Multilingual Education in Linguistically Diverse Contexts

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Title of Proposal

Developing knowledge on languages and cultures in intercomprehensive multilingual chatrooms: which role in the enhancement of multilingual education? [1]

Abstract

Since Doyé's *Reference Study* (2005), the concept of intercomprehension gained clear relevance in Language Education and the amount of publications, projects, networks, platforms are an evidence of that (Araújo e Sá, 2011). It became a complex concept which represents its richness and flexibility, but threatens the immediate understanding of its potential as a language education approach. Intercomprehension is aligned with the most recent language and education policies. However, it is still struggling to be recognized and operationalized in the educational context, due to its methodological inconsistency (De Carlo, 2013). Thus, the *Référentiel de compétences de communication plurilingue en intercompréhension* (REFIC) (De Carlo, 2015) was recently developed

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and one of its aims is to allow a consistent evaluation of the plurilingual and intercultural communicative competences involved and developed in an intercomprehensive experience.

In this study, an interactional perspective of intercomprehension is favoured. It is assumed that the interaction between students that live in different languages and cultures allows them to develop plurilingual and intercultural competences, which is intensified by new forms of communication associated to virtual mobility, such as chats, forums or blogs. In order to contribute to the piloting and further validation of REFIC, which is still in a conceptualized version, we will be analyzing the multilingual chats and forums from the session "Poliglotta? No, plurilingue!" from the Galanet platform using its categories. We will be focusing on a cognitive dimension and the research questions guiding this study will be: which knowledge on languages and cultures and how is it mobilized and developed in multilingual chatrooms in a pedagogical session on intercomprehension?

The "Poliglotta? No, plurilingue!" session took place in 2014, between February 3rd and April 10th, and was attended by 168 Secondary School students from Spain, Italy, France and Portugal, whose participation is directly related and connected with their language learning at school. There were 7 multilingual chat sessions and 64 discussion forums, which will be analyzed bearing in mind the categories from "II. Les langues et les cultures" from REFIC.

We expect to find evidence on the development of knowledge on different dimensions of language and culture, such as organization and social usage of a language and role of culture in communication. This approach puts multilingual virtual communication and interaction in the centre of learning, which is one of the trends in multilingual education that can only be fully recognized once a framework of competences in intercomprehenion in validated and adopted.

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Doyé, P. (2005). *Intercomprehension. Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe: from linguistic diversity to plurilingual education. Reference study.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe.