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Political Discourse of Leaders, Past and Present

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It is important to study language as something people use to persuade receivers with their assertion of power. In fact language is ideological as speakers can speak in a way that supports their interests. Gramsci, for instance, talks of hegemonic power as the ability of some to convince others of the rightness of their cause. What are the mechanisms of power inherent in language? Language is a powerful instrument and through a range of linguistic strategies one can empower oneself and convince others. These linguistic strategies include linguistic manipulation political leaders employ as influential instrument of political rhetoric to persuade audiences for a specific political action. To argue in favour of their political ideologies and goals, political leaders deploy a broad range of manipulative and rhetorical devices at the phonological, syntactic, lexical, semantic, pragmatic and textual levels in their political discourse. These include the employment of metaphor, allusion, repetition, parallelism, redundant questioning, alliteration, parenthesis, antithesis, redundant questioning, and numerous other devices of wordplay. In this paper examples will be taken from a number of world leaders, past and present, dead or alive, who have used such strategies to persuade their audience of the correctness of their stance.

INTERCOMPREHENSION or How to Learn Languages in Tandem

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Currently acknowledged as an ancient practice of communities from various parts of the world, as of the 70s and 80s, Intercomprehension (IC) has become a field of research for linguists who are interested in the apparent benefits of this communication model.

In the aftermath of these research studies (*EuroCom4* and *5, Euro-mania, Itineraires romans, Galatea, Redinter* or *Intermar* – to randomly name but a few) and without being considered a method for learning foreign languages according to the common acception of this process, IC strengthened its position as a methodological alternative to linguistic training by providing its users with a practical solution to communication in plurilingual and multicultural contexts. Based on mutual respect of diversity and credit given to the Other, IC paves the way to a climate which annihilates hierarchies, showcases the individual, favors a positive image of the self and raises awareness of both the intellectual and language potentials which are brought out in authentic communication situations.

Therefore, this paper puts forward several insights in this mechanism of understanding different foreign languages in IC situations, mostly based on an interactive module called *Icebreaker (An Introduction to Intercomprehension)* that was devised within Intermar – an EU funded project that was underway between 2011 -2013.

Keywords: Intercomprehension, Foreign languages, Methodology, Intermar

Ways to Support Student's Motivation in Academic Writing Course

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Motivation is the key to any activity; and a foreign language acquisition is not an exception. Teaching academic writing for language students in Russia I constantly face the problem of motivation. My students feel little interest in writing academically, which is caused by several reasons.

1. To begin with, language teachers are not prepared to explain the strategic need in English for academic purposes (EAP), and writing skills in particular. As a result a limited number of EFL students realise their need in academic writing.

2. Language students tend to confuse a good command of general English with good skills in EAP. They suppose that the ability to write in English automatically enables them to write essays, summaries, reports etc.

3. EFL students also tend to confuse the written norms of the academic texts in the Russian language with those in the English language. They genuinely believe that one can easily transfer writing skills without taking into consideration the fact that writing skills are culturally determined.

4. The subject itself is challenging. Academic writing requires knowledge of strict regulations. They concern style of the language, structuring the ideas, conventions in the way a writer quotes, organises bibliography, presents the final draft etc. These limitations may reduce any joy of learning.

5. Additionally, the tasks aimed at training students to follow academic conventions (models) may be of little motivation. Genuine writing is creative by nature. A teacher must vary the tasks to humanise the process of teaching academic writing.

To prevent the possible 'conflict' of teacher's and students' interests I usually start a series of seminars with 2 essential things.

1. It seems reasonable to open a seminar with the up-to-date information on the subject. I share with my students the results of the educational projects dealing with academic writing skills.

2. I provide my students with the possibility to comment on a model essay: its content, organisation, style, presentation manner.

The well-thought support makes the challenge reasonable though the students may look at an academic text from a teacher's perspective for the first time. The aim of the activity is to reveal the gap between the amount of knowledge students possess at the moment and that they need in future to be considered qualified specialists.

Professional achievements are not the only factor that fosters students' motivation. Students' self-confidence may also wake "intellectual curiosity". In case students see the positive dynamics while comparing their results from draft to draft, getting supportive written feedback (that of a teacher or of their peers), writing a report on their course results or 'A Writing Self-Biography', they develop motivation to learn further. Immediate success moves learners in their studies.

Additionally, I tend to employ social motivation in Academic Writing classes through introduction students into contrastive rhetoric ideas. Feeling pride in their nation way of thinking and, consequently, writing learners are more eager to further compare and memorise conventions of the EAP.

Motivation is vital for successful second language acquisition. Russia has a unique educational environment in which to learn academic English is now regarded as an essential step in the achievement of higher levels of proficiency. However, teaching English for academic purposes lacks far behind. It requires considerable changes in methods of teaching and adaptation of textbooks to the Russian writers' needs, and fostering various types of students' learning motives.

Students of English at University: Awareness, Expectations and Failure Issues

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The analysis of the EFL P.Æ.C.E. Corpus (Landolfi, 2012a) shows that university students are fully aware of the multifaceted value of English in our contemporary world and feel unsatisfied when considering their failure in language learning particularly in the presence of a significant number of years of exposure to formalized language learning prior to university enrollment. Despite their past negative experiences, however, students' desire to own the target language still pushes them to enroll in English courses and nurtures their expectations for future success. Though desires can be considered strong motivating factors, which supposedly lead to academic achievements, students' expectations may hide problems particularly when factors that lead to failure are out of focus and expectations are too high to be fulfilled in one academic course.

The present article intends to address the above issues with the scope to show that students' voiced/implied Self-representations illustrate despair in admitting incompetency in English but also lack of responsibility in the learning process or inappropriate blame transfer. Both issues poorly match their voiced desire to reach out toward a futuristic, language competent Self. The distance between the two Self-representations constitutes an intersection where language teachers may play a significant role guiding students toward a successful reframing of their expectations so as to overcome the issue and reduce/avoid future blocks in language learning, fear-entanglements, and/or detachment from the academic path.

Keywords: Awareness in language learning, Motivating factors, Failure issues, Self-representation, Learning expectations, the EFL P.Æ.C.E. corpus

Coursebooks, Materials and Technology in English Language Classrooms: Focus on Creativity

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Our classrooms, mainly because of curriculum and assessment requirements continue to treat "learning" as a "mechanistic experience" (Slavkin, 2004). Both teachers and students feel bored with coursebook-based activity work. Children are born into media and the Internet technology. Teachers want to teach less hours but more English. Many students, simply put, do not/cannot learn English despite all efforts. Traditional instruction centers around knowledge and comprehension that is measured by multiple choice tests and short essay questions. Our classrooms must be spaces where language is used as a social medium. English language classrooms must get rid of satisfying our endless thirst for meeting short-termed behavioral objectives. In this presentation, hence, teachers' creativity will be interrogated so as to show that through teachers' creativity in integrating technology and other course materials, ESL/EFL classrooms can be dynamic spaces that are conducive to learning.