

THE MEDIA IN THE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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Abstract

Nowadays we have many possibilities to learn a foreign language. Educational institutions are only one of the ways to access a foreign language. The spread of languages by the means of media become wider and more attractive. The media present an inexhaustible source of language skills and communication practice. The media work with multilingualism, and, if effectively used, they present a language in its true greatness. The access to foreign radio and television contributes to the learner's improvement in the knowledge of foreign culture and their social development competences. The learners have the possibility to listen to and to watch the programs in a foreign language round the clock and to choose what they like. It is worth mentioning that the base of all language education is decentralization. The learners have to understand that in other countries people speak, think and dream in a different way. Education certainly has an important place in this construction. The media help to decentralize the learners by offering them foreign situations through which the learners discover another culture, history, people's mentality and their customs on a daily basis. This is the multi-referentiality where the learners build their own identity and accept the existence of different viewpoints. The media bring the outside world to the educational institutions without pedagogic modification. They have a great advantage of using the language of the native speakers, with the specificities of a native practice, which is different from the teacher's performance. If used effectively, the media present the language in its true greatness; introduce the proper attitudes and manners of the culture where the conversation is taking place. The use of new technologies in language studies requires technical progress, pedagogical efforts and consideration. It is possible to foresee the future tendency of a partial unlearning in learning foreign languages, which already shows the importance of linguistic changes (in the majority of extracurricular cases) and a great quantity of materials aimed at the language broadcast. Switching to self-directed learning would result in the change of the teacher's role, which would have to develop. Should a change in school mentalities take place, we would certainly see the devaluation of traditional means. The didactics should fulfill a scientific function. It is supported by the specificity and the attributes of the means, content and pedagogical materials.

Keywords: Language education, media, learner, new technologies, pedagogic revolution, native language, authentic

1. INTRODUCTION

The languages play a social role. Presently, they make part of the essential life skills: the internationalization of professions, the vertiginous development of the media and new technologies represent the fundamental ingredients of this language banalization.

There exist many ways to learn a foreign language: going abroad, frequently using the media, communicating with a friend from another country. Nevertheless, education is the most widespread practice, the one in which the learners put the greatest trust.

The learners have turned into users. Language learning for them shifts from their direct interest. The languages as they exist in the street and what the professors teach may be in direct relationship with the extracurricular life. The learners have a great motivation to learn languages provided that the languages are taught in such a manner that they can be used outside the learning process framework.

This historical, technological and psychological progress caused an unpredictable effect: those who want to learn languages know that there exist several possibilities of achieving this goal. The media present new ways which lead to mastering language skills.

The main ways are correspondingly the Internet, radio and television.

2. METHODOLOGY

Framework of studies is developed on the base of the scientific works of the following spheres:

- General theory of foreign languages teaching;
- Theoretical and practical questions of foreign communicative competence formation in the second foreign language;
- Interrelation between competence-based, communicative and activity approaches in the foreign languages teaching;
- Theoretical and practical questions of cross-cultural competence formation in the context of linguistic education;
- Conceptual framework of the environmental approach;
- Pedagogic engineering and integration of educational system theory;
- Theoretical, methodical and psycho-pedagogical bases of foreign languages teaching with the use of multimedia means, ICT, mobile technologies;
- Methodology of scientific and pedagogic researches.

3. RESULTS

The analysis of cultural practices shows that in Russia learning at home is more preferable than at some other place; this statement is proved by the cut in the number of cinema visitors compared to the number of people watching films on the Internet. Easy access presents the reason for choice: one chooses what comes by itself.

Growing urban sprawl leads to the youth spending their free time at home. Under these conditions the media present an almost endless source of leisure activities. Getting acquainted with the media production has educational effects.

The programs chosen for the foreign languages sensibilization have a playful nature. One distracts him- or herself and learns at the same time.

The users do not always understand what is said. It matters little here. In the first place, because the images are aimed at conveying general sense. In the second place, because for the young children sensitive introduction to a foreign language creates the first step towards learning.

Thanks to the media technologies, which become convenient and desirable, the learners get used to the languages and studying. One may watch a program whenever he or she decides to, one masters the rhythm, chooses the way and the pace: a certainly indisputable possibility for the learner.

The media let each one evaluate his or her personal progress. They follow the learner by becoming focused on him or her.

We do not say, though, that the media can replace professors. On the contrary, without doubt, the learners need the presence of a tutor who will be able to help and to explain. With education, the media authorize complementarity, provided that its input is agreed to be taken advantage of.

The supply of resources presented by the media is inexhaustible. Unlike the professor, the media keep the stability of mood and repeat the same utterances in the same context. Indeed, this situation may result in monotony. Nevertheless, the inexhaustibility of the media makes the learning process more flexible.

A specific trait of media is its quickness. Language-learning, on the contrary, is characterized by slow pace, repetitions and returns. It requires time. The specificity of any education in general is the correction which requires a convenient rhythm and no urgency.

Whereas an educational institution works in an intellectual mode, the media base upon the principles of emotionality and senses.

McLuhan has noted that one of the major differences between the media and the educational institutions is that the first moves with globality while the second function in the mode of analysis. Whereas the educational institutions are still dominated by books and written material, the media base on discrete, globalizing, contextualized movements.

The media are close to the learners, for whom the understanding of the world comes by complex situations portrayed by mobile images. Languages, as they are presented by the media, influence their recipients by senses. This immediately requires that the learner possesses global knowledge. The language becomes a skill which one has to master in order to understand the components of the situation and to distinguish between them. The media present a semantic totality, and the educational institution reconstructs it by dividing it into constituent parts.

The media are presented everywhere, massively broadcasted and very attractive. Radio and television have a common trait: listening to or watching them does not require any preliminary competence. Thanks to new technologies, everyone is able to access foreign radio and television and thus to listen to the native speakers of the language. The advantages of the media in education are enormous. Their major capacity is to outreach millions of people altogether and each of them separately. The learners have the possibility to listen to and to watch the programs in a foreign language round the clock and to choose what they like.

It is worth mentioning that the base of all language education decentralization. The learners have to understand that in other countries people speak, think and dream in a different way. Education certainly has an important place in this construction. The media help to decentralize the learners by offering them foreign situations through which the learners discover another culture, history, people's mentality, their customs on a daily basis. This is the multi-referentiality where the learners build their own identity and accept the existence of different viewpoints.

Christian Metz points out that the media reveal a strong "impression of reality", they are integrated in life as an ordinary dimension, a part of existence by itself. The generations born with the media are inserted into the everyday media surrounding. Thus, this surrounding comprises multilingualism and multiculturalism. By diving into this world and into the language they learn, the learners discover the country's culture and history and follow the development of the society. Under these conditions the language education gives the learners a possibility to achieve good results.

The accepted idea that language education could pass without efforts or work from the learner's part is certainly an illusion. Learning requires concentration, investment and motivation. The media present solid support to education by returning convenient periods of use. This media support is important since it gives the possibility to integrate explicitly playful sequences in the course process, with their own character and their pedagogic use.

The media bring the outside world to the educational institutions without pedagogic modification. They have a great advantage of using the language of the native speakers, with the specificities of a native practice, which is different from the teacher's performance. If used effectively, the media present the language in its true greatness; introduce the proper attitudes and manners of the culture where the conversation is taking place.

Radio and television present a real communication situation, with a great advantage for the learners, as they avoid the stress of a true conversation. Thus, the media give to the professors the best simulation situations, since they are the closest to the real language, and everybody knows that simulation is the most productive way of learning.

TV5 Monde and RFI are often used in learning the French language as a foreign one. These media guarantee something that no teacher will manage to give: the language they use is authentic, it represents the language in its native self. The media intensify the course, enrich it and give everybody the possibility to evaluate his or her own capacity for understanding a foreign language.

However, at present the media (except for the Internet) have inconveniences which do not let them become completely embodied into educational institutions.

- *They are not interactive.*
- *They cannot correct the mistakes and treat everybody identically.*
- *They leave the learner on his or her own and do not interfere when he or she stop thinking about his or her learning interest.*
- *They use a colloquial language, full of approximations. The media are aimed solely at being understood and respect the grammatical and formal minimum.*
- *They do not evaluate. The user has to check the learning progress on his or her own.*

The Internet is an endless field of information in all spheres. This technology offers impersonal or isolated communication along with “chats”, multiplies the interlocutors and functions as the media do.

These technologies do not transform the base of language learning as it was defined by the European Council: the needs and objectives, competences and the scale of competences, levels, pedagogical approaches, evaluation (Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues : apprendre, enseigner, évaluer, 2001).

The media constitute a pedagogical revolution, as well as they have completely changed the world. They weave international communication, which concerns both individuals and communities and transform our ways of thinking. The success of their attempts to become the institutions of language learning are at the moment slightly higher than average, though their functioning as auxiliaries and assistants have, on the contrary, entered the establishments and transformed the practice without really confusing the education/learning (Porcher, 1994).

The technical means and new technologies unlock unimaginable perspectives.

The term “language industry” (Degrémont, 1982) means products, techniques and activities which cause the spontaneous perception of natural languages. The techniques of accessing the information, terminology and automatic translation interest the learners. The involved support and means are well-known: radio, television, video, computers, e-mail. All this regroup the centers of linguistic and media resources and “language houses” (Martinez, 2001).

4 CONCLUSIONS

The use of new technologies in language studies requires technical progress, pedagogical efforts and consideration.

It is possible to foresee the future tendency of a partial unschooling in learning foreign languages, which already shows the importance of linguistic changes (in the majority of extracurricular cases) and a great quantity of materials aimed at the language broadcast.

Switching to self-directed learning would result in the change of the teacher’s role, which would have to develop.

Should a change in school mentalities take place, we would certainly see the devaluation of traditional means.

The didactics should fulfill a scientific function. It is supported by the specificity and the attributes of the means, content and pedagogical materials.

Thus, the media and technological progress which reconstruct the didactic space have an evident cultural influence. The innovation should not be refused, but it is to be thoroughly selected and controlled.

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