MAJOR IMPLICATIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY WITHIN INTERCULTURAL MODEL OF TEACHING EFL AS GLOBAL LANGUAGE

Abstract. This article will discuss one possible model of teaching English as a foreign language with intercultural requirements, environmental psychological influences and active and genuine participation of learners as issues that help develop learning skills to negotiate meanings across languages and cultures. Environmental conditions are considered central to developing teaching and learning abilities. This discussion is based on two theoretical concepts: intercultural communicative competence (Byram) and the intercultural speaker (Kramsch). English, a global language of this universe, has strength to unite the peoples of the Earth and provide better conditions for progressive and more profitable living and working environment.

Key words: interculturalism, globalisation, environmental psychology, proficiency-based teaching, professionalism.

Introduction

At the beginnings of the 3rd millennium, among other things, the impact that teaching and learning environment have on the quality of learning skills is focused to the goal of mastering the English language use and production of speech for real situations.

English spoken as a foreign language has built its role as an effective tool for spreading globalization for the largest number of world citizens who use the medium of English for the purposes of international communications and global trade market.
and for the sake of meeting requirements for developing scientific and technological achievements worldwide. English has become the tool for globalization but also the tool that can help learners of EFL to develop self-consciousness and determination to unite with other people in search for better quality of life. This is the necessity for the respectful environment to manifest working skills and provide values for healthier living atmosphere. As a result, the role of environmental education within the scope of EFL teaching has become indispensable. Environmental Education consists of a process which enables an individual or a learner to become aware of and concerned with related problems and acquire the knowledge, skills, determination, attitudes and values to solve the problems.

Today, the problem arising in non-English speaking countries concerns mostly the environmental and educational development that is capable of satisfying the needs of the present generation of people and to show concern for the quality of life. This recognition of individuals’ and learners’ own well-being makes the basis for teaching environment to be harmonious towards respectful learning conditions and the classroom atmosphere. The environmental macro level which relies on global trade and communications create pressure towards „cultural life-style uniformity and brings with it fear of a standardization of values and increased anonymity“ (Moser, 2003). In order to eliminate fear from the classroom environment the cultural matters are to be considered and recognized as important for developing teaching and learning environment and create harmonious atmosphere among all actors involved in the organization and design of teaching procedures. To meet the learners’ requirements towards intercultural differences and similarities, the quality of the relationship within the environment are to be identified and formulated as to help improve more inviting model for EFL teaching and learning. This model is expected to conform with the learners’ care-taking environment that provides conditions for healthy physical, humane and affective social context.

**Intercultural Model of EFL Teaching for Communication**

The problem that is argued in this article is the question of culture in its global English perspective. Globalization of the English language use assumes understanding, appreciation and development of the intercultural skills. Intercultural communication is a form of global communication and English teaching should be done with reference to the socio-cultural norms and values of an English-speaking country together with developing strategies focusing to appreciation of different cultural values and communicative competence developed in order to understand, evaluate and respond to various peoples’ behaviors, both globally and internationally.

Sharing one language, English, as an international one, we expand our communicative skills and are able to deal with foreigners at the distance in order to do business or interchange experience and various kinds of information through video conferencing, emails or phone and by using world wide network like Face book. People
we meet and interact with come from various parts of this world and belong to different cultural and civilizational milieu. Foreign language pedagogy is concerned in cognition of the relationship between language and culture which significantly affects the level of comprehension and interpretation of a particular language discourse, both spoken and written. It is a matter of social and psychological problems that may occur during the process of English language teaching when we try to facilitate the learning process through the cognition of cultural elements from the target language. The foreign-language teachers have to be determined of the type of schematic input to the learners of English.

The teaching of English in its global imperialistic language perspective raises disconcerting questions about the paradigms underlying the concepts of language and language learning, EFL teaching, and culture. The fourth paradigm concerns environmental conditions on both micro and macro level. Foreign language teaching involves two types of meanings in a target language: 1. Systemic knowledge and 2. Schematic knowledge. Systemic knowledge refers to the formal properties of language, comprising its syntactic and semantic aspects (Alptekin, 1993), whereas schematic knowledge is socially acquired and for this reason we will be primarily interested in discussing the matter of foreign language acquisition followed by culture cognition of English as the language of lingua franca.

Culture is assumed to be an indispensable part of the language teaching under the conditions of an inviting, healthy, environment. Our aim in this article is to discuss the relations between intercultural and environmental approaches to teaching English and to point out the pedagogic dilemma about which teaching model is best suited to implement for international communication.

The EFL teaching model is analyzed within the scope of multilingual societies with multicultural diversified characteristics which have become further complicated by the rise of a recent problem attacking world societies, the problem that marks the second half of the 20th century and is still active, and the problem concerning climatic changes, global warmth and world spread pollution of and from the humankind.

Broadly speaking, English is in possession of all citizens of the world. The question is how to keep EFL teaching safe from environmental influences that can slow down the process of learning and prevent fast development of individuals to keep a pace with the development of other countries worldwide. What could be the basic characteristics of the model for EFL teaching within the scope of built environment that serve the practical purposes of classroom teaching?

Serbia, like most of the world countries where English is the first foreign language learned in schools, evolved its view of the target culture from the position when a successful learner has a positive attitude towards the foreign language cultural context and the notions of understanding the differences between the target culture and his local one to be acquired during the process of EFL teaching. Until now, the cultural content has been based on the context of British cultural traditions, values and behav-
iors of the native people and American cultural norms that could serve the purpose of building cultural versatility.

The Impact of Environmental Psychology to EFL Model of Teaching

The impact that teaching and learning environment have on the quality of learning skills and their development which are focused to master the English language production of speech for real situations is considered the major issue of the teaching practice. English, functioning as a global language of this universe, has developed another dimension – the language dimension that has strength to unite the peoples of the Earth in order to make a better place for progressive living and more profitable working environment that has become today one of fundamental requirements for productive and effective teaching of English as a world language. To reach such a goal of teaching EFL in adequate environment, the teaching conditions should become more humane, sensitive to inter and intra-personal needs, and to provide space for students’ autonomy under the mentioned environmental conditions. This fact forms the starting point in search for educated professionals who can get involved in finding and providing best solutions for healthy living.

Eroding values and advancing materialistic tendencies are leading characteristics of living environment today. We are witnesses and at the same time victims of environmental degrading processes that relate to the quality of life and even bring about the possibility of extinction of life on this planet. Such environmental conditions affect the learning atmosphere and enable learners to get involved more sensitively in acquiring knowledge, skills, and attitudes to cope with and solve the environmental problems in their surrounding.

Our concern for learners of English as a foreign language account for their physical and social context of the learning environment. Physical conditions of the environment make an impact on effective and active learning in the negative connotation when accompanying by various disturbances from the outer world such as noise, air pollution, the layout of the interior of a teaching space, the furnishing, etc. For example, the space plan and arrangement of furniture in the classroom can influence the interaction and relations between learners, learners and their instructor, and even can influence motivation and interest for the subject matter. Learners easily lack concentration, motivation and interest if physical conditions of the environment are in misbalance. Social context of the environment is a matter of crowding, population, heterogeneity etc. The interrelations between learners, their behaviors and environment are factors that determine success in teaching especially a foreign language in non-English speaking country. Climatic conditions of the environment make great influence on learners’ temperament and this refers to successful and pleased individuals with their education. Depending on environmental conditions such as cold climate with freezing days, or hostile environment, the impact on learners is manifested through
insecurity, aggressiveness, lack of moral control, laziness, inertia, etc. “Applied environmental psychology aims at better management of the environment for better life and psychological growth” (Baum, Singer, Valins, 1978).

The Modelling of Professional Intellectual in EFL Model of Teaching

Effective learning space is attained through good relationship between environment and individuals, professional relation between teacher and learner, and interesting language source implemented in the teaching curriculum. These general requirements for making professional intellectuals should be deeply and widely spread through all spheres of social life and accompanying environmental conditions at the micro or macro level. Another fact that takes a special role for the sake of this discussion concerns, the question of who is in possession of English cultural context and the answer leads us to the intercultural model of EFL teaching. This model represents teaching procedures through which learners’ ability to negotiate meanings across languages and cultures is developed in order to prepare learners for living in a multicultural world. This is about encountering linguistic and cultural barriers in cross-cultural communication. Teaching from an intercultural perspective involves developing in learners’ critical cultural awareness of their own culturally-shaped world view and behaviors as well as the skills and attitudes to understand and successfully interact with people from other cultures, that is, to become interculturally as well as linguistically competent (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1998; Risager, 1998). This discussion is based on two theoretical concepts: intercultural communicative competence (Byram) and the intercultural speaker (Kramsch). Risager (1998) describes four different ideal-typical approaches to FLT, which are used as analytical concepts: 1. The foreign-culture approach, which has been losing ground since the 1980s; 2. The intercultural approach, which has replaced the foreign-culture approach, and is the dominant one today; 3. The multicultural approach, which has made its appearance since the 1980s, but still is in marginal position; 4. The transcultural approach, which is just beginning to appear as a result of internationalisation.

The fundamental principle of teaching a foreign language environment should be made “to encourage students not only to recall facts and to think critically or creatively about the content of the subjects they learn, but to think wisely about it, too” (Halpern, 2001). This is the principle of the Wisdom Approach within the model of EFL teaching in any non-English speaking country. Sternberg develops this approach by pointing out the factor of motivating learners to develop their ability to “balance competing intrapersonal, interpersonal and extra personal interests” (Sternberg, 2001). The main concern of instructors is the shift from a knowledge-based teaching to wisdom-based education. The interest is on learner-centered curriculum designed for developing communication skills in proficiency oriented approach which makes a focus on fostering a high level of intellectual functions, in flexible way of presenting...
teaching and learning contents (Kim, 1997). More recently model-based teaching has been defined as an “implementation that brings together information, resources, learning activities and instructional strategies intended to facilitate” desired teaching-learning goals.

In the teaching environment of EFL learners are encouraged to deal with cultural differences and this intercultural approach is represented by initiating and developing empathy towards other nations and the feeling of ethno relativity as described in Bennett’s model of teaching. This intercultural sensitivity is assessed through the learners’ respond to teaching materials and language sources that serve as the background to base teaching activities.

**Teaching EFL for Professional Competence**

In this brief theoretical analysis about interrelated principles at the micro and macro level of major issues involved in organizing goal-oriented teaching English as an international, world language, emerges the idea of teaching English for professional reasons. In non-English speaking environments and countries, EFL teaching goals have drastically changed from knowledge-based to wisdom-based approach for linguistic, intercultural and environmental purposes. I would like to add another perspective for the English language teaching, and that issue concerns the requirement for building a professional intellectual, a person capable of applying the knowledge and skills through his professional career and education that allows higher psychological growth to notice his environment in order to protect and restore values that allow decent life in a creative manner. The capability to interact with the outer and inner world, professional individuals develop not just through involvement in latest scientific and technological inventions and general growth in the chosen career, but also through adequate and carefully designed objectives for learning goals of the foreign language. English is learned as a tool to develop cognition about working conditions, to enhance environment in order to provide better life-style and increase production of values that can help the humankind to explore, restore and protect the environment, globally and locally, and to increase such behaviors that lead to well-being of individuals.

The role of professional individuals in EFL is multifunctional and it can be spread through well-organized intercultural approach and environmental education in schools. “Support for the Environmental Education Policy : English” issued by New South Wales Department of Education and Training in 2001 cites the following curriculum objectives for English and Environmental education: learners acquire and develop knowledge of English to understand about the nature and functions about ecosystems and how they are interrelated; then it comes the study about the impact of people on environments, the role of the community, politics and market forces in environmental decision-making, the principles of ecologically sustainable development and career opportunities associated with the environment. The same objectives can be applied in EFL teaching but through the implementation of this specific approach.
ach to the curriculum design depending on the language materials that will deal with the mentioned topics. Teaching materials designed in the manner to promote increase certain behaviors in the learners of EFL will help teach English in non-English speaking countries for a professional world individual or learner.

**Conclusion**

Our proposed theoretical concept of EFL teaching in non-English countries is based on the principles of interrelations between Wisdom approach, intercultural teaching for communication in a foreign language and environmental education specified through the selection of texts and activities in teaching materials for the purpose of better living and working conditions for the world generation. This concept relies on humane environment which is sensitive to intra and inter personal needs and allows development of learners’ autonomy and independency. This learner-centered approach claims for the following requirement: learners’ engagement in creating, designing, modification and management of environments that are care-taking, clean, with reduced pollution and regular waste removal. Learners and their instructor must share good personal relations and their participation throughout the process of EFL teaching and learning should be genuine.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


UTICAJI PSIHOLOGIJE OKRUŽENJA NA INTERKULTURALNI MODEL NASTAVE ENGLESKOG KAO STRANOG JEZIKA

Rezime

Članak razmatra mogući model nastave engleskog kao stranog jezika u okviru interkulturnih zahteva, uticaja psihologije okruženja i aktivnog i iskrenog učešća učenika u nastavi u cilju razvoja veštine učenja kako bi se stekli uslovi manipulisanja značenjem kroz jezike i kulture. Diskusiju zasnivamo na teoretskom konceptu interkulturne komunikativne kompetencije (Biram) i interkulturnog govornika (Kramš). Engleski, globalni jezik naše planete Zemlje omogućava bolje uslove za progresivniji i profitabilniji život i rad u datim uslovima okruženja.

Ključne reči: interkulturalizam, globalizacija, psihologija okruženja, tečnost u komunikaciji, profesionalizam.