

# A Non-Culture-Bound Theory of Language Education

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**Abstract** *Educational linguistics* is a dyadic science. The noun, *linguistics*, is a broad term which includes neuro-, psycho-, socio-, pragma-, ethno-linguistics and communication studies: areas where national 'schools' non longer exist. *Educational*, on the contrary, is a culture-bound term: language teaching is carried out according to laws which concern syllabi, exams and certifications, the language(s) of instruction, the teaching of the host language to migrant students, teacher training programmes etc. These juridical and administrative acts are meant for the local educational systems. We propose that it is possible to find a number of principles and models (we call them "hypotheses") which can be accepted by culture-bound educational decision-makers, thus increasing consistency within language teaching and research throughout the world.

**Keywords** Educational linguistics. Edulinguistics. Language education. Language teaching. Communicative competence. Intercultural communication. Semiotic competence.

**Summary** 1 Educational Linguistics, a Dyadic Science. – 2 A Theory of Language Education Based on 'Models'. – 3 A Theoretical Framework Based on Eight 'Models' or 'Hypotheses'.



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## 1 Educational Linguistics, a Dyadic Science

Educational linguistics, edulinguistics, applied linguistics, language pedagogy, *didactologie des langues-cultures*, *glottodydaktica*, *Sprachunterricht*, and so on are dyadic names for a dyadic science. From the educational linguists' point of view, the dyad is "LANGUAGE + education", while decision-makers and authorities in educational systems view it as "EDUCATION + language". The opposition can be defined as Educational linguistics vs. Language pedagogy.

Since the 1990s, epistemological research on the nature of edulinguistics has flourished. The noun, *linguistics*, has become a broad term which includes neuro-, psycho-, socio-, pragma-, ethno-linguistics as well as communication studies.<sup>1</sup> Conversely, the adjective, *educational*, still remains rather vague and indistinct in meaning. Bibliographies are compiled from essays and books written by scholars like the Author of the present article who come from the field of linguistics. As a consequence, linguistics (in the broader sense indicated above) has been a transnational and transcultural science for the last century. This has resulted in a widespread consistency among American, European, Asian and African edulinguistic research. Differences exist, of course, but they are mostly philosophical (innatism vs. emergentism; form vs. use; lexicalized grammar vs. grammaticalized lexis, and so on) rather than culture-bound and based on national traditions.

However, if we move from language education *research* to actual language *teaching*, the situation is quite different. In fact, teaching is carried out according to laws, acts and decrees which not only concern native and non-native language syllabi but also the language(s) of instruction, the teaching of the host language to migrant students, exams and certifications, initial and in-service training programmes for language teachers, and so on. These juridical and administrative acts are meant for the national or local educational systems and, as such, are strictly culture-bound.

We propose that it is possible to find a number of principles, which we call 'hypotheses', that can be accepted not only by globalized edulinguists, but by culture-bound educational decision-makers as well, thus increasing consistency in language teaching research and practice in the world. In order to support this thesis, a theory of language education and teaching is needed (a deeper analysis of the problem is in Balboni 2018, which is the basis of this essay).

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<sup>1</sup> A general idea of the range of contents of educational linguistics can be found in fundamental books such as Clapham 1997; Spolsky, Hult 2007; Hornberger 2008; Chapelle 2012; Balboni 2018.

## 2 A Theory of Language Education Based on ‘Models’

A theory aims at providing a reference paradigm that is considered true until a paradigm shift occurs. If a non-culture-bound paradigm exists, as we think it does, each culture-bound educational system has the possibility of checking its traditional way of teaching native and non-native languages against the ‘true’ principles of the framework. This, in turn, initiates a process of increasing consistency between local traditions and the universal framework.

In order to be considered true, a paradigm has to be built on reliable ‘hypotheses’, that is, on statements that are *hypo*, ‘below’, the *thesis*. If hypotheses are wrong or even highly questionable, the main thesis, the paradigm, is not reliable.

In order to produce true hypotheses – ‘true’ according to current criteria of verifiability and falsifiability – we have chosen logical *models* as our main instrument.

In fact, the history of scientific research is the history of the quest for true knowledge. Many instruments have been used to this end such as *theorems*, which are based on empirical verification (it is possible to check with a metre that in a right triangle the squares built on the catheti have the same area as the square built on the hypotenuse); *sylogisms*, which are based on a strict formal structure (“men [A] are mortal [B]; Socrates [C] is a man [A]; thus Socrates [C] is mortal [A]”:  $A = B$ ;  $C = A$ ; thus  $C = B$ ); and the *laws* of physics, of phonetics, of chemistry and so on, which are usually considered true on the basis of empirical experience. Yet, Einstein reminded the world of science that empirical evidence might be misleading (in 1915 Einstein claimed that time was not a constant datum – which was empirically demonstrated only a century later).

Einstein opened the way to a post-Galilean way of conceiving scientific research. According to him, the traditional way (observing, making hypotheses, and then verifying them) was weak as human senses are not always reliable when they observe a phenomenon (for example, we all see the sun circling the earth). A reliable truth, on the other hand, is free from empirical verification as it is valid in itself. This is because its logical form is valid. It is true *per se*, as algebraic equations and chemical formulae are. They are logical *models*.

The Theory of Models is linked to Alfred Tarsky who felt language is an inadequate instrument to be employed in the search for truth. This is because language is ambiguous, changes over time and space, and is too open to interpretation. In fact, from the 1950s onwards, Tarsky became more and more interested in mathematics, a path that Wittgenstein had anticipated some decades earlier, and models, as a result, have become increasingly numerical and diagrammatic.

Theorems and sylogisms deal with very small sections of truth and are defined by the interaction of very few factors and statements.

Models, as we use this term, describe events that are more complex than theorems and syllogisms. Further, they use language systematically in their description alongside numbers, graphic symbols and diagrams. Yet, language use is limited to the two types of statements defined by cognitive psychology: *declarations*, simple sentences usually based on verbs such as *be*, *be made of*, and *have*, which are very easy to verify or falsify; and *procedures*, based on the *if... then...* sequence, where *if* introduces one or more declarations and *then* introduces the consequence.

Our definition of ‘model’ is based on a series of declarations (see Balboni 2011a, 2011b), but only two fundamental declarations are considered in this essay, that is:

- a. *models are universal*, i.e., they describe all possible occurrences of a phenomenon or of a notion.

For instance, the model of communicative competence indicated in Hypotheses 5 and 6 below claims that it describes communicative competence in all cultures and languages, anytime and anywhere. It may be used in a non-culture-bound syllabus only if it satisfies this claim; and,

- b. models can be *simple* or *complex*.

Simple models are forms of *declarative* knowledge, based on a topic, a copula and the core of the statement (“verbs are a class of words that function as the main elements of predicates”). Simple models work on a single level: the Pythagorean theorem, for instance, does not require further models to explain the relation among the squares of its sides.

Complex models, on the other hand, are forms of *procedural* knowledge. They link statements via an *if... then...* mechanism (“if languages are made up of different varieties, then a syllabus must indicate which varieties to present and when”). Further, complex models are hierarchical and work on different levels. For example, the model of communicative competence includes other models (of language competence, of comprehension, etc.) which work as secondary or tertiary level models.

Language, including the language used in the two declarations above, may be ambiguous. Ambiguity, both in writing and in comprehending a statement, can be reduced by the use of graphs and diagrams, as discussed in Allwein and Barwise’s *Logical Reasoning with Diagrams* (1996; see also Jonhson-Laird 2002; Holyoak, Morrison 2012; further reading about the Model Theory can be found in Rothmaler 2000).

### 3 A Theoretical Framework Based on Eight ‘Models’ or ‘Hypotheses’

We claim that the eight models outlined below can be internationally accepted and, that is, there are no cultures or traditions that can deem these models alien to their nature. A slightly different and more in-depth description of the models and the framework’s underlying *hypotheses* can be found in Balboni 2018.

#### Hypothesis 1. Logical Models Are a Non-Culture-Bound Way of Finding Truth

This framework is based on a number of models which are assumed to be right until alternative models are suggested. The nature of the models is outlined in section 2 above.

#### Hypothesis 2. A Non-Culture-Bound Definition of Language Education

The whole framework pivots on the following logical graph:

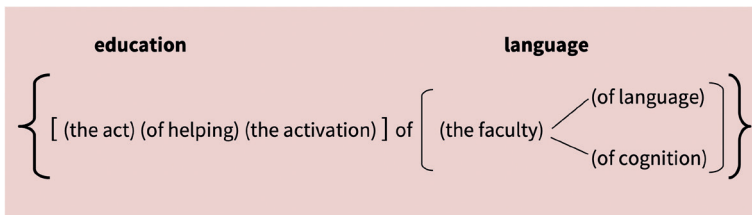


Figure 1 The graph of language education

The graph can be summarized in Alexander Von Humboldt’s words: “A language cannot be taught. One can only create conditions for learning to take place”. According to the model, language education and, consequently, language teaching are seen as

- a. helping the educational system (school systems, curriculum and syllabus designers, textbook authors, teachers, language assistants) provide for
- b. the person, however old, who is genetically equipped with the faculty to acquire both native and non-native languages (a definition of ‘Faculty of language’ can be found in Chomsky, Hauser, Fitch 2002; ‘Faculty of cognition’, instead, refers to cognitive linguistics). This person, or learner (a child in his

or her mother's arms, a student, a migrant worker, etc.) is the subject of language teaching, the one who learns a language with the help of others who know the target language and assist his or her acquisition.

The graph, Von Humboldt's principle and the items 'a' and 'b' above all concern human nature and human beings, independently from the cultural contexts they are born or grow up in. Language *education* is implemented in two different language *teaching* contexts, i.e. (1) native and almost-native language teaching and (2) non-native language teaching:

- a. Native and almost-native language teaching:
  - *L1, the mother tongue*: this is not just the mother's tongue, it is the language or languages of the home environment in which the child grows, thus becoming the language(s) of thought (a definition of 'native speaker' can be found in Davies 2003). Teaching the mother language aims at systemizing and improving the *quality* of a language which, when speakers start their formal education, has already been spontaneously acquired in its oral form. An International Mother Tongue Education Network is growing to support the use of mother tongue(s) in multilingual contexts and in schools where English as a Lingua Franca is used as the language of instruction;
  - *L2, second language*; L2 does not refer to the second language learnt by a person, but to a language present in the environment where it is taught, the first language being the person's native language. Some examples are Catalan for Spaniards and Spanish for Catalans in Barcelona, and French for foreign students in Paris. The student is immersed in the L2 alongside the mother tongue. This means that L2 teachers have no control of what and how much their students acquire spontaneously (sometimes with errors) in daily life. When L2 proficiency becomes high, let's say B2 according to the CEFR, the nature of L1 and L2 teaching is very similar, i.e. it concerns systemizing and improving the quality of the language rather than acquiring it;
  - *Ethnic language*: this is a peculiar form of L2, that is, a language spoken in a person's community of origin who has not acquired it as a mother tongue but who nonetheless hears it spoken in the family and community environment. For example, the children of immigrants often grow up as host language speakers, yet they hear the ethnic language spoken at home or in radio or TV programmes. They spontaneously develop receptive skills, and sometimes practice speaking when they visit relations during family holidays. Sometimes *ethnic*

or *community* languages are called *heritage languages* (definitions of 'ethnic language' can be found in Van Deusen-Scholl 2003 and in Brinton, Kagan, Bauckus 2008).

*Ethnic* and *second* language teaching contexts are similar in that both these languages are spoken in social contexts. However, the spontaneously acquired ethnic language is often an obsolete or local variety. Thus, when students decide to take a course in order to perfect their ethnic language, what they have picked up, not being representative of the standard variety, may be more of a hindrance than a help;

- *Language of instruction*: these are used in multilingual countries, as is the case of English in India or French in Maghreb, and in private schools where a non-native language, usually English, is used. It is apparent that the choice of non-native languages as the medium of instruction is a political issue. Many Mother Tongue Education Movements around the world claim that most children in the world receive instruction in a non-native language which hinders effective learning. On the other hand, there is a strong CLIL movement, especially in Europe, which supports the idea that content and language integrated learning enhances the acquisition of the language and does not hinder the acquisition of content.

We shall deal with the role of language as the main instrument of instruction in Hypothesis 2 (see Vollmer 2006a and 2006b).

#### b. Non-native language teaching

While the objective in group 'a' is to perfect and systemize a language which has already been acquired spontaneously although in differing degrees, this group includes contexts where the objective is to acquire a non-native language from scratch - or almost from scratch, as in the case of *lingua francas* used in mass and social media.

Non-native language teaching concerns:

- *FL, foreign language*: the objective of FL teaching is not to perfect an acquired language, but to start the acquisition process. At the beginning of a course acquisition, aimed at effective communication, prevails. The role of learning emerges at later stages in order to make communication not only *effective* but also formally *correct* and socio-culturally *appropriate*. The Council of Europe, the Chinese Confucius Institute, TESOL, and other international institutions have defined levels of communicative competence in foreign languages. They all share a common trait and that is, that there is a survival level, or threshold level (B1 in the European model) representing the turning point between acquisition and learning. In FL teaching the role of the teacher is peculiar: he or she

is the only native speaker available to students. The teacher is the living language model, and it is he or she who chooses other authentic language models among the many possibilities offered by the internet, DVD's, songs, films, ITC's and so on. The whole input is in the teacher's hands, as is the choice of activities and, in most cases, assessment.

The use of *second* and *foreign* as synonyms creates a lot of confusion as they represent two quite different teaching contexts (Achard, Niemeier 2004). A contribution of this framework may be the proposal of a common terminology in this field, so that this confusion is reduced;

- *LF, lingua franca*: A lingua franca is used to facilitate international communication and uses a simplified form, but not an oversimplified form as *pidgins* do. Two thousand years ago the LF was Latin, in the 19th century it was French, today it is English. The growth of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) is rapidly changing the way it is taught, even though the label 'English as a Foreign Language' (EFL) is still commonly used (two survey articles on research concerning lingua franca teaching are Seidhofer 2004 and Jenkins, Cogo, Dewey 2011; Polyudova 2014 discusses the teaching of English as a lingua franca).

In the ELF context the aim of the student is not to resemble a native speaker, but rather to be understood by everybody, to communicate successfully albeit with little formal accuracy, especially with regards to 'useless' markers such as the third person 's', the sequence of tenses, or the past tense of certain irregular verbs; for the same reason lexis is reduced as synonyms are held to be just as 'useless';

- *Classical language*: Koran Arabic, ancient Greek, Latin and Sanskrit are classical languages. Their prestige comes from ancient texts and traditions, even though they are the mother tongues of no native speaker. They are often referred to as 'dead languages', but the texts written in these languages are still fully alive and still talk to modern men and women. The cultural dimension, whether explicit in the text, or implicit in the lexis, is fundamental in classical language study, and it has no similar role in other language education contexts. If we continue to study Latin and Greek it is to have direct access to a cultural heritage and to the culture from which we originate as Euro-Americans and not because of a special interest in the aorist or the deponent verb forms (as concerns the integration between classical languages and modern languages in language education, see Balboni 2012).

All these contexts, however different, contribute to the same project, that is, to help activate a person's faculty of language.

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### Hypothesis 3. Language Education as the Core of General Education, whatever the Cultural Setting

Human bodies are meant to be instruments of communication involving voice, sight, hearing, body movements and postures. The human mind, moreover, has created many artificial codes.

The semiotic faculty of human beings (see Hypothesis 2) allows them to create and interpret signs, that is, semiotic structures that unite a meaning, *signifié* in Ferdinand De Saussure's words, and a physical *significant* such as a sound, a movement, a noise, and so on.

As far as language education is concerned, the core of the model is the role of language as the metalanguage of all other codes and of language itself: language can describe and discuss all codes, while the opposite is impossible. The educational consequence of this model, provided it is true, is extremely important. Since educational communication uses language as its main tool, alone or together with other codes, language education has a key role in the whole educational process, that is, in making self-actualization possible (Hypothesis 4). In other words, language education is the core of general education, whether it is carried out in the mother tongue, in a language of instruction or in a foreign language as in CLIL methodology.

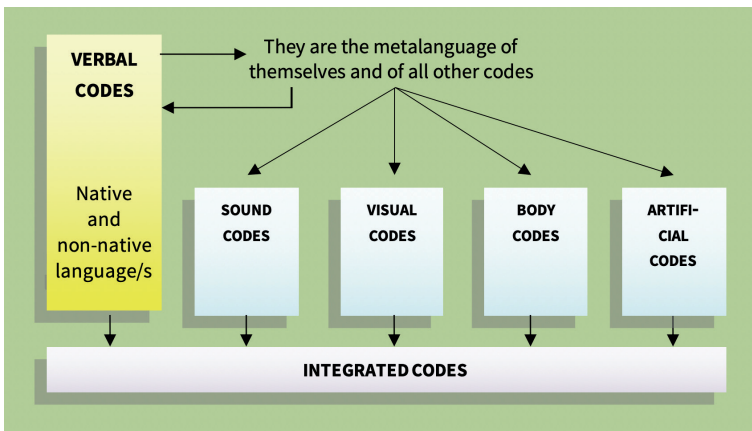


Figure 2 The diagram of semiotic competence

An ethical corollary derives from the model: if it is true that language is the metalanguage of all school subjects, then curricula, syllabi, school organization and language teaching must ensure that all young people are provided not only with mastery of everyday basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS), but also with the highest possible cognitive and academic language proficiency (CALP) in the var-

ious LSPs, the languages for the specific purposes of communication in mathematics, art, grammar, philosophy, history and so on (studies in educational semiotics can be found in Pesce 2009; Whitson 2009 and Danesi 2012, who focusses on semiotics in language education).

LSPs are fundamental not only as far as learning is concerned, but they also allow for socialization (another objective of language education, Hypothesis 4). In fact, professional and scientific communities are also discourse communities where the LSP communicates that the user belongs to that particular community (new perspectives for LSP teaching under this perspective can be found in Engberg et al. 2007; Gautier 2014; Garzone, Heaney, Riboni 2016).

#### Hypothesis 4. Language (Education) as a Non-Culture-Bound Condition for Self-Actualization

Figure 3 draws a map of human relations: human beings interact

- with themselves in their language of thought (ME, in the diagram),
- with people they know (relations, work colleagues, friends) or they just meet occasionally (seminars, negotiations, dinners, etc.): people they talk *to* (YOU, in the diagram), and
- with the rest of the world, people and facts they talk *about* (WORLD, in the diagram); it may be today's world or the world of the past, it may be the actual world or the fictional world of literature, and so on.

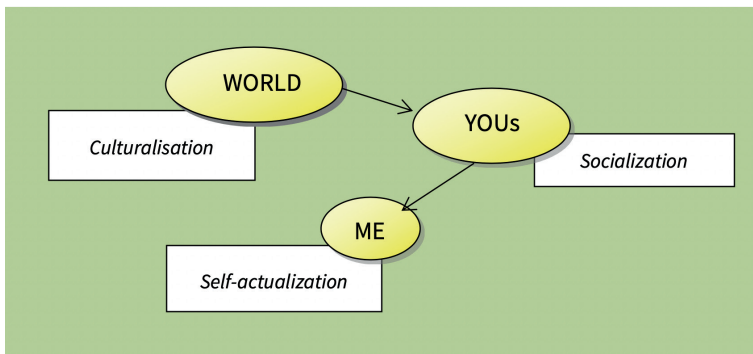


Figure 3 The diagram of human relations

If this model is correct, then it is possible to use it as a foundation in order to build a theory about the objectives of language education, regardless of where it is carried out and independent from culture and tradition. The three goals are:

- a. *culturalization*. This is the ability of a person to tune in to the culture he or she lives in (*inculturation*), or has contacts with (*acculturation* in a second, foreign, ethnic, classical culture). Language is the instrument used in all societies to convey cultural values and behaviours to children and to newcomers: this means that language proficiency is fundamental to culturalization;
- b. *socialization* becomes possible after a child or a newcomer accepts the basic cultural values and models of society (*culturalization*). The social needs of people, both from an emotional and practical point of view, are met through language, the mastery of which is necessary in order to socialize;
- c. *self-actualization*: this is the fulfilment of one's life project. Only a person who is accepted in the culture he or she lives in (*culturalization*), and who can socialize with other members of society (*socialization*) may have the opportunity to aim at self-actualization.

Item 'c' above, self-actualization, is the philosophical core of the whole framework: language is necessary, a *conditio sine qua non*, for people to pursue self-actualization, the fulfilment of their life project. Language is necessary even to think of a life project.

As a consequence, when translating education into teaching, i.e., when planning syllabi, organizing courses and implementing teaching, the ethical imperative of fulfilling these three objectives is the lodestar.

### **Hypothesis 5. A Non-Culture-Bound Model of Communicative Competence and Performance**

The meaning of 'knowing a language' is intuitive, yet intuition may produce the sun-circling-the-earth effect. Intuition is, above all, based on tradition and, that is, on a cultural idea of 'knowing' and, as a consequence, a model has to be provided as it is the core of a theory of language education.

Communicative competence (we shall use the traditional expression, although it should be *Communicative Competence and Performance*) is made up of two components, competence within the mind and performance within the world. Both are governed by the linguistic, extra-linguistic, socio-cultural, and pragmatic conventions accepted by a people, the so-called 'rules'. Acquiring and, subsequently, learning these mental 'rules' make up the first set of objectives which concern language teaching, independently from the language being taught and from the school system in which it is taught.

Another set of objectives is necessary for performance to take place; the development of those cognitive abilities and linguistic

skills necessary to comprehend, produce, interact, translate, summarize, etc. (the bidirectional arrow uniting the mind and world boxes in figure 4).

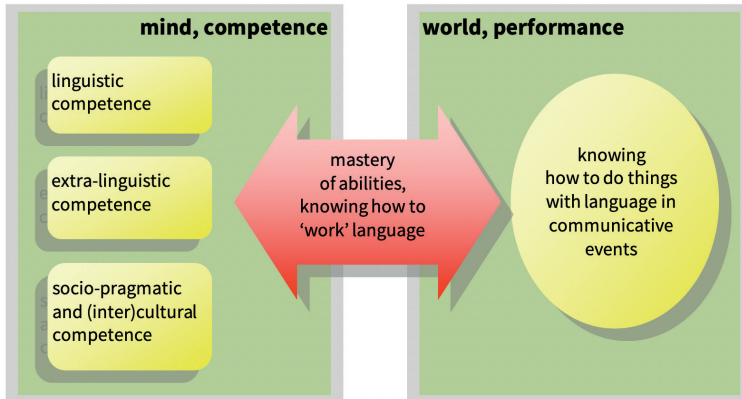


Figure 4 A model of communicative competence and performance

If the model of communicative competence and performance above is right, then:

- a. all codes and not just the verbal code are objectives of language teaching: in fact, gestures, expressions, body postures and objects are used in communication together with or even instead of language itself;
- b. sociolinguistic, pragmalinguistic and (inter)cultural 'grammars' are objectives of language teaching;
- c. the development of *language abilities*, that is, the cognitive processes underlying language *skills*, is an objective of language education (this dichotomy can be found in Widdowson 1998).

This hypothesis is central to a theory of language education and teaching. It describes the object, communicative competence, by means of a logical model while in most, if not all, school systems 'knowing a language' is defined according to local traditions. As a consequence, the results of language teaching differ from country to country, and study, work and international mobility are made more difficult.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The notion of communicative competence is Hymes', although it was also used by other authors in the early 1970s. There have been many different models of communicative competence. Canale and Swain (1980) set the standard definition for their decade, Bachman (1990) for the following one. Bagarić, and Mihaljević Djigunović (2007) survey the early evolution of the notion of communicative competence.

## Hypothesis 6. A Non-Culture-Bound Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence and Performance

When participants in a communicative event belong to different cultures, potential intercultural critical points must be detected so that communication does not lead to conflict. Making students aware of the existence of intercultural critical points and of the way to detect and face them is an objective of non-native language teaching.

This hypothesis applies differently to second, foreign, ethnic and classical language teaching as well as to the teaching of lingua francas, such as English today:

- a. in second, foreign, ethnic and classical language teaching the student belongs to language/culture 'A' and studies language/culture 'B'. Here the critical points of intercultural communication between 'A' and 'B' can be known and the appropriate behaviour can be taught;
- b. in lingua franca teaching, student 'A' learns the lingua franca in order to use it in communicative events with people from all languages/cultures. In this case, critical points cannot be detected *a priori* and cannot be taught. The objective in this case is to raise students' awareness of some of the general categories, and to teach them to observe intercultural communication in a lifelong learning perspective so that they may classify their personal experience according to the model. In other words, they must learn how to write their own textbook of intercultural competence, on the basis of the existing intercultural maps.

The intra-linguistic communicative competence and performance diagram in Hypothesis 5 must be integrated with a map of potential critical points. Figure 4 offers an example of an intercultural communication observation grid; the full model can be found in Balboni, Caon 2014.

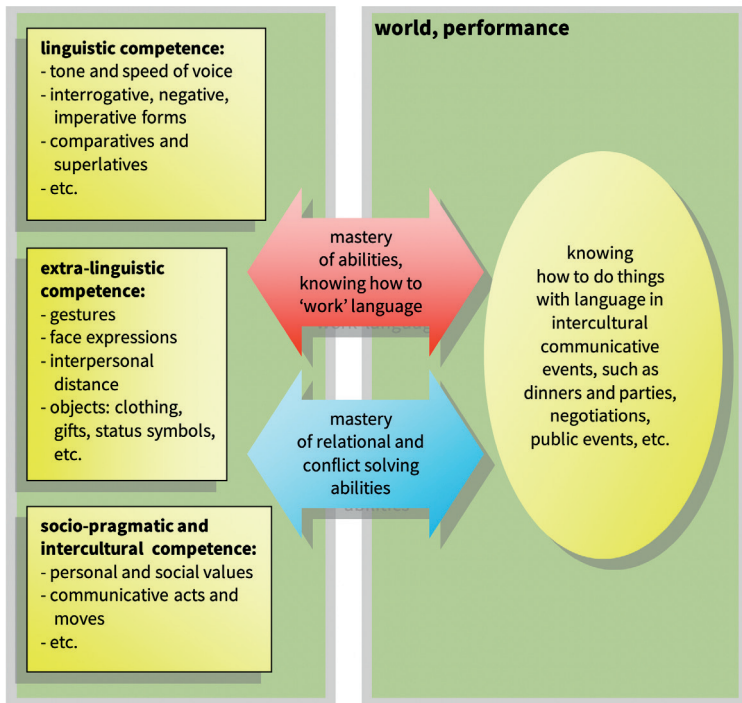


Figure 5 A model of intercultural communicative competence and performance

Both figure 4 and figure 5 describe *models*, the assumption being that they describe communicative competence and performance in any place or point in time. They are not culture-bound and thus universal as all models claim to be.

As a consequence, all traditional syllabi which do not include, for instance, extralinguistic competence or communicative moves among their objectives should start a revision process, however slow and delicate it may be, as educational systems and education decision-makers are usually rather defensive when radical transformations are proposed.

### Hypothesis 7. An Epistemological Model for Educational Linguistics

A theory must make its epistemological foundations clear and explicit so that users may evaluate both the premises and how it has been built. Two issues need to be solved:

- a. where does the knowledge used to build the framework come from? Is there a universal thesaurus of knowledge the edulinguist may use? Are there any non-culture-bound elements in the repertoire of available knowledge? (Hypothesis 7); and,
- b. how is such knowledge organized? Are all the elements on the same plane or is there a hierarchy? (Hypothesis 8).

Today, it is commonly accepted that Edulinguistics draws from four research areas as can be seen from the tables of contents of manuals and readers concerning language education and teaching (see footnote 1). These are: (a) linguistics and all its branches; (b) socio-cultural sciences which study the *object* of language/culture teaching (Hypotheses 5 and 6); (c) neuro- and psychological sciences which study the *subject* of language education, that is, those whose faculty of language must be helped to emerge (Hypothesis 2) and who aim at self-actualization (Hypothesis 4); and, (d) pedagogy and teaching methodology which provide the educational knowledge necessary to teach.

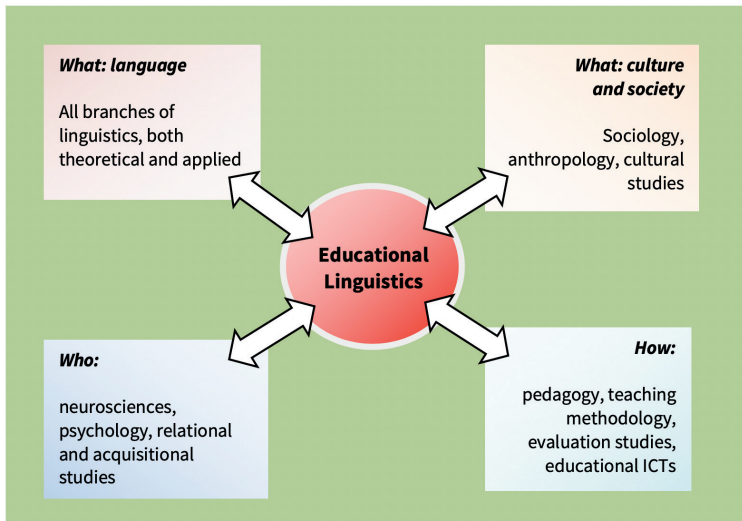


Figure 6 The epistemological diagram of educational linguistics

The traditional view is that information flows from the four research areas towards educational linguistics on the basis of the *application* principle: the linguist decides what to apply to language education and teaching, and how. This approach leads to applied linguistics, applied psycholinguistics, and language pedagogy. In application, the decision-maker falls outside the realm of educational linguistics. The opposite principle, *implication*, claims that the decision-makers, who

analyse their needs and objectives and check whether the knowledge they need is available in the outer research areas, are the educational linguists.

Implication is fundamental for a non-culture-bound framework. Once edulinguists agree on the principles, they may cancel cultural traits from the information they draw from outer sciences. These are especially relevant for the educational box in the diagram.

In picture 6 the bidirectional arrows connecting the four research areas to educational linguistics state that knowledge flows from the outer areas to the inner sphere, and feedback or new research questions flow the opposite way.

### **Hypothesis 8. A Non-Culture-Bound Model of Research and Action in Educational Linguistics**

Once knowledge has been gathered (Hypothesis 7), it must be organized according to a hierarchical principle indicating which elements are of primary importance, and which ones are secondary.

Traditional models have three levels: approach (what is language education? what does it aim at?); method (how is language education organized, in order to be implemented?); and technique (what is actually done in a class) (Anthony 1963; Puren 2010). In such a tripartite structure, the border between method and technique is rather blurred and the relation between educational linguistics and pedagogical and methodological studies is even hazier. Our theory chooses to consider only two hierarchical levels, approach and method, leaving teaching techniques out of its scope both in order to avoid ambiguity and because teaching techniques depend heavily on culture and tradition.

A theory claiming to be a universal reference point must leave any practical implementation to those who actually teach the language, provided they act consistently with the organizational lines of the *method* and the principles of the *approach*.

The graph in figure 7 translates the above into a visual diagram.



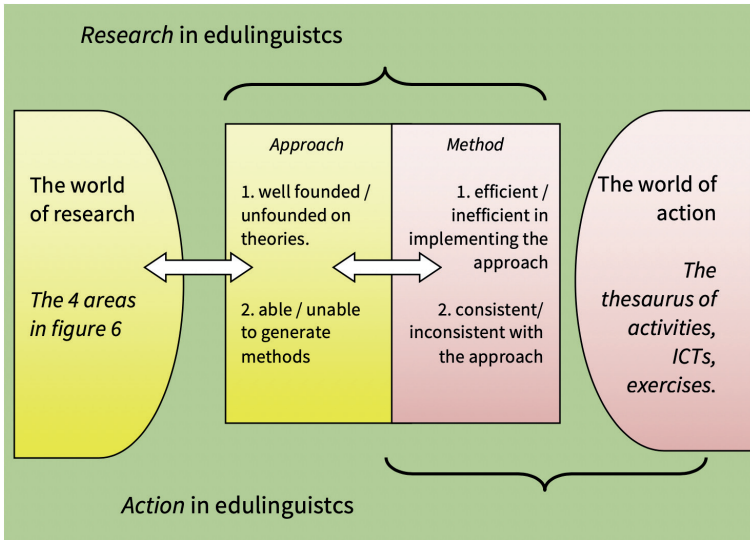


Figure 7 Research and action in Educational Linguistics

The model reads as follows:

- a. there is a *world of research* outside the field of edulinguistic research;
- b. *approach*: this is a theory of language *education* and not of language *teaching*. It provides definitions of the following: education, its general aims and specific objectives; language; the learner; and, the teacher;
- c. *method* links language education to language teaching. It provides guidelines for syllabus design, for the nature and the formats of teaching materials, for the role, nature and procedures of classroom teaching and of testing, evaluation and certification as well as for ICT use;
- d. the brace over the two boxes includes approach and method as the field of language education and language teaching research (that is, the field of this theory); this area is potentially free of culture-bound elements;
- e. the brace at the bottom of the diagram includes the field of language teaching *action* (not *research*). Suggestions and guidelines deriving from methodology as do those teaching techniques, which come from the thesaurus of teaching techniques, feed into this field and fall outside the scope of this theory. This area is heavily culture-bound.

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