

Shaping the intercultural communicative profile of young foreign language students: a multidimensional analysis of their written discourse

Abstract:

Intercultural communication competence has recently been established within research and teaching as a key priority within second and foreign language teaching classrooms. More specifically, developing intercultural communication skills fosters students' intercultural as well as linguistic competence in a way that prepares them to be able to interact with speakers of other languages and from different cultures. A very important component of effective communication is the persuasiveness of the message that is conveyed with a particular aim. In the speakers' attempt to achieve persuasiveness, they make use of several means which are used to change the beliefs, attitudes, values, feelings and intentions of a person by communicative means, that is, speakers employ several persuasive strategies.

This study recorded the persuasive strategies employed by 200 EFL language students (11 years of age) at the A1 language level according to CEFR when using English to communicate with speakers of other languages than Greek with the purpose of recommending an interesting work of literature. As for the analysis of the written communication, it was carried out through the 5R approach which consists of five stages called 'Investigatory Readings', in which the researcher stressed certain elements as regards the research hypothesis and a priori goals. This particular approach, written discourse examination, was also used in several studies at the national level, which recorded the communication strategies employed by language students when producing written discourse.

The processing and analysis of the results indicated that A1 language level students made use of more rational persuasive strategies such as Authority, Model and Information in their attempt to persuade and influence others. Toward this goal, they appeared to activate this mode of persuasion through assertive speech acts including claims and assurances, which are highly relevant to their goal and the context of the study. Finally, A1 language students seemed to use mainly adjectives, periods and exclamation marks as elements of evaluation in their written discourse attempting to express directly and indirectly the judgement of their proposals.

Keywords: *Intercultural communication; Persuasive strategies; Young learners; Foreign language.*