

7th International Conference on Intercultural Education “Education, Health and ICT for a Transcultural World”, EDUHEM 2016, 15-17 June 2016, Almeria, Spain

The perception of micro-expressions while learning English and Italian through computer techniques

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Abstract

Our society is rapidly evolving and each individual needs to communicate with their peers – speakers of other languages. The communication competence in various languages becomes thus a requirement. Our paper focuses on a topic less researched by researchers exactly because most times they work individually and not in a multidisciplinary team committed to implement digital technologies in formative teaching. The teaching of foreign languages should be paired in class with computer technologies that involve the use of glottodidactics in order to ease the learning of languages based on the method of discovery through deduction and intuition in the propaedeutic stage. The study presented hereby has been conducted using a group of 1055 participants, from urban/rural areas (459 girls and 381 boys/125 girls and 90 boys), aged over 10 years and with different levels of training. This study clearly reveals the preference of the subjects for learning including the digital technologies and the importance in this process of micro-expressions, gestures, mimics of the body of the teacher, actor / artist or characters. We would like to present here, as well, the motivation regarding the voice adjustment of the digital tool used to prepare the digital workbook/digital production in general, for a better learning of languages and of English and Italian in our case, according to the age and training of beneficiaries.

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Peer-review under responsibility of the organizing committee of EDUHEM 2016.

Keywords: micro-expressions, English and Italian, digital workbook, bilingual communication, glottodidactics.

1. Introduction

Access to education involves and facilitates communication between social classes, different fields and ages of

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actors (teachers and students), participants in the training process. In the age of speed, each of them understands that they should compress the information received (directly or indirectly), in particular in the learning of foreign languages (in our case) so that they could enjoy the results in a very short period of time. We know, however, that each individual/subject has a particular time of evolution, development, perception and learning characteristic to their character/personality to develop bilingualism.

Starting from the idea of developing competences in foreign languages from very early ages and their development beyond maturity, even in the second and third age, our team points out hereby the results of research that has involved participants of different ages, cultural and social levels and backgrounds to prove the usefulness of regulating the mimic-facial-vocal trinomial in the learning of foreign languages in class (young/adult students), in communities and at home, completing works as those indicated by T. Cristea (Cristea, 1984). It is common knowledge that a foreign language can be learned easier in a community of native speakers and, in particular, from individuals in the same age range as the student. An important factor is the swiftness and correctness of the party interested in learning the language, being of utmost importance the linguistic family from which their mother tongue originates and the one to be learned (grammatical, lexical and pronunciation/phonetic similarities), exceeding the propaedeutic level (respectively A1-A2) to the intermediate level (B1-B2) and then to the advanced level (C1-C2) and even to the proficient level.

We have to admit that the formal educational system offers training in this field using teachers-speakers of foreign languages with sometimes limited competences instead of C2 level and very rarely native speakers. The linguistic impact exerted by teachers on the subjects practicing a foreign language several hours a week benefits them up to the limits of the teacher's professional knowledge. A highly important support in this field is, for the interested parties, the digital notebook and its auxiliary materials that supplement and extend the possibility to learn foreign languages through self-training/autodidacticism (Pop Mion & Giurgulescu, 2015); (Glava, 2007). The truth is, however, that a very small proportion of those interested develop such a strong degree of training awareness to not need in the quality/correct learning of the foreign language support from a native teacher – speaker of the language the subject learns by themselves. Tangentially, we refer to the training of teaching personnel (Pop Mion, 2015), teachers who will teach foreign languages. The academic curricula stipulate that they should learn, during their training, the didactics of the foreign language teaching (Soare & Nasta, 1991). Teachers learn how to teach a foreign language in classrooms based on standards methods, using demonstrative tools that are quite restrictively applied. Learners are required to pay close attention while a teacher reads a text. Then, they reread the same text and pay attention to what is written on the board: rules, observations and examples. Although the explanation is the same for all learners, the results are not uniform, in particular in a mixed classroom/group in terms of age and cultural background. Some of the learners, interested in learning English/Italian in our case, get seriously involved in the learning process and practice and solve more grammar and memorizing exercises. And the results are accordingly. They often feel the need for auxiliary support to help them in their work.

The questions that have led to our research have been the following:

1. What is the best method to learn Italian and English correctly and fast?
2. What are the reasons that limit their learning?
3. What factors can contribute to the improvement of their learning?
4. How can a digital platform support the development of the proper linguistic competence?
5. How much does non-verbal language affect the learning of the linguistic competence?

We would like to point out here that there is no teaching method to work wonders in the classroom, whether there are used top-notch technologies or the so-called obsolete methods. The latter can support the subject, but everything depends on the level of involvement and satisfaction of the learner who aims to reach a certain degree of linguistic competence. The results are visible by the implementation into practice and even technically using the evaluation model of the level of acquired knowledge proposed by de Pop Mion M. (2015). We have to accept the theories and practices of Prof. Babloni (Babloni, 2015) and Fabio Caon and Fabrizio Lobasso (Caon & Lobasso, 2008) who have proven the usefulness of glottodidactics *on the field/in the classroom/in groups*, associating

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