

OLD AND NEW MODELS OF LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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Target audience

- Pre-service teachers
 - Primary teachers
 - Secondary teachers_
- In-service teachers
 - Primary teachers
 - Secondary teachers

Itinerary

- Dealing with intercultural and plurilingual communication.

Abstract:

These didactic materials are aimed at discussing about educational approaches taking into account that linguistic and cultural diversity is a reality. The set contains 2 worksheets. The first worksheet intends to discuss about old and new models of language education comparing them with the language curricula in the teachers' schools. The second worksheet focuses on different educational paradigms. Teachers discuss about each one of them and the convenience or not of them being included in infant, primary, secondary and tertiary education. A final discussion section assesses the usefulness of the materials.

Rationale

The material focuses on the need for a new linguistic and cultural education capable of promoting plurilingualism and pluriculturalism. The purpose of the worksheets is to raise teachers' awareness of the measures that should be adopted with regard to linguistic and educational policy. Pair and group work are mainly used to discuss about the best paradigms for an education favouring the development of plurilingual and pluricultural competence.

Personal and social dimensions

- Having a global vision of the exercise of one's profession (professionalism) as consisting of different dimensions.
- Having confidence in one's professional ability to develop educational approaches in which taking account of linguistic and cultural diversity is a reality.

Professional dimension

- Being aware of the need for a new linguistic and cultural education capable of promoting plurilingualism and pluriculturalism.
- Explaining and defending the reasons for an education favouring the development of plurilingual and pluricultural competence.
- Adopting a position, in different contexts, with regard to measures of linguistic and educational policy.

Worksheet 1

Timing: 30'

Old and new models of language education



Pair off the following statements in the table below by adding the appropriate numbers in each column.

1. Takes into account diverse language experiences outside the classroom as a basis for continued learning
2. Bilingualism welcomed – focus on developing ability in mother tongue as well as other languages
3. Bilingualism and diverse cultural backgrounds “silenced”
4. Focus on nation state and national language as a source of identity
5. Speakers of other languages are “foreign”
6. Multilingualism enriches society
7. Bilingual children’s education is seen as problematic – focus is on developing national language
8. Language teaching focuses mainly on linguistic goals. Cultural element tends to be poor, or focused solely on “high” culture. Static view of culture
9. Bilingualism and diverse cultural backgrounds celebrated
10. Speaking another language is the norm
11. Multilingualism is a problem for society
12. Emphasis on European citizenship and the plurilingual individual
13. Assumption that learners start from monolingual base
14. Language learning can be successful for everyone
15. Even low levels of competence are valuable and add to communicative repertoire – to be built on throughout life
16. Learning another language is difficult
17. Language learning focuses on links between languages, and on developing language awareness
18. Language learning focuses narrowly on one language at a time
19. Language teaching has strong cultural elements and includes intercultural awareness. Dynamic view of culture
20. Near-native speaker competence is the ultimate goal
21. Learning another language is the norm
22. Language learning tends to be elitist and problematic for the majority

Old model of language education	New model



Discuss in small groups:

- a) What features in both models are included in the official language curricula of your primary and secondary education.
- b) What features, in your opinion, should be included but they are not.



Put the results in common with the whole group class:

Worksheet 2

Timing: 60'

To what extent do you think the following educational paradigms should be taken into consideration in curricula?



Give a number from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important) to the following educational paradigms for infant, primary, secondary and tertiary education.

	Infant	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Bilingual education				
Plurilingual education				
Pluricultural education				
Intercultural education				
Anti-racist education				
Anti-sexist education				



Discuss the results with your partner. (A) Which ones of the above-mentioned paradigms are included in your national curricula – at different levels? (B) Which ones do you consider should be included in the different curricula of education? How would you include them in the curricula?



Comment on your results with another pair and report your conclusions to the whole group discussion.

Assesment



Group discussion

After the activities are done, some time is left for discussion. The discussion could be carried out in different ways and the topics for discussion could be the following:

1. How did you like the activities? Why?
2. Do you think these activities may promote changes in education? At what level/s?
3. What are the advantages of using these activities?

4. How can you adapt or develop these activities for in-service or pre-service training events?

Appendix

Old model of language education	New model ¹
Focus on nation state and national language as a source of identity	Emphasis on European citizenship and the plurilingual individual
Multilingualism is a problem for society	Multilingualism enriches society
Assumption that learners start from monolingual base	Takes into account diverse language experiences outside the classroom as a basis for continued learning
Bilingualism and diverse cultural backgrounds “silenced”	Bilingualism and diverse cultural backgrounds celebrated
Bilingual children’s education is seen as problematic – focus is on developing national language	Bilingualism welcomed – focus on developing ability in mother tongue as well as other languages
Speakers of other languages are “foreign”	Speaking another language is the norm
Learning another language is difficult	Learning another language is the norm
Near-native speaker competence is the ultimate goal	Even low levels of competence are valuable and add to communicative repertoire – to be built on throughout life
Language teaching focuses mainly on linguistic goals. Cultural element tends to be poor, or focused solely on “high” culture. Static view of culture	Language teaching has strong cultural element and includes intercultural awareness. Dynamic view of culture
Language learning focuses narrowly on one language at a time	Language learning focuses on links between languages, and on developing language awareness
Language learning tends to be elitist and problematic for the majority	Language learning can be successful for everyone

¹ Source: Teresa Tinsley in *Facing the future: language educators across Europe*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2003.