Teaching in multilingual education: Syllabus design based on the principles of multilingualism

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Abstract

This study is dedicated to the field of didactics in multilingualism, and presents the theories of didactics and didactics in multilingualism by explaining their differences. In addition, this study presents an overview of the definitions and models of didactics in multilingualism; and it suggests a model which can be implemented in a classroom with multilingual students, who learn German as a fourth language (L4). Finally, this study presents a lesson plan for students who have already learned three languages with English as their third language (L3) and are in the process of acquiring German as their fourth language (L4).

Keywords: Didactics in multilingualism, models of multilingualism, lesson planning.

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1. Introduction

The sociolinguistic situation and the advancement of the policy of foreign languages in countries demands from teachers of foreign languages to look for clear answers and concepts or guidelines for their didactic-methodical implementation. This is confirmed by many studies such as Meibner, Reinfried, Hufeisen, Neuner and others. They state that international books of German as a foreign language lacks the account of the influence of previously learned languages. This study addresses the questions on how and which didactic-methodical views could facilitate the learning of German as a foreign language, with regard to specific constellation in Macedonia, which brought the idea to study the development of language teaching methods and introduce the didactic of multilingualism. Furthermore, it discusses whether a textbook for German as a foreign language can enhance language transfer through appropriate tasks and exercises, i.e., how a proper language typology exercise looks like in a multilingual context considering the influence of the native language, in conclusion, the results of students.

1.1. Key concept

In foreign language teaching, the historical change of the methods of the professional area of the German language as a foreign language has a key role. The most important methodological paradigms that have predominated during the history of the didactics of foreign languages was briefly presented in the course of the effort, in order to achieve the linkage with the didactics of multilingualism and the need learning. For a description of the historical development of the methods in the didactics of foreign languages, the historical review of Neuner (2003, p. 225–234), Neuner/Hunfeld (1993, 19–122) and Reinfried (1998, 23–24), will be used.

1.2. Presentation of the theories of didactics and didactics in Multilingualism – differences of the definitions and models of didactics in multilingualism

The first, the oldest method of learning a foreign language, the Grammar–translational method, was based on grammatical rules and the principles of language construction. Text translation from the learned language to the native language and vice versa was the proof for the knowledge of the foreign language that was the characteristic of the grammar–translational method (Neuner, 2003, p. 227).

Furthermore, there are other methods: The Reformist method or the Direct Method. The content orientation of the direct method was to enable the students to think in the foreign language (Reinfried, 1998, p. 24). Thus, the language of instruction is extremely limited to the targeted foreign language (Schmidt, 1890, p. 73, according to Korn, 1896, p. 84; Reinfried, 1998, p. 23; Zergiebel, 1893, p. 11, 13). The learning of a foreign language is practised through hearing and repetition of the spoken language. Whilst the Audio–lingual method (ALM) also called as army method was developed by building on the direct method following the pragmatic and pedagogical goals (Neuner, 2003, p. 228f; Neuner/Hunfeld, 1993, p. 45, 58). Linguistic laboratories are the characteristic for ALM. The Audio–visual method (AVM) – The study of the foreign language via AVM follows the teaching principle of using optical teaching aids. Communicative didactics was focused on a pragmatic and pedagogical perspective (Neuner/Hunfeld, 1993, p. 84). She took and perfected the pragmatic impulses of ALM/AVM – e.g., principles of 'situationalness', to 'authenticity of linguistic examples', to 'introduction of the new material in daily conversations' to 'exercise in context', etc. (Neuner/Hunfeld, 1993, p. 84). 'Important impulses for the advantage of the oral over the written' had to be given, because 'pragmalinguistics doesn't consider the language as a system of forms, but as an aspect of human action' (Neuner/Hunfeld, 1993, p. 88) and develops a linguistic-functional concept in order to implement the everyday communicative situations in teaching (at the same place), whilst the intercultural didactics arose with the aim of 'accepting all human differences to reveal a new culture' (Neuner, 2003, p. 228f; Neuner/Hunfeld, 1993, p. 45, 58).

The neo-communicative didactics, using the term 'Neo-communicative method' Reinfried (2001, p. 8) tries to explain that the further developed concepts of the learning methods such as 'autonomous learning', 'individualisation', 'learning style', 'orientation towards the process', 'custom engagement', 'creativity', 'action-oriented learning' or for the concepts 'Authenticity', 'content-oriented learning' and 'bilingual education' by adding the attribution 'neo-communicative' should be considered as a new form of expression of the communicative method.

A very compact resume for the actual tendencies in the didactics of the foreign languages is given by Reinfried (2001, p. 1–20). Reinfried (2001, p. 10) with the help of a picture presents the principles of the neo-communicative teaching of a foreign language. Here it can be seen that didactics of multilingualism coincide with the principle of learning with interdisciplinary teaching.

Table 1. Display of the principle of neo-communicative teaching in foreign language learning (Reinfried, 2001, p. 10)

Teacher centred	Creative work. Learning through teaching. Teaching through project work.	
Interdisciplinary learning	Multilingual didactics Bilingual Interdisciplinary teaching content- based learning	Interlanguage coordination of the language input. Interlanguage learning strategies. Communicative language and culture awareness
Learning experiences	Authentic and complex learning situations Unexpected learning	Learning with all senses.
Learner centred	Personalised learning students autonomy	Student consciousness (strategies and techniques of learning). Language consciousness. Intercultural consciousness.

Starting from the historical development of theories of didactics and following the needs of the development of the society, the rapid growth of communication between people and nations, the growing need to learn languages of their fellow citizens as well as in the international level, and the need for co-ordination of all the studied languages appears in the head of the multilingual man, as well in education.

This paper follows an attempt to achieve a summary of the objectives and strategies of multilingual didactics of the foremost multilingual scholars (Meibner, Reinfried, Hufeisen) that follows as an addition in Table 1.

Based on the summary of the didactics of multilingualism shown in the Table 1, we can come to the conclusion that the didactics of multilingualism as a concept is built based on the idea of a comprehensive curriculum for languages, in which different languages communicate with each other and stand in close interaction. Finally, the idea is based on the results of neurolinguistics, proving that all languages in the student's brain are netted. Regarding this, Meibner says 'In a man's head, languages speak to one another' (Meibner, 1997, p. 13).

Table 2. Review of methods up to the communicative approach on the website and the added PD

	Grammarian-translational method	Direct method	Audio-lingual method / Audio visual method	Communicational didactics	Multilingual didactics
Period of creation /conditions	19centuries from the old languages (Latin - Greek)	Reformist movement of the 20s	The 60s	The beginning of the 70s, the 80s in continuity	The end of the 80s, the beginning of the 90s, still in development (Hufeisen, 2003, p. 11)
Linguistic conditions	Latin grammar, language understood as a building: blocks + logical rules	Behaviorism method of association	Behaviorism structuralism Linguistics	Structuralism Contextualism Pragmalinguistics	Neurolinguistics, psycholinguistics, Contextualism, pragmalinguistics, hypothesis grammar
Methodological didactic principles	Goal: use the constructive rules of the language, orientation in the written language. language of instruction: NL	Goal: implementing language as a mean for comm. Instruction language: the foreign language	Goal: learning the FL in typical situations Visually as aid to explain and support the memorisation Language of instruction: The NL	Goal: comm. skills, mediation of the student oriented learning strategies, LI: FL but the NL is also allowe	Goal: early, intensive and interdisciplinary language learning Meibner (1998, p. 18)
Theory of learning	Cognitive synthetic deductive	Imitative analytical inductive, discovery learning	Imitative (closer to natural adoption of the language - imitative)	Analytical inductive discovery learning	PJD participates clearly and actively in the foreign language learning (Hufeisen/Neuner, 2003, p. 19). Comparative and discovery learning
Skills	Reading/writing /translation as usage of grammatical knowledge	Listening – speaking before reading-writing, learning the pronunciation	Priority for the oral: listening – speaking	Integration of skills, relevance of the individual learning objectives	Integration of skills, restoring the already developed type of learning and knowledge of the language
Texts in the schoolbooks	Non authentic, produced texts for the schoolbook 2) classical, literary	Spoken language, everyday situations, songs, poems, stories	Grammatical progression, non-authentic, schematic dialogues as models for the everyday speech	Mostly authentic originals, other texts, everyday texts, usable texts literal - not only classical	Addressing the actual language

Grammar	Stand priority grammar lessons: synthetic-deductive	Very reduced, grammar rules intuitively lost, example grammar (application of example text)	There is no explicit grammar teaching, grammar through imitation, there is no systematisation (example text - exercises - usage)	Inductive grammar - mediation - self-discovery of rules (SDR) (example text -analysis)	Spontaneous grammar Contrastive Grammar
Exercises typical textbook	Text with gaps, dictation, composition, translation in both directions Schulz-Griesbach (Szanyi – Verm. methode)	The spoken language stands in the center, listening repetition, free play, discussions	Pattern Drill building sentences, text with filling, learning by heart and repetition of dialogs Deutsch 2000	Communicative situations prepared, constructed, structured exercises, conversation, discussion, Themen, Interk. Sprachbrucke, Sichtwechsel	Ordination exercises, filling texts, understandable texts, etc. Deutsch ist easy

'Didactics of multilingualism requires practical answers to the question, how to plan and implement learning of different languages' (Meibner, 2000, p. 1). And how the various positions of the academic language are presented, the different roles they occupy for the inter-language learning, because sometimes profit is made from the previously studied, sometimes of the language learned later, sometimes from the inter-lingual transfer, sometimes from the transfer-base of the native tongue and the first foreign language (Meibner, 2000, p. 1).

According to Meibner (2004, p. 152), the key terms for the concept of multilingualism are:

• Economising the study of foreign languages through systematic networking of the languages, knowledge, pro–and retroactive transfer between the native tongue and L1, L2, and L3 or further foreign languages
• Differentiation of the term 'transfer' in terms of the networked learning (intra-linguistic transfer in the language systems from L1, L2, and L3, inter-linguistic transfer)
• Focusing on the multilingual language of the student, temporary description of the multilingual systematic (negative/positive rules of correspondence)
• Developing empirically elaborated description of 'competence for language learning' through experience with different languages and ways of obtaining the language, orientation of the student
• Usage of the targeted languages as languages of the surrounding conferred virtually through new technologies. Meibner (2004, p. 152)

Multilingual education can be successful only if the language teaching is restructured and oriented according to the standards of multilingualism (Jessner, 2008, p. 15).

According to Reinfried (2001) 'Multilingualism means to be particularly aware of the inter-linguistic intertwining of the strategies for learning, vocabulary and grammar, whilst constructing the teaching materials as well as in planning the curriculum and its implementation. On the one hand, it implies that a linguistic foreknowledge should be adapted in such a manner that enables positive transfer; and on the other hand, to enable the students to be prophylactically kept abreast of possible errors due to interference; and thus, to avoid them with contrastive exercises'.

1.3. Model suggests which can be implemented in a classroom with multilingual students who learn German as a fourth language (L4)

Taking into account the most prominent models of multilingual language learning such as Rolle-Functions-Modell/Language switches model, whose representatives are Sarah Williams/Bjorn Hammarberg (1998) and the psycholinguistic model of cross-linguistic influences in learning additional languages; Foreign language acquisition model of Maria Groseva (2000) Contrastive-linguistic model: L2 as a reference for building the hypothesis of learning of L3. Dynamic model of multilingualism of Philip Herdina/Ulrike Jessner (2002), system-theoretic model (Hufeisen, 2004, p. 10). Language changes in individuals, including loss of speech and the commitment to preserve the language. Ecological model of multilingualism Larissa Aronin/Muiris OnLaoire (2004) socio-linguistic model: Attitude to two- and multilingual societies. Didactical multilingual monitor or multilingual machining model, Didactic model: integrated grammar for language aquisitiation. Faktorenmodell Britta Hufeisen (first 1998, new 2003 and then Hufeisen/Gibson, 2003). The applied-linguistic model of development describes the differences between learning the L2 and L3 and LX and by taking the lingual constellations in Macedonia into account, the conclusion is that the didactic multilingual monitor model is suitable for implementation in our country. And thus, the paper follows a more extensive description of the didactic multilingual monitor model, because it will be used for the empirical research of the reformulation of a textbook exercise, in terms of foresight of the knowledge of several languages (Hufeisen, 2004, p. 10). The didactic multilingual monitor, respectively the multilingual processing model (Meibner, 2004), is a constructivist model that contains etymological kinship between languages. This model is developed in order explain the process that takes place in the receptive skills of written and oral texts on an unfamiliar language; and the ideal way to explain the relationship between languages. Meibner (2004) model pays particular attention to fundamental processes that enable a better understanding of the new language. The Meibner model mainly relates to the previously studied Romanian language where a student is able to form new hypotheses for the Romanian language; and thus, the so-called 'Spontaneous grammar' of the target language (Jessner, 2008, p. 24). The spontaneous grammar is a hypothesis grammar to him –'that finds out the changes to the extent to adjust the declarative and procedural knowledge of the systemic nature of the language and to expand its scope' (Meibner, 2004). The spontaneous grammar or hypothesis grammar applies to positive as well as negative bases of transfer as well as their intelligent transfer process, that evoke an appropriate interest, that enables long-term availability of declarative and procedural knowledge. In this case, the new target language will take the role of a bridge, where in the contrary, set structures and vocabulary that will mutually compare side by side (Jessner, 2008, p. 24). The Meibner model (Jessner, 2008, p. 24) gives a large number of preconditions in the frames of the 'spontaneous grammar' that should be fulfilled: The model on adoption of more languages is developed based on the data of linguistic processes of Giebener Interkomprehensions model, comprising the following steps of processing, which can also be represented as memory segments:

- There must be an etymological relationship between languages
- The student should overcome the linguistic bridge
- The student should draw lessons (learn from), how to face the knowledge gained from the previously learned language as a bridge for learning a new language

The conditions for the development of more receptive language skills among students who study several languages consist of four phases:

• After the first meeting with the target language, the spontaneous grammar for that language is being developed.

• In the second phase of meeting the target language, an inter-lingual correspondence with the grammatical rules that will act as a bridge between the earlier language skills and knowledge acquired from the target language is being developed, and the grammatical system will be functional.

• In the third phase, the multilingual learning system will be built. This means that students will keep and support (successfully or unsuccessfully) all the inter-lingual transfer processes.

• In the fourth phase, teaching experiences of multilingual students are kept as a collection of metacognitive strategy (Jessner, 2008, p. 25).

This model emphasises that the system of students' knowledge may change, if one other lingual system is introduced.

2. Method

Within the empirical part of this thesis whether the didactics of multilingualism can be implemented in Macedonia among Albanian speaking students of the German language, should be investigated, by paying attention to the language situation in Macedonia and of the matching multilingual didactic model.
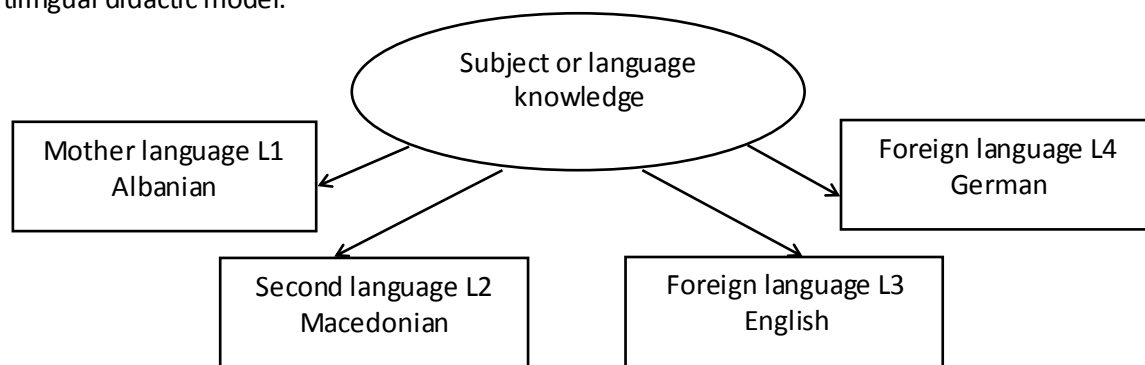

Figure 1. Presentation of the languages studied in Macedonia

Question is:

How can the exercises from a multilingual textbook be made didactic?

Through reformulating the exercises from the schoolbooks of German as a foreign language, wherein the potential vocabulary of all the three languages including the native tongue is considered.

2.1. Reformulated exercise

The reformulated exercise can be found in the schoolbook studio d A1 on page 85, exercise 6. The main objective of this exercise that consists of civilisation subject matter 'Registration of residents and foreigners', is read aiming to expand the vocabulary. The text consists of 56 words. With these words, the following is explored:

Of the 56 words that the students have learned from the previous lessons, 43 are known i.e the text is 77% understandable. Known words are 'brauchen', 'in Deutschland', 'nach', 'drei', 'Monaten', 'eine', 'hat', 'man', 'immer', 'fur', 'ein', 'Jahr', 'und', 'der Wohnung', 'ja', 'aber', 'gibt es', 'allen', 'Landern', there are 22 words that are being used multiple times, and altogether there are 45 words (for example: the word 'haben' is used twice)

The number of new words in the text, which are not mentioned in the previous lessons:

Aufenthaltsgenehmigung, Auslander, das Auslanderamt, muss, Einwohnermeldeamt, melden, Visum, Passfotos, Mietvertrag, kompliziert, spezielle, Regeln.

Potential words are:

Monaten, Visum, Passfotos, spezielle, Regeln, spezielle, kompliziert

Unknown words are:

Einwohnermeldeamt, Aufenthaltsgenehmigung, Auslanderamt, Mietvertrag, Auslander

The premises, respectively the given words to identified the new ones are 5:

Leute aus andere Lander, eine Genehmigung fur Aufenthalt in Deutschland, Amt fur Auslander, Meldeamt fur die Einwohner, einen Vertrag fur die Miete.

The exercise was used in teaching as an additional exercise. 15 min were planned for this exercise and the following steps were taken:

Strategy 1:

Mobilising previous knowledge – in order to activate the general knowledge and knowledge of the other languages as well as their native language, everything in the text (images, notes, side notes, images etc), the following activities were undertaken:

A short conversation is conducted with the students about the images, the terms of service for foreigners and the authentic form – note for registration (prepared questions, copies/group work). At this phase, the students managed to recognise the new word 'Auslanderamt' in Albanian language.

Strategy 2:

Building hypothesis – reflection of the text content and issues, starting from some familiar information was achieved. Students read the text once and during reading they should highlight the potential words. And through them they should think about the possible meaning of the new words.

Strategy 3:

In order to develop sense for the most important elements in the text, at this stage, they rewrite the unknown words and internationalisms in their notebooks and leave them without translation, and then they close their books.

Strategy 4:

To understand the text that they are to read with closed books, a text with gaps is given to them and according to their hypothesis they check the meaning of the word several times, and then they fill the gaps with the aid of the given premises. The main aim is to awaken the students, with what other words it could be connected in order to understand the unknown word.

3. Results

The result of the analysis is in Table 1, which support Reinfried's (2001, p. 10) theory that didactics of multilingualism coincides with the principle of learning with interdisciplinary teaching, while Table 2 indicates that the didactics of multilingualism as a concept is built based on the idea of a comprehensive curriculum for languages in which different languages communicate with each other, stand in close interaction.

Considering the construction of the in-class activities and exercises based on multilingual didactics, the results indicate that out of 35 participants 27 of them filled the gaps, 8 of them partially, and for

the word 'Aufenthaltsgenehmigung', they have used the word 'miratim qendrimi' i.e., during thinking, the native tongue stands first in the heads of the students, in case no other solution is found.

After the discussion with the students, a conclusion has been made that the premises were additional help only for the good learners, others were confused because they had an additional task, i.e., they had to think of the meaning of the word which caused additional difficulties. However, 'students automatically decided to choose the easiest version, and used their native language in order not to make the teacher think that they did not understand the text', i.e., they have one correct answer when reading the assignment.

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Appendix

Reformulated exercise from 'studio d 1A' page 85, exercise 6

Damit man in Deutschland wohnt, muss man sich beim Einwohnermeldeamt und Auslanderamt anmelden.

_____ *(Leute aus andere Lander)* brauchen in Deutschland nach drei Monaten eine _____ *(eine Genehmigung fur Aufenthalt in Deutschland).* Die Aufenthaltsgenehmigung hat man immer fur ein Jahr. Das _____ *(Amt fur Auslander)* fragt nach dem Visum, nach drei Passfotos und nach der Wohnung. Die Wohnung muss man beim _____ *(Meldeamt fur die Einwohner)* melden.Fur die Wohnung hat man einen _____ *(einen Vertrag fur die Miete).* Kompliziert? Ja, aber fur Auslander gibt es in allen Landern spezielle Regeln. _____ *(Leute aus andere Lander)* brauchen in Deutschland nach drei Monaten eine _____ *(eine Genehmigung fur Aufenthalt in Deutschland).* Die Aufenthaltsgenehmigung hat man immer fur ein Jahr. Das _____ *(Amt fur Auslander)* fragt nach dem Visum, nach drei Passfotos und nach der Wohnung. Die Wohnung muss man beim _____ *(Meldeamt fur die Einwohner)* melden.Fur die Wohnung hat man einen _____ *(einen Vertrag fur die Miete).* Kompliziert? Ja, aber fur Auslander gibt es in allen Landern spezielle Regeln.