered by as many subjects and teachers as possible.

Learners' perceptions of the unit

The following statements are translations of the opinions that some pupils expressed at the end of the process. They are valuable as they represent the perceptions of the actual beneficiaries of the teaching process.

Learner 1 (girl, 12, good grades in English): "The lesson was interesting, was different from the textbook. I liked the new country activity, but the reading was a bit difficult."

Learner 2 (boy, 13, average grades in English): "It was a kind of surprise because it was not in the textbook and we don't usually talk about that in English. I liked making the poster for the last activity. I also liked that we had trainee teachers in the classroom."

Learner 3 (boy, 12, low grades in English): "It was OK but the text on the tsunami was difficult for me. It was good to have new teachers because they helped us a lot. I understood some new words that I didn't know."

Learner 4 (girl, 12, average grades in English): "I liked those days because they were different from other classes and the new teachers were very helpful. It was a good experience. I liked the topic because one day our social studies teacher talked to us about it; I think it was the day when human rights are celebrated.

Other school teachers' perception of the unit

In order to broaden the scope of reflection, other school teachers kindly agreed to evaluate the teaching unit and the words that follow are their comments. A brief, initial introduction was provided to each one of them about the reasons for designing and implementing this unit.

Teacher 1 (male, twenty-four years of teaching experience): "After so many years attending teacher training seminars, this is a complete novelty for me. I can't remember a seminar where we were taught to design a teaching unit in such detail. The content of the unit – human rights – is not a topic that most trainers dare to approach in any way, so I am glad this is happening with the Council of Europe's support. Having taught 1st grade secondary school for many years, I am sure the pupils have perceived it as a surprise because it is a topic that is not very frequently dealt with in textbooks. In terms of content level, this is just at the limit of most pupils in this school grade. I suppose it will require a slower pace during the lessons because there are quite a few new words for the pupils. In any case, its implementation in the second or third term is an advantage."

Teacher 2 (female, seven years of teaching experience): "The first impression is a mixture of surprise and enthusiasm because the unit provides a new insight into the teaching of foreign languages. It is true that human rights is a cross-curricular topic suggested by the education authorities, but other than in social studies few references are made to it in other school subjects. We had heard about content-based teaching but never thought about topics with such a deep social impact as this one. Certainly, our so-called "first world" also needs this type of content and probably foreign languages are the perfect tool for that purpose. Regarding what goes on in the classroom, it may require some extra time and effort than the standard unit for the 1st grade but the input and possible outcome are worth the effort."

Teacher 3 (female, thirteen years of teaching experience): "In my opinion, the content and level are appropriate for 1st grade learners. Nevertheless, I dare to suggest one little thing: I cannot see clearly the relation between human rights and Save the children. This type of organisation is usually a charity, except, perhaps, Amnesty International. I consider there may be other tasks that can focus on human rights more directly. Moreover, pupils at this age are more attracted by individuals/heroes than by abstract entities/organisations."

Conclusions

Having considered feedback from participants – learners and student teachers and their evaluators – and also from other teachers, in this final section I shall summarise and seek to find some common elements in the perceptions they have of the implementation of the teaching unit. It will serve both as an internal and external evaluation of this experience by the author of the materials and of this paper.

Some common ground can be found in the following areas:

- alternatives to current, communicative syllabus design and textbook-based teaching in schools are possible and appreciated by the learners; human rights in language teaching is one of those possible alternatives that has been little explored and exploited up to now. Even in the best of cases, the current situation in most schools does not go any further than including anecdotal exercises and references in some Spanish and social sciences lessons;
- in-school practice by student-teachers provides an excellent opportunity to try and test new ideas and approaches. All participants – teachers, student-teachers and learners – may benefit from this special classroom context. Learners' opinions may be summarised as "the more teachers, the more learning". Student-teachers perceive this part of their teacher education course as the most rewarding experience prior to starting their teaching career;

- education and training are the keys to implementing human rights in language teaching at all levels. From both the student-teachers and the practising teachers' reflections, it clearly emerges that both pre-service and in-service training courses need to change to accommodate new realities and proposals. At present, neither university degrees in language teaching nor postgraduate courses in education are paying necessary attention to issues such as human rights, which will necessitate substantial changes in language classes in the near future.

Sources of information

The teaching material *The European Convention on Human Rights. Starting points for teachers* is published by the Communication and Online Information Division, Council of Europe, 2002. Task 2 is an adapted text from an educational power point presentation available for teachers on the Save the Children website (www.savethechidren.org).

Rights in deed

Ruxandra Popovici

The following is an example of a lesson on human dignity which is based on participative and interactive methodology. The syllabus is a developmental framework of human rights concepts, issues, values, cognitive skills, action and communication skills, language aspects and the tri-dimensional approach to each topic: rights, responsibilities, remedies.

The students are provided with copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Unit/ lesson	Concepts	Values	Skills and aptitudes	Knowledge and understanding	Language aspects
Standing tall	Dignity; Rights and responsibilities	Understanding and expressing the nature of human dignity; Respect for human dignity; Self-assertiveness; Standing up for own and	To formulate definitions; To find solutions; To analyse real-life cases	Attributes of human dignity	Vocabulary related to human rights and dignity; Speaking: narrating; reporting Writing: formulating

		others' dignity; Value of people's experience in clarifying human dignity; Determination to take action in the defence of human dignity			main ideas; Reading

Standing tall

"You never realise how important human rights are until you lose them, and by then it's too late", Passionara Xharra, 18, Kosovo.

I.1. Read what several students understand by human dignity. Choose the quote you consider best.

(a) "I think that human dignity should be an essential feature of all human beings. It is related to common sense, personality and sincerity. It means to have the guts to assume responsibility for your actions including your mistakes."
(b) "To me human dignity means respect for others and never giving up, even if it is very hard."
(c) "It means to stand tall and not let yourself be stepped on by others."
(d) "In my opinion, it is a sort of inner feeling. One's dignity can be harmed with irony and sarcasm. Dignity defines a human being. If you have it, it means you are worth something."
(e) "It is the law that guides your life; the moral standards you follow and in which you believe; the way you feel about yourself."
(f) "Human dignity makes us a better person."
(g) "Human dignity is based upon mutual respect and understanding. A person with human dignity cares about others' feelings."

2. Work in groups of four. Discuss the reasons for your choice, and then work on a group statement on human dignity.
3. Report your group statement to the class.
4. Compare the group statements and choose the most comprehensive one. This will be the class statement.

II.1. Compare your class statement with this definition of human dignity. Find the common attributes and list them.

“Human dignity is a sense of worth of self and others, irrespective of social, cultural, ethnic, linguistic or faith background. It can be realised by observing those rights which belong to every individual simply because they are human beings.”

2. What is the connection between human dignity and human rights?

III.1. Read the following texts from different newspapers. Say if there is anything that infringes human dignity and if so, name it.

(a) “Thousands of Chinese in Beijing yesterday planted trees, repaired road signs and scrubbed the streets in a mass campaign aimed at winning the race to host the 2008 Olympics. In their eagerness to beautify the capital, they evicted poor residents and tore down unsightly buildings” (*The Times*, London, 14 February 2001, page 19).
(b) “Paul Hogan, 30, claimed his life and employment prospects were ruined when Denis Fricot, a master at St John’s Catholic College, Sydney, beat him eight times on the same day when he was 13” (*The Times*, London, 15 February 2001, page 16).
(c) “US rapper Eminem prepared to take the stage at his first British concert in Manchester last night with around 15 000 fans, mostly girls aged 13 to 16, flicking hand gestures at gay students who had come to tell them the singer’s sexist, homophobic songs were unacceptable. The protesters’ message – that Eminem’s lyrics such as ‘take drugs, rape the sluts, make fun of gay clubs’ were dangerous and offensive – fell largely on deaf ears. Some boys with shaven heads in the far distance smashed bottles against the walls and shouted ‘Come on you queers’, but most were more interested in checking if their whistles were working” (Guardian, London, 9 February 2001, page 1)

2. Are there any rights in conflict in any of the extracts above? If so, suggest some remedies.
3. Why do you think that sometimes some people disregard other people’s dignity?

IV.1. Work in groups of four and tell each other about a personal experience when you stood up for your dignity or for somebody else’s.

2. Choose one case per group and fill in the columns of the table below.
3. Report back to the whole class.
4. Discuss other possible remedies for each case.

The main issue in your story	**Who is involved**	**Article(s) from the UDHR**	**Suggested remedies**
	Victim Challenger Perpetrator (namely, a person who violated somebody's dignity) Bystander		

Did you know that in 2001

Women in Afghanistan were not allowed to attend school or hold jobs?
Some children in Pakistan worked in carpet factories for little pay and long hours and they could not go to school?
The Chinese Government could punish a couple for having a second child?
In Burma, 14-year-old girls were sometimes sold by their impoverished families into prostitution until they earned enough to repay the money given to their parents?
People could be sentenced to death in the US for the crimes they committed as juveniles?
(Adapted from Nancy Flowers, *Human Rights Educators' Network*, Amnesty International, USA.)

Give us a voice!

The results of a survey on human rights issues conducted as part of the project among teenagers in several countries around the world – Croatia, Hungary, Morocco, Romania, the Russian Federation, United Kingdom and the United States of America – are included in *Rights in deed*, under the section: "Give us a voice!" This activity helps create a sense of connectivity between the students' own communities and communities of the wider world. The overview of contents for this lesson reflects the development of human rights and language aspects:

Human rights concepts	Values	Skills and aptitudes	Knowledge and under-standing	Language development
Equality; Fairness; Diversity; Discrimination; Rights; Responsibilities	Affirmation of equality among all people from a human rights perspective; Sense of social and moral responsibility; Concern to find remedies	To reflect on lessons learnt; To organise ideas; To find links between ideas; To express personal opinions; To think critically	Rights, responsibilities and remedies in connection with the issue of equality and discrimination	Reading; Writing

Question:

Some students will not let fellow students who look different (different clothes, different colour skin …) or speak a different language play in their games, join in their activities or come to their parties. What do you think about that? What would you do?

1. Read what these young people from different countries answered to the question above and say which one you agree with most.
2. Fill in the empty bubble with your own answer.

"I don't think nationality, or colour or race should make any difference. The way somebody behaves is important", Olga, 15, Russia

"It doesn't matter what you are on the outside, it matters what you are on the inside", Helen, 11, UK

"I would try to change their beliefs but if it doesn't work, you have to consider their opinion too and that we live in a free country and also that it's their party", Brian, 16, USA

"I think marginalisation is a bad thing. If I had a colleague who was different, I would accept her or him in my group and speak out for them even at the risk of being thrown out of that group", Radu, 18, Romania

"I'm not a racist, I don't mind students who look different. I would tell the others my opinion but unfortunately the majority decides. I don't think I would fight for their cause", Mara, 17, Romania

"That's so wrong. You can't be mean to somebody just because they don't look the way you do. I would join the group who looks 'different' because I believe I'm 'different' in my own way. It's unfair to exclude someone from being loved and having friends. What's in your heart is much more important", Melita, 17, Croatia

Materials used

Carianopol et al. (2002), *Rights in deed*. Bucharest: Humanitas Educational and British Council, Romania.

Text in activity II.1 adapted from *Human rights: a handbook for teachers and advisers with guidance on teaching and learning about human rights*, Brand, J. and Brown, M. (eds.), 1999, DEA/EIHRN.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by UN General Assembly Resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948.

The why and how of human rights in language education

Ruth Pappenheim, Ruxandra Popovici and Antonio R. Roldán Tapia

The why

In spite of the advances of CLT in many learning contexts, students still face difficulties when using the foreign language for actual communication in a variety of contexts. One of the reasons for this failure may be the lack of relevant content in the foreign language class. Therefore, we see a need for a new curriculum design that perceives language as a vehicle for communication and social action to complement the target of instruction.

Considering the challenges of the 21st century, school systems and educational institutions have to implement comprehensive programmes that approach students as human beings with a whole range of potentials to be developed. The goal of educating human beings can be achieved in foreign language courses, irrespective of what language is being taught. Language courses should not only aim at developing language skills and transmitting knowledge, but they should also provide the context for learners to develop social competences. For the achievement of this goal, language teachers can play a crucial role as human rights promoters.

However, this issue has hardly been dealt with in teacher education so far. We have observed that issues related to human rights and citizenship are still sporadic and left in the background of language teaching and teacher education. Consequently, there is a need to rethink the design of foreign language education curricula so as to allow us to incorporate issues related to intercultural competence, citizenship and human rights. It has been our purpose to show how these issues can in fact be the starting point for a new approach to curriculum design and classroom practice.

The how

The starting point is an educational policy at the top level that establishes a systematic treatment of human rights in language teaching, where the goal is not only the acquisition of language but also the development of intercultural competence and attitudes which foster mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence.

The definition of these goals should be explicitly and systematically stated at various levels of decision making: regional or school curriculum design, teacher education and materials design and production. A synchronised and coherent effort at all these levels is essential for the consolidation and development of this approach.

In curriculum design:

- allowing enough time for language classes that aim at a multiplicity of goals (intercultural competence, communicative competence, phonological competence, grammatical competence, etc.);
- a curriculum design where human rights is one of the core elements;
- an integrated design of teaching goals where communicative competence serves as a goal for social interaction according to human rights principles;
- a cyclical development of human rights content as the pupils' language competence increases;
- an adjustment of classroom procedures to the new type of content and goals.

Teacher education programmes should provide future teachers with adequate training to cope with the new challenges of their future profession. This encompasses:

- creating an awareness of the language teacher's role as human rights promoter;
- modifying the contents of teacher education programmes so as to promote content-based and process-oriented types of approaches that support the treatment of human rights and related topics;
- training teachers for materials development and evaluation according to the goals of a human rights content-oriented language teaching;
- teaching the linguistic and cultural diversity of the target language;
- helping students to become critical thinkers and to make appropriate choices and decisions in their future profession.

In materials design and production, the following actions can be taken:

- producing human rights focused materials both for classroom practice and for teacher education courses;
- allowing schools and teachers to choose the most suitable materials to achieve this goal;
- making use of authentic materials;
- making human rights a regular issue in textbooks and materials.

A seminar on intercultural awareness and literature

Martina Kaltenbacher

Before the seminar: tell trainees to bring along an object or picture that is an expression of culture (in actual seminars participants showed up with such diverse things as Marmite or a picture of the Mona Lisa).

Day 1

1. Lead-in

- Put the trainees into groups. They should present their objects/pictures and explain in what way they are an expression of culture.
- Then ask each of them to write down a definition of culture.
- In a new grouping, they should then share their individual definitions and come up with a definition that comprises all the elements of the individual texts. The definitions are written on posters or transparencies.
- These group definitions are then presented and discussed in plenary. They are displayed on the walls for later use.

2. Extension

The student group is split into two halves. They prepare for the "Ambassador game". In this role play, half the group are local diplomats preparing a cocktail party with a group of foreign diplomats. The foreign diplomats get role cards telling them what is considered polite behaviour in their countries (for example, never to look directly at the person with whom one speaks but to look at the ground instead or to get as close as possible to the person one speaks to). Both groups get ready for the role play by thinking about speaking prompts ("small talk") and preparing to behave very politely in their own way.[16] Carry out the role play – usually you get lots of laughs.

Debriefing: ask the local diplomats how they felt during the conversations, then ask the foreign diplomats how they felt carrying out the actions. Many of them will say that they felt surprised and even uncomfortable at times. Collect observations as to why and write down keywords like:

- eye contact;
- body language;

16 A Canadian version of the game can be found at www.macewan.ca/web/international/ims/client/upload/Ambassador%20Game.pdf.

- physical contact;
- proxemics;
- paralanguage.

Extend the list by brainstorming (or introducing) more cultural variables such as attitude towards time (polychromatic vs. monochromatic):

- observance of rules;
- humour;
- public vs. private;
- directness;
- politeness;
- high vs. low context;
- teaching and learning styles.

Look at the posters from stage 1 again and add observations.

3. Background reading: Culture and culture metaphors

Organise a jigsaw reading with texts about culture and culture metaphors. In my seminars I have used parts from the introduction to *The culture pack* by Derek Utley and also a text on Bennet's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity.[17] After giving each other information about their texts the second grouping should come up with the 10 statements/findings/ideas about culture that they find most relevant, such as:

- Culture is a very complex concept, most of which is invisible but deeply felt when there are culture clashes (metaphors such as the one about the iceberg are a good way of illustrating this).
- Culture clashes sometimes evoke very emotional responses but can be seen as a chance for personal development.
- Knowing about cultural differences does not prevent us from having emotional reactions.
- Culture clashes may occur within one's own culture, for example youth culture as opposed to the established one.
- Stages or categories of intercultural awareness and competence can be formulated.

17 A short version can be found here: www.lancs.ac.uk/users/interculture/docs/ria.rtf (Simon Hall, St. Martin's College, Lancaster, and Sylvie Toll, University of Central Lancashire, August 1999).

4. Thinking about teaching methods

Depending on the time available, do one or more of the following:

- give a short lecture on teaching methods to raise cultural awareness;
- brainstorm ideas for teaching methods;
- hand out textbooks and resource books and ask students to collect ideas;
- have students carry out an Internet search for activities.

Make sure to familiarise the students with the following teaching methods:

- role plays;
- simulations;
- critical incident analysis;
- case studies;
- cultural dilemmas;
- writing "how to" tips for tourists or exchange students;
- writing or answering cultural questionnaires;
- cultural show and tell;
- games;
- time capsule;
- tandem learning;
- e-projects;
- exchange projects;
- songs;
- literature;
- film.

Assignment: collect three pieces of literature that lend themselves to developing intercultural awareness at an elementary, intermediate and advanced level.

Day 2: Using literature to develop intercultural awareness

1. Lead-in

Students are put into groups of four. They are handed out the poem *Bleezer's ice cream* by Jack Prelutzky.[18] They are given fifteen minutes after which they have to "perform" the poem in any way they think is entertaining. After the presentations, discuss the poem as an intercultural resource text. Point out that one of the reasons why literature is a good means of teaching about culture is that it can be used in activities that stimulate the brain and are fun.

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18 The poem can be found at www.poemhunter.com.

2. Helpful theory

As a theoretical input the teacher trainer gives a short lecture on three levels of reading to access the different aims when using literature in the classroom. At the first level, which could be called "reading the lines", the reader is simply asked to understand what is going on in the text, that is who are the characters involved, what is the conflict and what is happening. An aim related to intercultural awareness at this level would be, for example, to identify a culture clash or a culture-related conflict between two characters or groups of characters.

At the second level, which can be called "reading between the lines", the reader takes a closer look at how the way the story is told or the poem is written adds to our understanding or impression of the text. Here we consider techniques like the narrative perspective, the mode of presentation or the characterisation, but also the imagery or the tone which make the text a unique piece of work. In the case of T.C. Boyle's novel this would mean, for example, to analyse the way in which the author contrasts two different worldviews by frequently changing the narrative perspective and the narrative voice, or the way the author uses interior monologue to make his readers share the mindset of his protagonists.

The third level, "reading beyond the lines", takes into account the biographical, historical, social and cultural background of the text, and considers ways in which this text could be part of a textual and cultural dialogue (intertextuality). At this level, it is of course interesting to examine how writers often use their own cultural mental framework as a means to contrast and compare different worldviews. A good recent example is the book *A step from heaven* by An Na (2002).

It should be pointed out that there can be a focus on intercultural awareness at any of these reading levels and that working out an intercultural awareness focus at level two is probably most challenging.

3. Lesson planning

Students work in small groups. They present their texts to each other and pick out three (elementary, intermediate, and advanced) they like most. In their groups they now write lesson plans clearly stating:

- the target level;
- the learning aims with a special focus on intercultural objectives;
- the teaching methods.

From each lesson (or if time is short from one of the three lessons) the trainees pick one stage that best illustrates the intercultural aspect of the lesson and use it for

microteaching. After each microteaching phase, the group gives feedback which is used to improve the lesson plan.

The lesson plans are collected, copied and handed out to each group member.

Assignment

Try out a lesson within the next two weeks/month. Be ready to evaluate the lesson plan on the basis of your experience in class.

After a given period the feedback is discussed in the plenary and the lessons revised accordingly.

Reference

Utley, D. (2000), *The culture pack.* York: York Associates.

Examples of teaching materials based upon authentic literature

Smiljana Narančić-Kovać

Example 1: *Flint*

Christina Rossetti's (1830-94) poem *Flint* can be introduced in EFL classes with learners as young as 10 or 11, and it can be interesting to learners of various ages, including adults and pre-service or in-service EFL teachers. The procedure varies slightly depending on the age of learners and the context. When used with (future) teachers of English, educational and methodological implications of the task are discussed after it has been accomplished.

Task

Readers should reconstruct the text and give the poem a title.

Procedure and comment

The poem is given to learners without its title, and with the "colour words" and the word "flint" in the last line missing. Learners should first reconstruct the poem based on their general knowledge about precious stones and gems. Younger children will learn about the names of various gems instead of recalling their previous knowledge. The purpose of this step is to emphasise the value and the beauty of gems, so that readers appreciate the contrast between the gems and flint, which is emphasised in the poem. If the readers have problems with vocabulary, some vocabulary work is required prior to reading or, rather, while reading the poem for the first time. Learners, depending on their level of English, may have problems with the words "flint", "mud", "brilliant", "spark" and/or "desire". Sometimes, they need to discuss the phrase "the world's desire", but it does not need to be explained in too much detail. A paraphrase, such as "(so that) everybody wants it" should be enough. Of course, the most important word here is "flint", and everybody should have an idea of what it means and what real flint looks like. A photograph can easily be downloaded from the Internet, or a specimen could be brought into the classroom. Everybody should understand very well that flint is a very plain stone. A reference to "The Flintstones" could also be helpful. An additional detail: it would be helpful to understand that the word "fire" is frequently used by professionals when describing the colour of gems.

For younger learners, the poem in the task sheet can have boxes instead of given words, and they should colour them in. For older learners, the dashes are fine.

Task	Key
	Young learners/adults
An emerald is as [...] as grass, A ruby as [...] as blood; A sapphire shines as [...] as heaven; A flint lies in the mud.	/green /red /blue
A diamond is a brilliant stone, To catch the world's desire; An opal holds a fiery spark; But a [...] holds fire.[19]	/flint

Learners should not have difficulty filling in the colour words, but if they do, help should be provided. They may have some more difficulty with the last word missing, "flint". To help them discover the word, they should be encouraged to work in pairs and small groups, and to consider the structural elements of the poem, such as rhythm and structural and thematic parallelism of the two verses. If that does not help, the teacher may ask an additional question: which stone is in many ways different from a diamond? If individual readers produce a suggestion that functions, but is not the same as the original one, it should be accepted as a possibility, and the implications of the suggested word(s) for the meaning and the understanding of the poem should be discussed later. At this stage, however, readers should eventually arrive at the original wording. Finally, if readers themselves do not grasp what kind of "fire" flint contains, which may happen with young learners, the issue should be cleared up.

The reconstructing task should help readers become better acquainted with the poem and understand it well at the level of textual meaning. When everybody understands that the fire flint conceals is the real fire, because it can literally light a fire, and that the fire of gems is fake, that they only look nice, but do not give warmth, the readers are ready for the main task: finding or, rather, suggesting a title for the poem.

While in the first step readers are encouraged to guess the original words the poetess actually used, in the second step, suggesting the title, they are encouraged to think of as

19 The poem can be found in an anthology, or on several pages on the Internet, for example, Story – It: Language Art Resources for Children and Their Teachers (www.storyit.com/Classics/JustPoems/flint.htm).

many titles as possible. The titles that have already been supplied for this poem by various readers range from “A little secret” and “A good friend” to “Stones” and “Per aspera ad astra”. When the titles have been handed in, the teacher may provide additional titles to widen their range. Then, the members of the group are invited to re-read the poem several times, silently and individually, and each time with a different title. Enough time should be given for this quiet activity, so that everybody may ponder the interpretational implications of different titles. Now, various words suggested in the first stage can be considered and their influence on the whole of the poem can be discussed; new poems are produced based on the “old” one.

Finally, readers are invited to discuss how various titles influence the way we understand a poem, and how a simple poem like this may hide several layers of meaning to be discovered by readers. They are also invited to realise that the original title, *Flint*, is as neutral as can be, so it does not hinder various readings. The readers experience how the same text may radiate multiple meanings simultaneously, and how active reading and critical reading of a text may “change” the way in which we understand a poem. The experience should help them appreciate the potential of literature and the value of reading literature in its original language. As it is a foreign language for the learners involved, they should also experience that they have managed to appreciate a piece of literature through this task, while also improving their skills in English.

Example 2: Reconstructing the initial paragraph of *The water-babies: a fairy tale for a land-baby* (1863) by Charles Kingsley for pre-service teacher-education classes in children’s literature

Goal

To encounter an important book in the history of children’s literature in English, to understand the narrative perspectives as used in characterisation and to define the settings.

Tasks

1. Fill in the gaps in the text to reconstruct the original text.
2. Decide whose perspectives are taken into account and determine which parts of the text represent each of them.
3. What does the text reveal about the main character, Tom?
4. What does the text reveal about the settings? Where and when does the story happen?
5. How does the text invite the reader to think about the situation? Does the text raise social awareness in readers?

6. Which other literary texts with similar intentions can this text be related to?
7. Answer these questions about the text:

- What can you infer about Tom's master from this extract?
- Is he a good man?
- Why do you think so?
- Is Tom a clever boy? Is he a good boy? Is he a happy boy?
- Why do you think so?

The text[20]

	Key
Once ________________ a time there was a little chimney-sweep, and his ____________ was Tom. That is a short name, and you have heard it before, so you will not have much trouble in remembering it. He lived in a great town in the North country, where there were plenty of chimneys to ______________, and plenty of money for Tom to earn and his master to ____________________. He could not _________________, nor write, and did not care to do either; and he never washed himself, for there was no _______________ up the court where he lived. He had never been taught to say his ______________. He never had heard of God, or of Christ, except in words which you never have heard, and which it would have been well if he had never heard. He cried half his time, and ________________ the other half. He cried when he had to climb the dark flues, rubbing his poor knees and elbows raw; and when the soot got into his eyes, which it did every __________ in the week; and when his master beat him, which he did every day in the week; and when he had not enough to ____________, which happened every day in the week likewise. And he laughed the other half of the day, when he was tossing halfpennies with the other boys, or playing leap-frog over the posts, or bowling stones at the _______________ legs as they trotted by, which last was excellent fun, when there was a wall at hand behind which to _____________. As for chimney-sweeping, and being hungry, and being beaten, he took all that for the way of the world, like the rain and snow and thunder, and stood manfully with his back to it till it was over, as his old donkey did to a hailstorm; and	1. upon 2. name 3. sweep 4. spend 5. read 6. water 7. prayers 8. laughed 9. day 10. eat 11. horses' 12. hide

20 Here the task is given together with the key. The text can be easily found on the Internet, for instance at www.pagebypagebooks.com/Charles_Kingsley/The_Water_Babies/Chapter_I_p2.html.

then shook his ears and was as jolly as ever; and thought of the fine times coming, when he would be a ________________, and a master sweep, and sit in the public-house with a quart of ______________ and a long pipe, and play cards for silver money, and wear velveteens and ankle-jacks, and keep a white bull-dog with one gray ear, and carry her puppies in his pocket, just like a man. And he would have apprentices, one, two, three, if he could. How he would bully them, and knock them about, just as his master did to him; and make them carry home the soot sacks, while he rode before them on his ______________, with a pipe in his mouth and a flower in his button-hole, like a king at the head of his army. Yes, there were good times coming; and, when his master let him have a pull at the leavings of his beer, Tom was the jolliest boy in the whole town.	13. man 14. beer 15. donkey

Comment

The first step should not be difficult at all: the words to be filled in are simple, and it is easy to deduce them from the context. The real aim of the activity is to get the students involved and to help them start thinking about the text. The only spot which is somewhat more difficult is the last dash, but students can be directed to look at the previous text and decide about the animal word – it is not a horse, but a donkey.

The first word to fill in should draw the students' attention to the typical introduction to a fairy tale and to the contrast between the literary context and the realistic situation depicted in the remaining part of the paragraph. It should be clear that different genres are confronted in this book.

Regarding Task 2, in deciding about narrative perspectives, students will discover that the passage is written as a third person narrative, but that initially the perspective is that of an objective narrator. The narrator even gets involved in an exchange with the assumed reader, creating a context of mutual understanding. The narrator becomes sympathetic and almost involved, that is changing the perspective towards a more subjective one when the word "poor" appears in the description of Tom's rubbed knees and elbows. This viewpoint is further supported by the emphatic rhythm of the sentence. Gradually, the narration shifts towards the character's perspective, even though it remains third person narrative, in the sentence "As for chimney-sweeping, and being hungry…", especially when it reveals Tom's thoughts about the life ahead of him. At the end of the section, the narrator returns to the objective perspective.

In answering the next question, Task 3, it should not be difficult to realise that Tom is a poor, uneducated boy who knows little about the good side of life. In his ignorance, he sees his bullying master as a model.

Regarding Task 4, students should easily conclude that the situation described is realistic – contemporary to the times when the novel was written; that is mid-19th century, and that the author describes his own country, England. The situation depicts the life of an orphan at the time if he was lucky enough to become someone's apprentice, even a chimney-sweeper's apprentice. A historical expansion is possible here about the education of children in the 19th century, and about the institution of apprenticeship and its rules. A reference to old codes of behaviour in verse as a form of anonymous poetry addressed to children in the beginnings of children's literature (for example, *Manners at table*) is also possible. The question in Task 5 has already been partly answered: the author has created an atmosphere of understanding and confidence between the narrator and the reader explaining that the name Tom is not going to be difficult to remember. Further, the narrator becomes sympathetic, so the reader is invited to feel sorry for Tom. Next, in presenting Tom's perspective and thoughts, irony appears, because the reader has already started thinking about Tom's situation as horrible. When the reader is presented with Tom's optimistic views, he or she can easily understand how wrong Tom is. The reader should pity Tom not only because his life is terrible, but also because he does not understand it at all. Besides, Tom's moral values are questionable as well. So the text raises social awareness in its readers: they realise that children like Tom do not receive proper treatment, and that the social codes regarding child labour and education need to be changed. They ponder the status of orphans in this society and develop empathy. In its time, consequently, the text shifted general opinion in favour of mistreated children in society. The text encourages readers to think about their reading through the techniques employed. Finally, it should not be difficult for students to discover the connection of this text with some works by Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, for instance, and with two poems by William Blake entitled "The chimney sweeper" from *Songs of innocence and songs of experience* (Task 6).

Task 7 encourages students to consider the implications of the text through open-ended questions. Neither of the questions can be definitively answered, so that yes and no answers are equally acceptable. The point is in the explanation: in trying to explain why he/she thinks Tom is or is not clever, good or happy, the student will need to deepen the understanding of the text exploring possible reasons for Tom's situation. Various answers and explanations are expected here. For instance, some students may think that the master is a good man, but that his situation, his education, his personal history, his conformism and/or mediocrity have turned him into a bully. Would he have been considered one at the time when the story is happening? Does Tom feel bullied by his master? Why (not)? Others may think that he is not a good man – he has had a choice, he is a sadist, he considers a boy and an animal equally important, etc. Obviously, an interesting discussion may arise.

Based upon the tasks, predictions about the story can also be made, and the purpose of the novel may be discussed. The book was written for children – how did the author

treat his readership? What previous knowledge did he expect them to have to be able to read the book? Thus, students are encouraged to think critically and to learn how to ask questions about a literary text.

As a result of doing the tasks, students' awareness of both historical and theoretical issues concerning children's literature in English should be raised. Students should also realise how writers manage to influence readers through literary techniques and how literature can be socially engaged and amusing at the same time. Another issue is the use of irony. Why and how does Kingsley use it? Is he justified in doing so? Further, students should be able to develop their critical reading skills, and also realise how they can encourage children or other learners to think when encountering a piece of literature. They could discuss various issues inspired by this passage, such as how someone's situation may influence their perspective and their understanding of the world, just as Tom's situation influenced his views. This can be expanded to include a discussion of the ways in which various cultural contexts may influence people's viewpoints, and how to find ways to communicate in such situations. Besides, students may want to consider their individual contexts and think about their own views regarding various issues. They could also discuss what they can do to understand others. As a historical reference, the text will help students understand how children lived and what they had to cope with only about a hundred and fifty years ago. They will also realise how texts of different kinds (Dickens, Blake) treated the same topic in similar, and yet different ways. They may even consider the intertextual dialogic relationship between Blake's poems and Kingsley's novel: did Kingsley choose his character to be a chimney sweep because of Blake's poems? Or was it an independent decision?

Grammar awareness-raising in an initial teacher education seminar[21]

David Newby

Background and aims of activities

As in many other countries, many teachers in Austrian schools teach grammar in a fairly traditional way. Not surprisingly, student teachers tend to follow the grammar pedagogy they have experienced in their time at school.

In the following, I shall present a series of activities which form part of a seminar I hold for students undergoing their initial teacher education at Karl-Franzens University Graz entitled Cognitive and Affective Aspects of Learning English as a Foreign Language, and which have the overall goal of guiding students to reflect on both linguistic and didactic aspects of grammar pedagogy. The specific aims are:

(a) that students should understand the importance of both theories of grammar and theories of learning before selecting grammar pedagogy;
(b) to explore different ways of learning and teaching a particular grammar point and to understand differences between a traditional and a cognitive+communicative approach to learning and teaching grammar;
(c) to try out and analyse pedagogical activities, to understand the principles on which they are based and to evaluate their efficiency.

The item of grammar which will be discussed is what is commonly referred to as "indirect or reported speech". I shall refer to this as "reporting words and ideas" (Newby, 1989).

Procedure

The following activities consist of two phases: the first, phase A, is intended for students undergoing pre-service education or qualified teachers in in-service development and has the purpose of focusing on the nature of the linguistic phenomenon of "reporting words and ideas". The second, phase B, consists of classroom materials, which students will try out and analyse, and which focus on principles of learning and methodology.

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21 This chapter and the activities discussed are adapted from Newby, D., *A cognitive+communicative theory of pedagogical grammar*, in preparation, with permission of the author and publisher.

Phase A: Awareness-raising activities for student teachers

Step 1: Activating existing knowledge and beliefs

Students are asked to write down any rules they have learnt about reported speech. The result of this activity is invariably a list of "shifting rules" as can be found in many reference grammars. For example:

present tense → past tense
present perfect → past perfect
I → he/she
here → there
now → then
yesterday → the day before

Then I might give the following example and ask whether this confirms the "rules" they have cited:

- direct speech: "I wasn't here yesterday because I was ill";
- possible indirect speech: "Earlier I told you that I wasn't here yesterday because I was ill but I didn't tell you what was wrong with me."

This is followed by a brief discussion of why this utterance contradicts the "rules" but a more detailed consideration is put on ice until further stages have been carried out.

Step 2: Creating data

Students are now asked to imagine a specific situation, which is prompted by the teacher. One that I am currently using is the occasion when Prince Charles first took Camilla home to Buckingham Palace to meet the Queen. I give the following pictorial support (on PowerPoint) and add a few light-hearted comments about the characters, which helps students to feel relaxed. I may also ask a few questions about their opinions of the characters to help them to focus on the topic.

Students then work in pairs or small groups and are given the task to imagine what the meeting was like. When did it take place (lunch, tea, dinner, etc.)? What were the three characters wearing? What did they feel like? What happened? etc. Some examples that students have come up with are: “They met for tea”; “The Queen was wearing a twin-set”; “Charles tried to make small talk”; “Camilla was very nervous”; and “She spilt her tea on her dress”.

When this is completed, the pictures are shown again, this time with thought bubbles added:

Students are now asked to imagine what each of the characters thought, hoped, wondered, etc. and to write sentences beginning, “The Queen/Charles/Camilla thought that … hoped that … wondered if …”, etc. Some recent examples of sentences from students are: “The Queen thought that Camilla was charming”; “Camilla hoped that the Queen would like her”; and “Charles wondered if he had made the right choice this time”.

Finally, the pictures are shown again but with speech bubbles:

Students are then asked to imagine what each of the characters said, asked, told, etc. and to write sentences beginning: “The Queen/Charles/Camilla said that … told … that … asked if …”, etc. Some recent examples of sentences are: “Charles asked the Queen if she would allow him to marry Camilla”; “The Queen told Camilla that she preferred her to Diana”; and “Camilla said that she wanted to become Queen Camilla one day”.

At the end of each of these three tasks some of the students’ answers are written on the whiteboard as follows:

Events	Thoughts	Statements
They met for tea. The Queen was wearing a twin-set. Charles tried to make small talk. Camilla was very nervous. She spilt her tea on her dress.	The Queen thought that Camilla was charming. Camilla hoped that the Queen would like her. Charles wondered if he had made the right choice this time.	Charles asked the Queen if she would allow him to marry Camilla. The Queen told Camilla that she preferred her to Diana. Camilla said that she wanted to become Queen Camilla one day.

The collected sentences serve as data for the following analysis.

Step 3: Discovering rules

The students’ attention is now drawn to the third column, “statements”, and the fact that they have produced examples of “indirect speech”. They are then asked to consider whether these sentences correspond to the “shifting” rules which they gave in step 1. Usually, students will answer that their utterances confirm that present → past, will → would, I → he/she, etc. However, I then point out to them that this is not, in fact, the case. Traditional rules are based on the view that when reporting, speakers have in mind the words of direct speech, which they proceed to shift. Yet in the activity of step 3, students did not have any direct speech at their disposal; since it was an imagined situation, no direct speech was ever uttered. Nevertheless, they were able to produce correct reporting utterances. The conclusion to be drawn is that whilst, as with all grammar use, the utterances in box three are guided by rules, they are not the shifting rules widely given in grammatical reference books and cited by teachers. After all, if direct speech were a prerequisite for reporting, people would not be able to report lies, “Camilla told the Queen they hoped to have lots of children”. Moreover, it would mean that reporters would have to be able to remember the exact words which were said,

which is clearly not the case. (To illustrate this point, I ask students to report about something I said in a previous class.) If we see the phenomenon of reporting as a cognitive process and act of communication, which takes place in a real context, we shall need to see it in quite different terms from the decontextualised manipulation of sentences, which figures so strongly in foreign language pedagogy. What is in fact reported is not words at all, but a semantic representation of a past situation, reconstructed by the reporter at the moment of reporting.

The question that now arises is "if indirect speech does not result from shifting, what are the rules which steer the grammatical choices in reporting utterances?" To explore this question I focus on the first box on the whiteboard, "events", and ask students the (very obvious) questions: why did you choose to use the past tense? Why did you refer to Camilla as "she"? The answers that of course are given are: "because I was thinking back to an event in the past", "because I was referring to a woman", etc. The same questions are then asked of the second box, "thoughts", and then of the third box, "statements". From this it emerges that the grammatical choices made in all three boxes are identical. In other words, the rules that underlie reporting are no different from the rules of tense usage in general; in a school setting, it is usually the case that when learners are confronted with "reported speech", they have already learnt the rules necessary to use tenses when reporting. However, in order to enable pupils to make use of this previously acquired knowledge, rather than putting reported speech on a separate pedestal and treating it as a special phenomenon, it is necessary to show the links between reporting and how tenses and other grammatical items are used in general. This entails pedagogy which rejects a shifting approach altogether and which is based on a contextualised view of how speakers report situations in the past, from their own personal, temporal, location, deictic perspective.

In recent years the pendulum of methodological attention has swung away from language analysis to some extent to focus more strongly on the learner. Whilst a greater awareness of learning processes and learner potential and characteristics is to be welcomed, it is not possible to specify grammatical objectives and to devise grammar methodology without a clear understanding of how grammar operates as a communication system. I therefore consider it essential for my students to go through the process outlined above before addressing the question of how to deal with this area of grammar in the classroom.

It might be added here that the role of tradition in pedagogical grammar can be very strong. When dealing with this topic, particularly in in-service courses, the realisation which teachers often come to in the course of these activities – that the "shifting" approach to reporting is not compatible with teaching grammar as communication – can come as something of a shock to them. However, it can equally lead to a very

fruitful discussion on the nature of grammar, the rules which underlie its use and, last but by no means least, the aims of learning it, which is to use it in contexts and not to perform “grammatical mathematics”.

Phase B: Analysis of classroom activities

The question that is often posed by both teachers and student teachers is how it is possible to teach reporting without reference to shifting from direct to indirect speech. In the following I shall present some activities aimed at supporting different stages of the learning process (see my article in the ‘Theories and principles’ section of this publication):

Input → Awareness → Conceptualisation → Proceduralisation → Performance

It should be added that the activities presented do not represent a single unit, but aim to illustrate various learning principles. In my university seminar, I try out these activities with students and then ask them to analyse them using the following grid. The smileys in the last two columns allow students to give their own opinion of the activity.

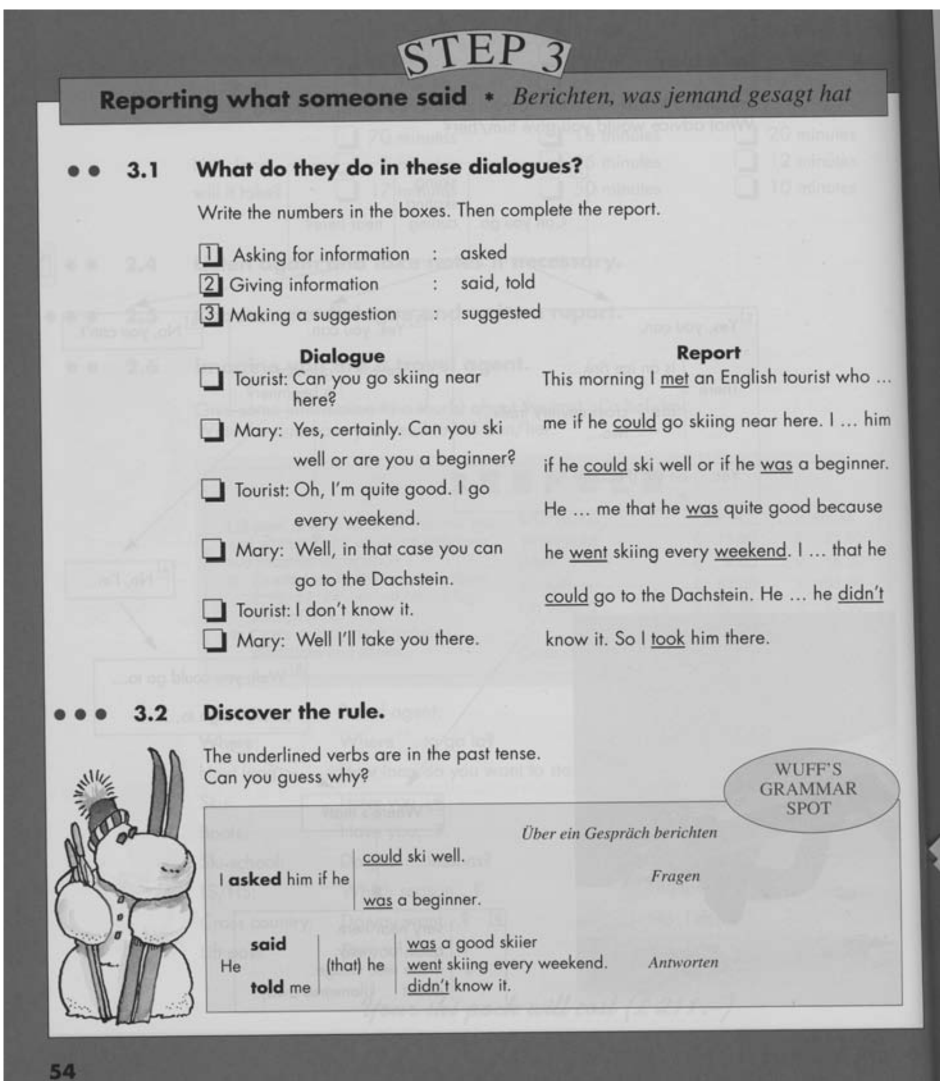
Grammar activities analysis grid				
Language focus	Learning stage	Learning principles	☺☺☺	☹☹☹

The following analysis is, of course, my own, but in seminars the points below mostly emerge from discussions with students themselves in the course of their analysis.

Step 4: Pedagogical activities – Awareness to conceptualisation

This activity is taken from a school textbook which is used in Austria, *Your ticket to English*, and of which I am co-author. When this activity is used, pupils are in their third year of lower secondary school (aged 12-13). It is part of a unit on winter sports.[22]

22 From Heindler, D. et al. (1995), *Your ticket to English*, 3, p. 54.



STEP 3

Reporting what someone said • *Berichten, was jemand gesagt hat*

●● **3.1 What do they do in these dialogues?**

Write the numbers in the boxes. Then complete the report.

1 Asking for information : asked
2 Giving information : said, told
3 Making a suggestion : suggested

Dialogue	Report
☐ Tourist: Can you go skiing near here?	This morning I met an English tourist who ...
☐ Mary: Yes, certainly. Can you ski well or are you a beginner?	me if he could go skiing near here. I ... him if he could ski well or if he was a beginner.
☐ Tourist: Oh, I'm quite good. I go every weekend.	He ... me that he was quite good because he went skiing every weekend.
☐ Mary: Well, in that case you can go to the Dachstein.	I ... that he could go to the Dachstein.
☐ Tourist: I don't know it.	He ... he didn't know it.
☐ Mary: Well I'll take you there.	So I took him there.

●●● **3.2 Discover the rule.**

The underlined verbs are in the past tense.
Can you guess why?

WUFF'S GRAMMAR SPOT

Über ein Gespräch berichten

I **asked** him if he could ski well. / was a beginner. — *Fragen*

He **said** / **told** me (that) he was a good skiier / went skiing every weekend. / didn't know it. — *Antworten*

54

The text in exercise 3.1 will provide the language input for the learner's first contact with the grammatical function of reporting. In the first part of this activity, students are given a task which focuses on three general functions of language, "asking for information", "giving information", "making a suggestion". The aim of this is, with regard to language, to create a link between the communicative purpose for which this area of grammar is used and the semantic and formal choices which encode the speaker's representation of events, for example, by choosing in this case the past tense. In other words, grammar is being approached from both a top-down and a bottom-up perspective. With regard to learning, such a task helps the learners to "engage" with the new language and to become actively involved both by identifying purpose and by

contributing verbs to the text. In a cognitive approach to learning, this aspect of strong engagement is an essential part of an awareness stage of learning: learners are not just passive receivers of input but contribute to the "input" themselves. In cognitive terms, the tasks require deeper mental processing than is usual in, say, the presentation stage of traditional teaching, where there is the tendency for new input presented by the teacher to go in through one ear and out of the other.

The second activity, 3.2, asks learners to "discover the rule". This activity thus belongs to the "conceptualisation" learning stage and follows what I earlier termed a "learning by reflecting" mode. What is important in this activity is that reported speech is not treated separately but is linked to the use of the past tense that pupils already know at this stage of their learning. Thus, they see that the basis for the use of the past tense in an utterance such as "I met an English tourist" is the same as that in "He told me he was quite good". Rather than learning a totally new item of language, learners – to use Piaget's term – need to accommodate this use of grammar in their existing stock of knowledge.

Step 5: Pedagogical activity – Conceptualisation and proceduralisation

The following activity is not related thematically to that described in step 4 and is a single written exercise taken from a grammar reference book.[23] The language aim of this exercise is to focus on what many learners find a particular learning difficulty: reporting "future in the past" using the forms "would" or "was going to".

Reporting the future: not what was expected!

Report what they said, thought, etc. Complete the sentences with your own ideas, using "would", "was/were going to", etc:

1. "Oh no! It can't be raining! The weather forecast said that it would be fine."
2. "He was surprised that he won the match. He expected that …."
3. "I didn't expect you to be at home. You said you …."
4. "Why haven't you brought a DVD with you? You promised …."
5. "You shouldn't have tried to stroke that dog. I warned you that …."
6. "I didn't phone grandma last night because she said …."
7. "Mum doesn't know that I'm at the cinema with you. I told her …."
8. "This film is really awful! And I thought it …."

This activity can be done either in written form or as an oral activity and should be used following the awareness and conceptualisation stages. That is to say, the teacher

23 From Newby, D. (1992), *Grammar for communication: exercises and creative activities*, p. 106.

has already focused on this item of grammar and learners know the rule, either implicitly or explicitly. The exercise type is what I sometimes refer to as a "communicative drill". It is drill-like in that it provides repeated practice of a particular grammatical point, an essential component of proceduralisation. On the other hand, students have to provide their own utterance based on their understanding of the context of each sentence. The resulting utterances can be assessed both according to their meaningfulness and to their grammatical acceptability. This requires students both to create language and to monitor their own production.

The exercise is occasionally criticised by teachers in that, from their point of view, it is "too easy". What they mean by this is that learners are told from the beginning that the answers require "would", or "was/were going to" and are therefore not "tested" on whether they "know" which tense to use. At the heart of this criticism is a common confusion, both among teachers and authors of grammar exercise books, between teaching and testing, most grammar exercises seeming to fall into the latter category. Since the aim of this learning stage is proceduralisation, the didactic purpose of this exercise is to build up the learners' confidence and to develop their ability to create utterances using this item of grammar. It is what I call a "can you use?" exercise, as opposed to a "do you know?" exercise, common in traditional grammar approaches. On the other hand, I do not see this exercise as imposing the kind of constricting straitjacket which can be the case with "fill-in-the-gap" exercises, where learners make grammatical choices, but do not make lexical choices, or do not have to assess the overall meaningfulness or contextual appropriacy of an utterance; rather it supplies a scaffolding framework which, on the one hand, provides learners with a secure structure and, on the other, allows them to generate their own personalised utterances.

Step 6: Pedagogical activity – Proceduralisation to performance

This final activity allows learners to use reported speech in all tenses. Whilst in its original form it is a written exercise, the form that is being illustrated here is that of an oral activity.

Reporting: all tenses[24]

Two sets of cards are required, as shown below:

24 From Newby, D. (1992), *Grammar for communication: exercises and creative activities*, p. 109.

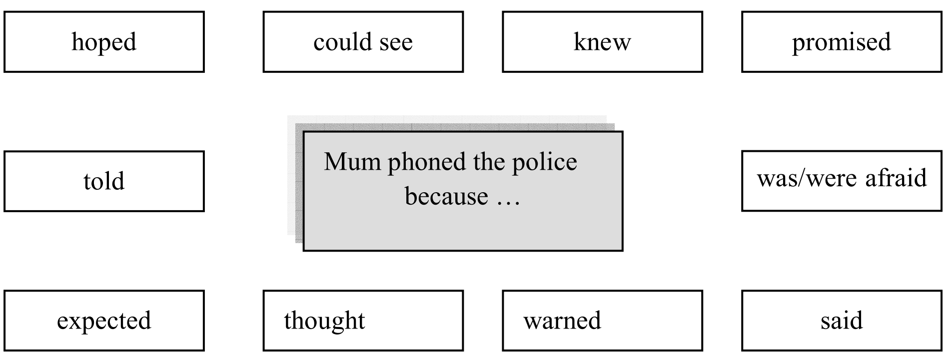
(a) Cue cards

Sue didn't do her homework yesterday because …	We didn't go to the lake yesterday because …
I felt really happy yesterday because …	The police arrested my brother because …
Jim didn't come to school yesterday because …	Our teacher gave us all some sweets because …
I didn't buy the radio because …	Nancy's boyfriend left her because …
Mum phoned the police because …	The headmaster didn't punish me because …

b) verb cards

hoped	was/were afraid
could see	expected
knew	thought
promised	warned
told	said

Students work in groups of about four. The cue cards are placed in the middle of the table, with the verb cards placed around them facing up, as seen below:



One pupil picks up a cue card and reads it out and tries to produce a meaningful utterance using one of the verbs from the verb cards. He/she then passes it on to the next pupil, who tries to produce a different utterance using a different verb. The game continues in this way.

As in the previous exercise, cue cards are used to provide a stimulus. This activity, however, is both a "do you know" and a "can you use" activity as pupils will need to use a variety of tenses in their utterances. For this reason, it leads learners in the direction of performance since they have to process both context and grammar, and to generate overall messages in which choices of the lexical, grammatical, phonological code are embedded. It might be assigned the "learning by using" label.

Two further aspects of the activity should be mentioned. Firstly, it is an oral activity; as a result, utterances produced by learners are made in real-time conditions, which not only aids proceduralisation but also partly replicates and rehearses the conditions of spontaneous performance, which is an important skill not supported if grammar practice is reduced to written exercises. Secondly, the peer group in which this activity takes place can provide valuable learning support, by monitoring and discussing the utterances produced and giving feedback. The heuristic element resulting from this group-work dynamic means that learners have the opportunity to try out ideas and grammatical choices and to seek advice on possible problems from their peers. It is important, therefore, that not only the competitive but also the collaborative atmosphere that can accompany grammar games is stressed by the teacher.

Conclusion

The purpose of the activities described above is to guide students to reconsidering both linguistic and didactic aspects of what is a bedrock of traditional grammar: the shifting of direct into indirect speech, which is in my view – as will have emerged from my preceding comments – neither of linguistic validity nor of pedagogical use. Clearly, my theoretical agenda in dealing with this topic is, on the one hand, to present a communicative, use-based view of grammar, and, on the other, to outline a cognitive view of learning. It should be added that the terms "communicative' and 'cognitive' do not represent separate sets of theories but are in various ways interlinked, for which reason I like to speak of a cognitive+ communicative approach. For example, in my contribution to the theoretical part of this publication, I said that "input" should be seen not only as new language transmitted to the learner but as both linguistic and schematic knowledge which learners have at their disposal and which can be, but is not always, activated when new language items are presented. In the case of reporting, learners have the latent and tacit knowledge that in real life they report semantic representations of events they have experienced and know that they do not change one structure into

another. Even though this knowledge is latent and tacit, it is my view that when learners are asked to do the kind of artificial pedagogical exercise such as shifting, subconsciously or possibly even consciously, they experience a form of “alienation”. Krashen identified the “affective filter” as inhibiting acquisition; might it not also be that students’ engagement in pedagogical activities can be inhibited by a “cognitive filter”?

With regard to the individual activities, one of my main concerns is to guide students to considering what the learning value of each one might be. Whilst many so-called communicative activities are very popular with both pupils and (student) teachers, there is a tendency to focus purely on the fun element and to use them in an undifferentiated way. Relating activities to specific learning stages helps students to consider both the principles underlying each activity and at what stage of learning they may be used most profitably.

Clearly, it would be possible for me to give a series of lectures on cognitive+communicative grammar and outline its theoretical aspects. However, using a series of awareness-raising activities as outlined above enables students through their own analysis to arrive at principles arising from this approach as well as their own personal insights; it helps them to experience the practical applications of the approach and, last but by no means least, creates a dialogue which gives them room to reflect on the theories to which they are being exposed, to take a critical view towards them and to accept or reject their principles.

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An additional contribution on the topic of mediating grammar by Daniela Drinková – entitled "Grammatik im Fremdsprachenunterricht" – can be downloaded from the ECML website, www.ecml.at/publications. It relates to trainee teachers of German at the Universität der Hl. Cyrill und Methode in Trnava, Slovakia.

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Coherence of principles, cohesion of competences

Coherence of principles, cohesion of competences:

Exploring theories and designing materials for teacher education

Anne-Brit Fenner and David Newby

The multi-competence nature of post-communicative language teaching has been spawned by a variety of theories deriving from very diverse sources. It was the aim of this project to investigate learning and teaching to discover whether some coherence between theoretical aspects of these different sources could be found and to what extent the apparently disparate competences, which are the aims of modern language teaching, could be seen as a cohesive whole.

In order to do so, the project took as its starting point the role and nature of teacher education as a basis to explore theories which underlie post-communicative language learning and teaching. Following a survey of teacher education institutions, the question was addressed as to how communicative language competence can act as a springboard to other competences which lie within areas such as social interaction, language awareness, intercultural awareness and learner autonomy.

Focusing on three main areas - learner autonomy, intercultural awareness, including literature teaching and human rights teaching, plus grammar - the first part of the publication considers theoretical aspects of these areas and attempts to show links between them. In the second part of the publication, case studies are presented illustrating the implementation of principles identified in the first part, both in language and in teacher education.

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