The Impact of Mediation and the Action-oriented Approach on Language Education: The Learner’s Voice

For decades now, the teaching of an additional language is predominantly based on the development of four linguistic skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing (Fox, Cheng, & Zumbo, 2014). A much-needed paradigm shift from skills to modes of communication, namely reception, interaction, production, and mediation, was initiated by the seminal Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001) and the revised Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020) with illustrative descriptors that operationalize the use of these modes for immediate classroom application (North & Piccardo, 2016). Despite the growing interest in the concepts of the CEFR, particularly in mediation, there is a lack of empirical studies that focuses on the implication and on the learners’ experience on mediation-based tasks in the language classroom. This talk presents the findings of a qualitative study with 12 adult participants, enrolled in an English for Academic Preparation program in Ontario, Canada, who completed online 5 researcher-designed mediation-based, Action-Oriented tasks (Piccardo & North, 2019) in small groups, and were required to collaborate, to mediate text, concepts, communication, to use mediation strategies, to explain new ideas, to adapt a text, and to create a final artifact for each task. Qualitative data were collected from the transcription of video recordings of task completion, participants’ individual interviews, participants’ self-assessments as well as researcher and peer-researchers’ task observations. Findings reinforce that mediation and the Action-oriented Approach motivate learners, and also reveal an increase in learners’ social agency with strong promise for language education.

SPEAKER

Giacomo Folinazzo is a PhD Candidate in Language and Literacies Education at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto. His research interests are in the CEFR, Second Language Education, and Teacher Training, and his dissertation focuses on the impact of linguistic mediation (as presented in the CEFRCV) and the Action-Oriented Approach on language learning. He has 20 years of teaching experience internationally and took part in numerous research projects.

DATE
November 30th, 2023

TIME
3pm-4pm EST

PLACE
OISE Room 10-254

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