

ORGANIZING COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN GERMAN LESSONS

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Abstract

This article discussed about Communicative Language teaching with a particular reference to the teaching and learning of German. The article deals with the educational management teaching process in Higher education. Research will explain to teachers the method of teaching German as a foreign language (GLF) in the classroom setting in such a way that students can communicate and practice knowledge in a spontaneous way, taking into account their real experiences. Communicative language teaching (CLT) is a language teaching method that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the goal of study. The article is illustrated clearly some examples of communicative activities which are given from the novels that can be used in a German class for non native learners of German. We can acknowledge about thoughts of great German linguistics and essential tips for learners.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, teaching method, foreign language, German language, communication, non native learners.

INTRODUCTION

It seems teaching German as a foreign language in the South African context is not generally viewed as important. Ever fewer schools offer German as a subject and young people do not see a future for themselves in teaching or even studying German, nor are they aware of the excellent opportunities knowledge of this subject could offer. This seems to offer a good reason for retaining and even promoting German as a foreign language in our school curriculum. One could argue that enhancing the status of the indigenous languages by teaching them as school and university subjects is more important in the South African context than teaching foreign languages. It is undeniably true that these languages have been marginalised and stigmatised.

However that should not mean that foreign languages should now be marginalised or phased out of the school curriculum. Such thinking is short sighted and does not take into account the value knowledge of foreign languages has in the global village we are living in. The solution to this problem is not simple, because the South African linguistic situation is very complex, as Webb (2002) has so ably described Part of the solution to the seeming impasse seems to lie in elevating the status of the indigenous African languages rather than in reducing the number of languages learners may elect to do at schools. At present, the primary languages of the majority of the South African population are being significantly marginalised in education or treated as minority languages because of lack of status and economic importance. Even in the eyes of the speakers of these languages themselves, English is the language of choice in education, because it is considered to be the gateway to success. According to: 'To be educated and trained means having acquired knowledge and expertise mainly through the medium of English' (Webb, 2002:12). Professor C.T. Msimang, professor of Zulu at the University of South Africa makes a much stronger statement: 'Most black people in South Africa have come to hate their languages and consider them irrelevant in the education process' (. What many people fail to recognise, is that

the development of cognitive abilities takes place in the primary language and is transferred to other languages at a later stage in the child's development. According to a statistical analysis of the current situation in our schools 70% of the learners with an African language as primary language only have basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) in English as opposed to cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). They lag behind their (English L1) classmates, because they have not developed sufficiently on a cognitive level before being subjected to being taught in English. Show that learners in grade 5 could not understand questions such as: 'Where is your home?' and: 'In what standard are you?'. 83.5% of the teachers indicated that their learners did not understand their textbooks. In a questionnaire distributed in Northern Province in 1996, it was established that only 5% of the teachers who would be teaching through medium of English had adequate command of the language. This situation will have to change and the Department of Education has to find a way of improving mother tongue, or primary language education in South Africa if the problem of subtractive multilingualism is to be addressed. Skutnabb-Kangas (1988) cites several examples of groups of people whose primary languages do not enjoy high status in the community and who fail to learn the high status languages well. In research carried out in 1988 she gives a number of reasons for this phenomenon, including low language status of the primary language. In contrast she cites programmes that lead to additive bilingualism, such as the immersion programmes in Canada, where the English speaking majority are taught in a high status language, French, and achieve a high measure of additive bilingualism. The L1 of these learners has high status, they study the language voluntarily, they are taught by bilingual, well qualified teachers, they are self motivated, their L1 as well as the L2 are taught in the school on a high level and they have many opportunities of using the L1 on a high level in formal situations outside of school. All these factors are the result of the high status of their L1, English. The situation in South Africa is, of course not the same as in Canada, nor can it be. English as a world language can not be compared to the many indigenous South African languages that have only limited usefulness inside the borders and no usefulness outside the borders of SA. The stigmatisation of these languages under apartheid is still felt, even though theoretically all the official languages have equal status. Even in the black community some languages have higher status than others. See for instance the position of Venda in the Pretoria scenario sketched by Webb (2002: 63 – 64).² Perceptions, mistrust and stigmatisation are not things that can be changed in a short period of time. Affective aspects of language behaviour should not be underestimated. The parents who are raising children today and who are making decisions concerning their futures are the products of apartheid. They are suspicious of mother-tongue education because it reminds them of African education, an inferior educational system reserved for Black learners during the apartheid years. The prevailing view is that the cost of giving mother tongue education is in any event prohibitive, not to mention an organisational nightmare. In a country in which so many people are unemployed and undernourished, equal language status does not seem quite so important to the man in the street. Heugh (2005a) takes a very different view, arguing that mother tongue education could be cost-effective since it could lower the dropout and repetition rates. I would argue that if the inherent value of all the indigenous languages were recognised, in the eyes of the general public and more especially by the speakers themselves, more parents would opt to choose the mother tongue as a medium of instruction. Not only would the children acquire the desired level of cognitive development, but the level of learning English would improve (see Heugh, 2005b). That, in turn, could lead to a greater degree of acceptance of other foreign languages, which would include German.

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