Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures

The term pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures refers to didactic approaches which use teaching / learning activities involving several (i.e. more than one) varieties of languages or cultures.

Four pluralistic approaches can be identified:
- the intercultural approach;
- the awakening to languages;
- the inter-comprehension of related languages;
- the integrated didactic approaches to different languages studied.

These approaches reject the “compartmentalised” view of an individual’s linguistic and cultural competence(s), a decision which is a logical consequence of the way in which plurilingual and pluricultural competence is represented by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: this competence is not a collection of distinct and separate competences but a plurilingual and pluricultural competence encompassing the full range of the languages available to him/her.

The pluralistic approaches form the essential point of junction between all didactic attempts which seek to facilitate the continuous development and enrichment of individual learners’ plurilingual and pluricultural competence. This process takes into account all the existing competences, acquired within or outside the educational environment.

As far as educational goals are concerned, these approaches represent an essential tool for the construction of what the Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe calls education for multilingualism.

The FREPA – a new instrument of the Council of Europe

Created as a tool to establish the similarities among languages and language varieties that a person speaks or is learning, the FREPA closely reflects the overall vision of the languages in education and languages for education which the Council of Europe seeks to promote:

The FREPA – a new instrument of the Council of Europe

The materials created within this project are:
- A reference document about competences
- A tool for teachers, including:
  - Tables of “resources” aimed at (Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills)
  - A teaching materials bank
- A teacher training kit

… available online:
http://carap.ecml.at/

in German, English, Spanish and French and partly in Hungarian.
The FREPA reference document

For two levels of skills:

⇒ Competence to manage linguistic and cultural communication in a context of otherness
⇒ Competence of constructing and developing a pluralistic repertoire of languages and cultures

… organised lists of "resources", such as:

For the teacher... in addition to the tables of descriptors, a Teaching materials bank (BMD):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carpe descriptors</th>
<th>11. Taahuo</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Approach: Awakening to languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-2.1</td>
<td>Dutch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-2.2</td>
<td>Pressure: indifferent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-2.2.1</td>
<td>sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-3.1</td>
<td>view/dip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-3.1.1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A-18.1</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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Source:

| Michelen: Ponta |

For the trainer of teachers (or isolated teacher)... the Training Kit:

The Kit

Entry point 1: What is desirable? What do we do in class? Reflection
Entry point 2: Situations starting from: a) problems, b) projects, c) teaching activities

Articulated with the tool...

The tool:

Elements:
- Tables of resource descriptors
- BMD - Bank of teaching materials using pluralistic approaches

Users: teachers

For designers of textbooks... the FREPA reference document and the teaching materials bank.

For decision makers... the FREPA reference document

For each user...

Teachers can search the teaching materials bank, taking into account their targeted objectives and the lists or tables of resource descriptors. As a result, they find records corresponding to teaching materials.

They can make an advanced search using other criteria (type of pluralistic approach, level, language of teaching materials, etc.).

Once they have selected the appropriate material, they can, in general, download it by simply clicking on the link.

The training kit exists in an online version for self-training by teachers. A prototype version will be available in October 2010.

This material will be made available to trainers who can use it for training sessions. A guide for trainers of teachers will be available in late 2011.

To set goals, establish a progress schedule, create other activities...

To enrich the learning curricula, develop integrated language curriculum...