Implementing the Core Curriculum of English Language in Preparatory Classes in Gjakova

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Abstract

Pre-school education represents the first level of education whereby children are educated in their families or in pre-school institutions (age 0-3 and age 3-6) or preparatory classes (age 5-6). First of all, there are dialectal differences from their everyday language, from low variety to high variety that implies the standard of Albanian language. It is understood that through communication children's development can be stimulated, encouraged and accelerated through the appropriate techniques used by the teacher. The number of English language speakers is increasing every day by reinforcing its geographic position as one of the most spoken languages around the world. In the same rate, it is noted that the number of institutions providing English language teaching as a foreign language is increased. According to the Core Curriculum of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Kosovo, it is envisaged to necessarily have classes of English language learning for elementary communication in preparatory classes (age 5-6 years). Linguists define the language in different ways, the first thing that comes to mind is that through communication start all the development processes of the human being. Apart from linguistic communication an inalienable element is also the psychological one. Given that Psycholinguistics is a scientific discipline between linguistics and psychology, this paper is carried out by treating the standard Albanian from the psycholinguistic perspective. The purpose of this research is to get acquainted with the level of standard language learning at pre-school children, and how the English language influences this age.

Keywords: preparatory classes, standard language, English language, core curriculum, psycholinguistic perspective etc.

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to get acquainted with the level of standard language learning in children, especially in pre-school children, the difference of speaking standard language, how much parents' education affects in this regard, the impact of written language as opposed to the spoken language, such as and use the standard under certain circumstances.

The whole miracle of human existence, all the forms and dimensions of the natural, biological, physical, scientific, artistic or sensory phenomena that accompany it are outlined through expressing thoughts in language. It is the word that conceives and baptizes the concept, describes the phenomenon, names the object, defines what we have never called before, the cloud, nothingness, and everything. Therefore, the word sounds in all languages.

According to American physicist Murray Gell-Mann the languages resemble large reservoirs of meanings and references, small and large worlds altogether masked within sounds and symbols.[1]

Speaking is of paramount importance in our lives, but we are seldom attentive to it, perhaps because it seems so familiar to us and we take it for granted just as it is breathing or walking.

Language has given voice to every other scientific discipline such as mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, philosophy or anthropology, perhaps creating the wrong idea that linguistics itself is not a true science but vegetates at the expense of one or some of them.

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[1] Gouthier, D. Ioli, E. (2007), Fjalet e Ajnshtajnit. Gjuha e shkences midis perpikerise dhe poezise, Dituria, Tirane, f. 56.

Knowing oneself according to Plato is achieved through language. Furthermore, it is precisely the language that takes on the semantic mediation between man and the reality that surrounds him.

Shezai Rrokaj, in his book "Introduction to General Linguistics", states that language is a system of units and rules and that units of a language are in opposition to one another. This opposition appears at least in one of three fundamental aspects: form, meaning, and function. So it is a phonemic system, a system of forms and a system of words. This implies the fact that language is not a list of words that is sufficient to know in order to speak and understand it. Anyone who learns a foreign language realizes that it is not enough just to know words in order to use in its entire scope of human activity. The union of signs (words) does not happen by chance. Words fall into classes, in categories: they are grouped according to the nature, meaning of the functions they perform. But they also relate to certain aspects in larger units, such as syntagm (phrases) and sentences.

The English language, thanks to telecommunications tools, such as the internet, television, or institutions that have it in their curriculum, has become a language that is heard today in all four parts of Kosovo and is used on a fairly wide scale. Due to the close historical ties between the two nations, the Albanian and the English, it is distinctive a mutual approach of love and respect. Thus, English has always been one of the favorite languages for Albanians. This connection of the Albanians with English starts from the time of the Huns in Europe, because precisely in this period date the first meetings between the two nations.[1]

Propounding the problem

The main purpose of this study is to research the teaching of English as a foreign language in Kosovo; the teaching methodology, the acquisition strategies used by pupils to achieve the most efficient results, and a number of other elements used during the teaching activity.

Following this fundamental goal, some of the main goals are to highlight the difficulties faced by Albanian pupils regarding the acquisition of this language; the definition of the strategies used to overcome these difficulties, the teaching methodologies used by teachers, and the impact of texts on this process.

The importance of the study

The English language is increasingly reinforcing its position as one of the most spoken languages in the world and in a constantly expanding geography. Obviously, these changes and developments have an impact on the institutions that offer the teaching of this language as a foreign language. They are constantly striving to provide a qualitative service.

In addition, the difficulties faced by Kosovo pupils regarding the acquisition of this language will be highlighted and the strategies that are most appropriate to overcome these difficulties will be identified.

THE CONCEPTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LEARNING IT

The foreign language includes all the languages used in a country or society other than the mother tongue. By learning a foreign language, at the same time, along with this language, is also learned the cultural heritage, its historical evolution, as well as other values.

According to Saracaloğlu and Varol the benefits of recognizing a foreign language can be listed in this form:

- It helps to create a new worldview,

- Strengthen your personal profile,

-Prepare to work more efficiently in the international arena

- Provides easier opening and recognition around the world.

The pupil who learns a foreign language, as it opens the gates to a new culture of that language, she/he can make comparisons of other cultures with her / his culture. For this reason, this situation will bring different perspectives, especially

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[1] Artun, 2003, fq. 99. Ndërveprimi ndërmjet llojeve të hirit turk dhe ballkanik në periudhën e hershme osmane. Folklore / Letërsi.

to young people who will benefit in the process of personality formation.[1] The fact that many languages are taught, on the one hand, is a parentheses that we live in a multicultural and multilingual world, while on the other hand it has become a necessity to support personal development. The first thing that comes to your mind when you say that you know a foreign language or a second language means that an individual, in addition to his native language, has learned, and knows how to use another language. In addition, these two concepts can also be referred to as the target language.[2] The concepts of second or foreign language used in this context should not be understood as opposed to one another or as two distinct independent concepts. We can mention the acquisition of a second language. In the first case, language learning is acquired naturally by living within the community that speaks it as a native language; here we can give an example of a Turkish child born in Germany without the need to study that language. In the second case, a foreign language can be learned in environments such as schools, or language centers.[3] To sum up, the aforementioned cases are known as informal (the first case) and formal (the second case).

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN PRESCHOOL AGE

According to researchers in the field of development psychology, age 2 to 6 years is known as the age of early childhood or pre-school age.[4] Similar to babies, preschoolers grow rapidly, both in physical and in cognitive aspect. Particularly noticeable during the early childhood years is the fact that development is integrated: the biological, psychological, social, and emotional changes occurring at this time are interlinked.

Cognitive development at preschool age

Preschoolers are unusual examples of how they themselves play an active role in their cognitive development, especially in their attempts to understand, explain, organize, manipulate, build, and predict. Children see models of objects and events in the world and then try to organize them into models to explain it. But at the same time, preschoolers have cognitive constraints. Children have difficulty in controlling their attention and memory functions, focusing on an aspect of the experience at a certain moment. Piaget referred to cognitive development occurring between the ages of 2 and 7 as the preoperational stage. At this stage, children enhance the use of language and other symbols, imitation of adult behaviors and their game. Young children create fiction with words. They play symbolic games, learn to use symbols and signs, imitate, use symbolic games, drawings, and so on. According to Piaget, children at this stage use magical thinking, which is based on their sensory and perceptual abilities and that are easily misleading. Children, when involved in magical thinking, can talk to their parents on the phone, ask for a gift, and wait for it to through phone.[5] Piaget believed that the cognitive skills of preschoolers are limited by egocetrism, which implies the inability to distinguish between the child's point of view and that of others. Preschoolers learn to adjust the tone of voice, intensity, speed to fit with listeners. Piaget indicated that preschoolers do not possess the ability to make classifications or the ability to create communities based on characteristics. They cannot understand the conservation or the concept that physical characteristics remain constant even if their appearance and shape change. Researcher John Flavell indicated that preschoolers progress through two stages of empathy or sharing perspectives. At the first level, around the age of 2 to 3, the child understands that others have their own experiences. At the second level, around the age of 4 to 5, the child interprets the experiences of others including thoughts and feelings. This change, in perspective, is an indicator of cognitive change. In this way, children develop social cognition, or an understanding of the social world.[6] Typically, 5-year-old children are interested in how their minds and the mind of others work. Children create theories of mind, awareness and understanding of others' state of mind and accompanying actions. Recent studies for the age of two to five have shown that, unlike Piaget's assumptions, the children of the preoperational stage think logically, project themselves into the situations of others, and interpret the surrounding environment. Therefore, the cognitive qualities of Piaget's preoperational stage may apply to some children, but they do not apply to all. Preschoolers do not remember as well as older children and adults. These children are better in recognition than in remembrance. Preschoolers show great interest in learning. This will lead to an accelerated process of cognitive development. For instance, they will achieve rapid development of speech and text recognition, which are the forerunners

[1] Sayın, Ş. (1993). Fq. 10-11. A mund të jetë e mjaftueshme një gjuhë e vetme e huaj në arsimin bashkëkohor? Universiteti i Ankarasë.
[2] Troike, M. S. (2012). Introducing Second Language Acquisition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[3] Ellis, R. (1997). Second Language Acquisition. New York: Oxford University Press. fq. 3
[4] Karaj, Th. (2004). Psikologjia e Zhvillimit të Fëmijës. Tiranë: Progres.,fq. 9
[5] Zgourides, G. (2000). Developmental Psychology. Foster City: IDG Books Worldwide., fq. 58
[6] Po aty.

of reading skills development in young children. Children with more developed work memory will be better able to develop language and reading and control it to a higher level.[1]

Language development stages

Language and speech are constantly evolving and changing depending on life experiences. It begins to emerge from early infancy, around the age of 3-6 months, when sound starts and stuttering starts and develops at a very rapid pace up to about 6 years when the child is able to pronounce the exact language sounds that he/she speaks. At 18 months old, the child gains the vocabulary and in 2 years she/he builds up a considerable vocabulary of about 200-300 words and has begun to form two-word sentences (telegraphic speech).[2] The vocabulary and sentence structure of the child is enriched day by day through her/his social activity and cognitive capacity. The child is accustomed to correctly pronounce the sounds of the language she/he hears and speaks. It also develops syntactic skills, meaningful sentences, and meaningful and linguistically accurate texts (stories).About 6-7 years of age, when the child begins to be influenced by the school program where, besides the alphabet book, general knowledge gained from the pre-school system, the child also begins to learn other disciplines such as Literary Reading or Mathematics. The entire pre-school period is what will determine her/his academic future.

Phonological development –Before they start talking, babies produce different types of sounds. In the first month of communication life is not the same as the spoken language: the sounds used are crying, coughing, panting or burping. Around 2-3 months, the children vocalize the first sounds that are vowels of the language and, around the age of 6-7 months, most babies unite some vocal and consonant sounds that, although they do not have any meaning, they sound like the syllables sounds of words used by adults; ma, ba, da, etc. This is the stage of babbling, in which from 6th to the 12th month babies will produce sounds of all the languages of the world.[3] Russian linguist Roman Jacobson explained that the earliest vocalization of babies all over the world are non labial open vowels, [a]. Furthermore, they start experimenting with other easy consonant sounds. Composed of labial consonants [b], [p], [m], and non labial open vowels, the children create their first babbling [ma-ma], [ba-ba], [pa-pa] which are reinforced by parents who react happily to these "calls". Indeed children do not know what they are saying neither expressing any special love to their mothers or fathers. The word **"mama"** for the child at this age does not mean "**I love you mother, who sacrifices for me and loves me so much"**, the word **"mama"** in this case means **"food"**[4]. So, in the case of sound in the word form [ma], the connection between the sound [ma] produced by the child and the real word [mama] is understood that the meaningless vocalization of the child can be easily transformed into a meaningful word.[5] During the pre-linguistic period, children continue to be exposed to adult language and begin to form representations and schemes that will enable them to understand and produce their own language.

From babbling to words –Children typically produce their first word around the age of 1, and words and babbling coexist for some months more later. They soon reach a 25-50 words repertoire.[6] Longitudinal studies on babbling and first words show that individual patterns produced as sound shapes or syllable forms and the length of vocalization often increase the progress of the child's first words.[7] The time of the child's journey from pronouncing the first word with meaning to the creation of a 50-word vocabulary is characterized by a "phonetic inventory" of simple small structures of monosyllables, consonants and vowels. From the study of phonetic structures produced by 13 children aged 18, 21, 24 and 27 months, Zmarich and Bonifacio[8] concluded that phonetic inventories are systematically increased in size and complexity. Children

[1] Sigelman, C. K., & Rider, E. A. (2009). Life-Span Human Development. Belmont: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.,fq. 330

[2] Nadelman, L. (2004). Research Manual in Child Development. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates., fq. 36

[3] Stoel-Gammon, C., & Sosa, A. V. (2007). Phonological Development. Në E. Hoff, & M. Shatz, Blackwell Handbook of Language Development (fv. 238-257). Hong-Kong: Blackwell Publishing., fq. 239

[4] Oneill, T. (2013, Maj 12). Why babies in every country on Earth say 'mama'. Gjetur në http://theweek.com/: http://theweek.com/article/index/243809/why-babies-in-every-country-on-earthsay-mama

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[7] Stoel-Gammon, C., & Sosa, A. V. (2007). Op.cit., fq. 240

[8] Zmarich, C., & Bonifacio, S. (2005). Phonetic Inventories in Italian Children aged 18-27 months: a Longitudinal Study. AISV Scuola Estiva 2006

will experience difficulty in pronouncing friction sounds such as **[s], [z], [r] or [l].**[1] Over time, they will add words like ball, good, bad, and consonant like **[v], [r], [ç],** which are sounds that will take some more time to reach correct pronunciation.

*Conversation Goal - Pragmatics –*The ultimate goal of language learning and acquisition is, of course, its use in conversations with the likes. This means that language has a social use that includes not only words as separate choices but also the message to be sent. Using pragmatic habits means talking with a certain tone and volume at a suitable distance with the listener.[2] Pragmatic habits of children develop over time, from early childhood to adulthood. These skills are acquired from life experiences and shaped by the child's culture. All the adults present in the child's life play an important role in the development of these skills, who influence by monitoring the child's language and explaining acceptable forms of expression in different contexts.

3.3. Appropriate Joint Reading Techniques - Illustrated Books

A painting is worth a thousand words. Paintings, sights, photos show more than words can, especially to babies and pre-school children who do not know the symbolism of most words in their own language. Illustrations are used to associate the text in many scientific and non-scientific fields by creating a light decorative, emotional-inspirational and controlling relationship and strong repetitive, organizing, narrative, summarized and explanatory relationships.[3] Children's books must include illustrations that serve to expand, explain, interpret or decorate the written text.[4] Moreover, Bodmer says that the illustrations provide "texts" in themselves, which will tell a story as easily different as two synonyms that never have the same meaning. Fang[5] in 1996 emphasized the importance of children's books illustrations, to enhance the understanding of history. Illustrations that accompany the text best determine the scene where the events take place, providing visual detail to it. They define and develop the main and secondary characters, along with their features. Likewise, the illustrations allow children to see the characters interacting with the heroes of history, for example parents or pets. Through illustrations, the story is expanded or developed, showing more detail about events between activities performed by heroes, or anticipating some events. For example, it is easy for the children to precede the Red Riding Hood's dialogue with the wolf when they see the wolf "hiding" behind a shrub in the background. With or without purpose, illustrations sometimes show a story that is slightly different from the text, thus providing a different viewpoint for the story. However, it doesn't always happen to have discrepancy between the text and the illustration. Often, illustrations contribute to preserving the coherence of the events in the text. This is especially important in the stories written in the first person singular "I am running...", where the child can see who is the "I" that could be a bird, a butterfly, a piglet or another child. Finally, the illustrations reinforce the text. Children rely on illustrations to build their understanding of the event. They focus on the characteristics of figures to draw and build the meaning of the story.[6] This is in fact the primary function of illustration books. Such may be, for example a view of a village, a view of a jungle with animals walking in the woods, or photographs of fruits, cities, and other objects and characters.

Appropriate reading strategies studies[7] suggest that the way you read to your children is more important than the time you spend reading to them. In a study conducted in the context of a home-based[8] intervention, where parents were trained to add open questions to their children during reading, it was discovered that the way and style of reading for the child affects their language skills. The book starts to be read from the cover. Initially, the title will be read and the author's name, the

[1] Kent, R. D. (2005). Speech Development. Në B. Hopkins, R. G. Barr, G. F. Michel, & P. Rochat, The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Child Development (fv. 249-256). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press., fq. 255

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figure on the front will be tracked to give an idea of what the story is about. This action will spark interest and curiosity for the book. Reading for preschoolers can be provided on an individual basis when the parent is reading for the preschool child or can be offered on group terms when a tutor, educator or teacher is reading for the group in kindergarten. When the parent is reading for the child, the latter may be sitting in the parent's lap and may touch the book and look closely at the figures. When a teacher reads about the group, the children are all sitting in front of the book and the teacher keeps the book in a visible position above the children's level as the miniature puppet theater scene they have in the kindergarten. This enables viewing of the illustrations, which add important facts that the text does not reveal during reading, or simply can show how the scenes or event characters appear.[1] Just as in a case where someone reads to only one child also in the case of reading to a group of children, adults need to point out at the rows as they read and show with their thumb the illustrative figures. Some books are do not have a text and they present all the events only through the figures.[2] In order to preserve the child's or children's attention, adults read by changing the voices based on the characters, in an way of acting where the child is involved and enjoys reading even more. As Mem Fox, an Australian children author says, "There is not a proper way to read aloud, except to try to be as expressive as possible. As we read a story, we should be aware of our body position, our eyes and their expression, eye contact with the child or children, the variability of our voice, and the overall facial animation. But each of us will have its own special form of reading".[3] The average rate for pre-reading for fun should be 15-30 minutes every day.[4]

BILINGUALISM IN KOSOVO – KOSOVO CURRICULUM

Relying on European policies on languages Kosovo also begins and continues with implementation by supporting the UN Declaration containing more detailed provisions, which states that: "States should protect cultural and linguistic identity of the communities within the borders and approve the necessary measures to achieve these results".[5] In its policies and strategies it also foresees and affirms the right of the people belonging to national minorities to use their language, privately and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination, always based on European policies for being permanent member of the European Union, OSBE has developed some of the most comprehensive standards for the protection of language rights.

European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (KEGjRP) is currently one of the most detailed and accurate treaties aimed at protecting language rights, community identity, the value of interculturalism and multilingualism without prejudice to national sovereignty and territorial integrity to protect regional or minority languages from unequal treatment, and to develop affirmative measures to promote and develop a certain language. Promoting the use of minority languages in the public sphere, including education, media, justice, etc.

a) Recognition of regional or minority languages as an expression of cultural wealth;

b) Facilitating and / or encouraging the use of regional or minority languages spoken and written in public and private life;

c) Providing appropriate forms and tools for teaching and studying regional or minority languages at all stages.

These provisions in particular should serve as justifications for the implementation of affirmative measures in support of a particular ethnic or cultural group. This charter encourages the adoption of measures that promote equality between users of these languages and the rest of the population or that adequately take into account their own conditions.

Communicative assignments in bilingualism

Foreign language teaching as well as other fields of human activity are open to social changes and developments that imply different pedagogical practices based on reflection, awareness and other meta-linguistic dimensions that we would

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[1] Bodmer, G. R. (1992). Op.cit., fq. 72-73

[2] Fang, Z. (1996). Loc.cit.

[3] Hahn, M. L. (2002). Op.cit., fq. 62

[4] Munson-Benson, C. (2005). Op.cit., fq. 56

[5] Politikat e gjuhëve në Kosovë zbatimi në marrëdhënie me organet publike shtator 2011 Deklaratën mbi të Drejtat e Personave që u Përkasin Pakicave Kombëtare ose Etnike, Fetare dhe Gjuhësore, Rezoluta e Asamblesë së Përgjithshme A/RES/47/135 http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/47/a47r135.htm, neni 1, para. 2. Fq. 1

treat learning processes and in a way we would like to give an answer to the question: "How to learn a foreign language?" so that the teacher would structure better in an operational way the entire teaching activity.

Assignments can be varied, demanding, complicated or too simple. The number of stages or intermediate tasks can be large and, consequently, setting the limits of a given assignment becomes difficult. Types of similar assignments or activities form the central core of many programs, school textbooks, classroom learning and tests, although their form may differ from whether they are taught or taught. These "second" or "repetitive" or near "real" assignments are selected in the function of the needs of students outside the classrooms, either in the personal or public domains or in relation to more specific professional or educational needs.

In the field of education one can distinguish between the assignments that the pupil has to complete and the assignments in which he is implicated as part of the process.

a) as participants in directed and completed interactions, projects, incentives, role play games, etc;

b) or when the second language is the language of teaching the language or other disciplines in the program etc.

The language has many uses that contribute to its perfection through game play and creativity, they can have a fun, aesthetic or poetic function.

Entertaining games include:

Games in society or oral (history with errors or - find the mistake how, when, where, etc.);

Written (dependent, etc.);

Audio - visual (lotto figures etc.);

Cards and checkers (Scrabble, lexicon, etc.).

Phonetic enigma and mimicry.

Individual activity:

Riddles and enigma (crosswords, anagrams, phonetic enigma, etc.);

Media games (radio and television: numbers and letters, questions about a champion, a thousand euro game etc.);

Word Games (puns, etc.):

in advertisements, for example, for a car: a sacred number;

in the newspaper headlines, for example, in case of a strike in the Paris Metro.

Gallery without weapons

 - In scribbling, for example: draw an gloomy day.

Aesthetic or poetic use of language

The use of language for aesthetic activities, to dream or for fun is important in the educational plan:

Songs (gesture songs, heritage songs, folk songs, etc.);

Rewriting and repeating narrative stories, etc.;

Listening, reading and writing or oral narrative fiction texts (rhymes etc.) including caricatures, cartoons, story with figures, photo- novels etc.;

the theater (written or improvised);

production, acquisition and presentation of literary texts like;

Reading textbooks (novels, poems, etc.);

Presenting and viewing or listening to a recital, an opera, a theatrical part, etc.

The personal domain is characterized by family relationships, social and individual practices. Private domain - means sharing information about family, friends, and free chat with a visitor for preferences, ideas, dislikes, etc.

The public domain is related to common social relationships such as public, cultural, commercial, civic, media relations, etc.).

The educational field has to do with the moment when the actor is in the forming stage who is forced to acquire knowledge and skills defined as participating in a role play or at a seminar, or to write an article on a specialized topic for a colloquium or a magazine etc.

Literary studies have numerous educational, intellectual, moral and affective, linguistic and cultural goals and not just aesthetic purposes. National and foreign literature brings a major contribution to the European cultural heritage, which the Council of Europe views as "... an invaluable common source to be protected and developed". In order to carry out communication tasks, language users should participate in language communication activities such as conversations or correspondence, in most cases, the speaker or writer produces his own text to express her / his opinion and can communicate directly. The mediation process can either be interactive or not. Activities can be varied. For example, in a language lesson class a student can listen to a professor's presentation, read a book either loudly or not, communicate in small groups with his friends about a project, perform exercises or to draft a text and even play the role of the mediator, either in the context of a school activity or in helping a friend. "Strategies are the means used by the user of the language to set in motion and calculate her/his resources and to put in place the skills and actions in order to respond to the communication requirements in a given situation and perform the task successfully and in the most complete and economical way possible - in view of her/his particular purpose." To accomplish this whole process of communication tasks, we need to rely on the strategy that forms the practical basis for modeling language skills.

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