

A Critical Analysis of the conception of Methodological Models in International English Didactics: The Example of the "PPP Model"

Christian PUREN

Datos de contacto:

Christian Puren
Université Jean Monnet - Saint-
Etienne
christian.puren@univ-st-etienne.fr

Recibido: 07/08/2024
Aceptado: 15/11/2024

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to critically analyze the generally restrictive and prescriptive treatment of methodological models for organizing didactic units in International English Didactics (IED). The example taken is the "PPP model" (Presentation → Practice → Production), the most widely implemented in textbooks and therefore probably the most widely used by teachers of this language. Its aim is to promote the "praxeologization", which consists of teachers manipulating methodological models themselves at will, rather than reproducing them, so as to constantly adapt their practices to their action environments. In describing the PPP model, this article draws on the work of specialists in the IED field, and in critiquing it, on a conceptual framework whose elements are borrowed from various philosophers and epistemologists who have worked on modeling as a tool for dealing with complexity. The article concludes by emphasizing the need to develop, in the pre-service and ongoing training, the ability of foreign language teachers to carry out "mental praxeologizations". This would avoid reductionism and promote the didactic creativity necessary for effective language classroom practices.

KEYWORDS: International English Didactics; PPP model; praxeologization; Teacher Education.

Un análisis crítico de la concepción de los modelos metodológicos en la didáctica internacional del inglés: el ejemplo del "modelo PPP"

RESUMEN

El propósito de este artículo es un análisis crítico del tratamiento generalmente restrictivo y prescriptivo de los modelos metodológicos de organización de las unidades didácticas en Didáctica Internacional del Inglés (DII). El ejemplo tomado es el "modelo PPP", el más implantado en los libros de texto y, por tanto, sin duda el más utilizado por los profesores de esta lengua. Su objetivo es promover la "praxeologización", la cual consiste en que los profesores manipulen ellos mismos los modelos metodológicos en lugar de reproducirlos, con el fin de adaptar constantemente sus prácticas a sus entornos operativos. La descripción del modelo PPP en este artículo se basa en la lectura del trabajo de especialistas en el campo de la DII, y la crítica del modelo se basa en un marco conceptual cuyos elementos se toman prestados de diversos filósofos y epistemólogos que han trabajado sobre la modelización como herramienta para abordar la complejidad. El artículo concluye incidiendo en la necesidad de atender en la formación inicial y continua de docentes de lengua extranjera, a su capacidad de realizar "praxeologizaciones mentales", para evitar el reduccionismo y favorecer la creatividad didáctica necesaria para sus prácticas de aula efectivas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: didáctica internacional del inglés; formación de docentes; modelo PPP; praxeologización.

Acronyms

- DLC: Didactics of Languages and Cultures
- FFL: French as a Foreign Language
- IED: International English Didactics
- PBL: Project-Based Learning
- PPP: Presentation - Practice - Production
- TBL: Task-Based Learning

Introduction

The aim of this article is a critical analysis of the generally restrictive and normative treatment of methodological models –conceived as intermediate concepts between theories and practices (Puren, 2019a)–, for organizing didactic units in "International English Didactics" (henceforth IED), a particular version of what I call "Didactics of Languages and Cultures" (henceforth DLC). Its objective is to present the "praxeologization" operation, which involves teachers manipulating these models themselves at will. This being possible by introducing modifications, additions,

combination or articulation with other models, rather than reproducing them, in order to constantly adapt their practices to their action environments. It is what concerns to the realm of DLC, as part of the complexity paradigm with its multiple, heterogeneous, variable, interrelated, contradictory and context-sensitive parameters (Puren, 2019b), stated in particular by the French sociologist and philosopher Edgar Morin (1990).

The example taken here is the methodological model that is both the best known and undoubtedly the most widely used to date in the teaching of this language because it is historically linked to the communicative approach (Anderson, 2016, 2017), namely the "PPP" model (Presentation→ Practice→ Production)". But the same analysis could be carried out on the second major competing model, namely "Pre-task → Task → Post-task" model of TBL, "Task-Based Learning" (cf. e.g. Oxford 2006's synthesis, with its bibliography, or Ellis, 2019).

The third major model currently available is the natural model of the action-oriented approach outlined by the 2001 CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001, 2020), namely the PBL model, "Project-Based Learning". Unlike the other two, the fact that this is not a methodological model, but a pedagogical one, and that its fundamental principle is maximum learner autonomy (Acar, 2020, 2022; Acar & Puren, 2024) means that in principle it is protected from any normativity in the choice and organization of activities within didactic units or sequences. But deviations are always possible, all the more so as some didacticians interpret PBL as a variant of TBL, simply considering projects as more complex tasks spread over a longer period of time (e.g. Bilsborough, 2013).

IED has developed since the 1980s as specific didactics in major journals (*Applied Linguistics, Language Teaching Research, Studies in Second Language Acquisition, ELT journal, TESOL Quarterly...*) and in major English-language book collections for teachers of English as a foreign language worldwide (Longman, Cambridge University Press, Peter Lang, Oxford University Press, Routledge...). Beyond the sometimes radical oppositions between authors and the sometimes intense debates between them, IED is generally part of a shared culture, of which the importance given to the question of the organization of didactic units is precisely part.

We only realize this when we look at one culture from another. In the didactics of French as a Foreign Language (henceforth FFL), we have to go back to the audiovisual methodology of the 1960s-1970s to find considerations of didactic unit models, with the so-called "moments de la classe de langue" ("moments of language classroom") all centered on the basic dialogue:

Figure 1

Phases of the audiovisual teaching unit

Presentation → Explanation → Phonetic correction → Memorization →
Dramatization → Exploitation → Free expression

Since the end of this period, French authors of FFL textbooks have been proposing their own didactic unit structures, but these models as such have not given rise to collective debate among didacticians. In 2003, Janine Courtillon, a well-known FFL textbook author, wrote a guide for teachers, *Élaborer un cours de FFL (Creating a FFL course)* in which she proposes, in the chapter entitled "Le déroulement du cours" ("Course sequence"), what she calls "un enchaînement logique des opérations d'apprentissage" ("a logical sequence of learning operations"), which she diagrams as follows (p. 53):

Figure 2

"Logical learning sequence" (Courtillon, 2003)

Comprehension ↔ Identifications ("Repérages") → Memorization → Production

But first, right at the start of this chapter, she takes care to avoid any reproach of normativity:

[...] everyone can claim their own logic, what they consider to be coherent and effective, or choose an approach that doesn't necessarily follow a logic because they "don't believe in it" or because "nobody knows how a language is learned". (p. 52).

This is certainly a radical way of recognizing the right of any teacher to refuse any debate on the subject. Courtillon (2003) is thus showing a healthy caution, given, as we shall see, the great complexity of didactic problematics and the diversity of didactic environments, which make it not only possible but necessary in the field to have practically infinite variations in the structuring models of "didactic units" (those of textbooks) or "didactic sequences" (those constructed by the teachers themselves).

The fundamental complexity of Didactics of Languages-Cultures

The present analysis of this PPP model is situated within a theoretical framework combining the following elements:

- (1) The epistemology of complexity (Morin, 1990).
- (2) Pragmatist philosophy, which considers theory as an auxiliary to practice (Rorty, 1995).
- (3) Systemic modeling as a way of dealing with complexity (Le Moigne, 1987, 1994/2006; Walliser, 1977).
- (4) The conception of the teacher as an engineer managing the complexity of reality by designing artificial devices (Simon, 1996).
- (5) The qualitative analysis approach of Huberman and Miles (1991) leading to a modeling of practices at the end of a "selection, centering, simplification, abstraction and transformation" (pp. 35-36) of raw data observed in the field.

Finally, the present analysis constitutes an application to the PPP model of the ideas I have previously developed from this theoretical framework in an essay on modeling in DLC (Puren, 2022a).

Complexity is in fact the fundamental epistemological characteristic of the project and object of the discipline DLC, which is the intervention, for the purpose of improvement, of the process of teaching-learning-using foreign language-cultures in different action environments, i.e. for different audiences, with different objectives and in different contexts. This complexity entails a whole series of consequences at different levels, such as the following:

-In DLC, there are never simple "problems" that can be "solved", but always complex "problematics" that can only be "managed" as best as possible.

-Teachers have always spontaneously implemented an eclectic approach in their classrooms as an empirical way of managing complexity (Puren, 1994).

-The establishment in France in the early 1970s of a "didactique des langues" ("didactics of languages") opposed to both "pédagogie des langues" ("pedagogy of languages") and "linguistique appliquée" ("applied linguistics") was historically achieved through a shift from a methodological perspective to a metamethodological one, known precisely as "didactic" (Puren, 1999). From a methodological perspective, we propose optimal answers to what we consider to be problems; from a didactic perspective, we "problematize", i.e. we question the methodological questions themselves, placing all available answers in relation to variations in the environment, so as to choose each time the answer that will be the most satisfactory because it will be the most adequate. It is this fundamental complexity of DLC that makes adaptability a teacher's primary competence. As a language teacher wrote at the end of the XIXth century:

We would willingly say that the only general principle of sound pedagogy is that there is no marvelous method, no infallible recipe applicable to all cases; it's that teaching must be modified as circumstances change, and that's why there are teachers and an art of teaching. (Morel, 1886, p. 46)

Practical models and praxeological modeling

This complexity of DLC, and the adequacy paradigm it imposes on the discipline at the expense of the optimization paradigm, calls for a distinction between practical models and praxeological modeling.

Practical models come from the methodological perspective: they are models to be reproduced as they are in classroom practice. They are indispensable because they can be automated, leaving teachers with the cognitive resources they need to adapt to the actions and reactions of their learners in real time (or in slightly delayed time, maintaining an effective "mental presence" of practice time: in on-the-spot assessments of their lessons, or in their lesson preparations).

Provided, however, that these are models of limited size, i.e. processes, techniques and approaches such as:

-Putting students in a situation of active listening based on prior hypotheses about the content of a document.

-The sequence of exercises involving identification, conceptualization, application, training and reusing of new language forms (grammar, lexicon or phonetics).

-The procedure for real-time correction of oral errors (pointing out the error to the pupil, requesting his/her correction, guiding him/her towards the solution, calling on other pupils, and finally having the pupil repeat the correct form).

-In summary, all procedures designed to intensify classroom language practice as much as possible: open questions from the teacher, work in small groups, spiral progression, concentration of all activities on a single document, periodic revisions, etc.

On the other hand, the practical macro-models of established methodologies (e.g., American audio-lingual methodology, French audiovisual methodology, the communicative approach) claim to resolve all teaching problems within the same overall coherence, and they severely limit the teacher's ability to adapt in real time, since they provide him or her from the outset with all the methodological responses considered optimal. When these methodologies have been imposed –through mono-methodological training courses, official instructions or the rigorous use of textbooks that strictly implement them– they have not prevented eclectic practices. They have simply driven them underground, creating varying degrees of dissatisfaction and even guilt among teachers.

Praxeological modeling, as the expression suggests, is not product-oriented, like models, but process-oriented, and is not a matter of practice, but of *praxis*.

The concept of "praxis" has a long history in the history of ideas, appearing as far back as Plato and Aristotle, and has been used extensively in political philosophy and the philosophy of education over the XIXth century. These two fields have sometimes been strongly linked, as in the work of Brazilian pedagogue Freire (1972), who used education as an instrument of social critique and ideological emancipation.

This concept does not always have the same meaning, depending on the author. I will define it here, in a way that seems to me most relevant to the field of DLC, as:

(a) A reflexive action on reality, taking into account the ideas that guide it and the concrete constraints of this reality.

(b) The concrete effects of the activity on this reality, and transforming both the ideas and the practices of the actor himself in a recursive logic: praxis transforms the agent, who in turn modifies his praxis.

If we speak of "praxeological" models, it is because they are created by teachers in and through the actual action of teaching, so as to manage their praxis professionally in context and in real time, by means of operations known precisely as "praxeologization", which in turn enhance their professional competence.

It is exactly this operation of praxeologizing models that Durkheim (1922) describes in the following lines, which he dedicates to the project of the discipline "pedagogy":

Instead of acting on things or beings according to determined modes, we reflect on the processes of action that are thus employed, with a view not to knowing and explaining them, but to assessing what they are worth, whether they are what they should be, whether it is not useful to modify them and in what way, or even to replace them altogether with new processes. (pp. 88-89)

At the same time, this quote perfectly illustrates the pragmatic approach of DLC, which is by nature opposed to any form of applicationism, especially theoretical.

To illustrate the process of praxeologization, I will take the example of the standard exercise procedure cited above, consisting of progressive exercises for identification, conceptualization, application, practice and reuse of newly introduced language forms (for a detailed presentation of this historical model, which appeared at the very beginning of the XXth century and is later to be found in Bloom's taxonomy, cf. Puren, 2016). It is possible for textbook authors to reproduce this model as a whole in didactic units, in the common case of grammatical forms preselected by the authors. However, in classroom practice in context and in real time in the classroom, the teacher will necessarily subject it to a process of praxeologization.

For example, if students fail to conceptualize, the teacher may decide to give the explanation immediately, or refer the students to the grammatical guide at the end of the textbook, postponing practice and re-use until later. For a grammatical structure he does not know whether or not his pupils know, and at what level they have mastered it, he may, just as rationally, plan a guided re-use at the very start of the didactic sequence for diagnostic assessment purposes, followed by an application exercise if necessary. He may consider the structure too complex to be conceptualized, but decide to train the pupils to use them as they are because they feel they are useful in certain communicative situations (this is what French audiovisual methodology called "acquisitions globales"). If the grammatical structure is similar to that of the source language, the teacher may even decide to dispense with the whole exercise procedure, in an attempt to elicit immediate re-use from the pupils, etc.

A teacher trained in a didactic perspective is a teacher capable of performing mental praxeologizations of this kind, imagining highly diverse classroom contexts that generate multiple variations of models. And, as we saw in the last example, mastery of methodological models includes knowing when not to implement them: we speak in this context of "conditional knowledge", a necessary component of competence along with knowledge and know-how.

Critical analysis of the PPP model (Presentation → Practice → Production)

To introduce this PPP model to readers who may not be familiar with it, I have chosen Jason Anderson's description of it in a 2017 article, because it seems to me to be relatively consensual among its proponents. The other advantage of this article, apart from the fact that it is available online, is that the author gives a history of this model, and defends it with arguments that can be found in many other authors against the criticisms of the exclusive promoters of the competing TBL model.

Presentation: *language features (including grammar, lexis, and functional exponents) are selected and sequenced in advance for explicit instruction, typically involving contextualized presentation followed by elicited clarification of meaning, form, and use.*

Practice: *controlled practice of the feature is provided, typically including written exercises (such as gap-fills), controlled speaking practice activities (for example 'Find someone who ...'), and oral drills.*

Production: *opportunities for use of the feature are provided through free production activities that attempt to simulate real-world language usage (spoken or written) such as role-plays, discussions, email exchanges, and story writing, when correction and integrated form focus can be provided by the teacher.* (Anderson, 2017, note 1, pp. 226-227)

My criticism of this model focuses on its reduction of complexity.

A reduction of the model to its practical function, at the expense of its heuristic function

The PPP model is relevant in terms of the methodological model of the communicative approach, but from a didactic perspective, it cannot be limited to its practical function alone, i.e. simply promoting its reproduction in textbooks and classroom practices.

Another function of models is the heuristic function (Varenne, 2022; Walliser, 1997), which is implemented precisely during the activity we might call "mental praxeologization". This activity consists of "running" the model, as we say of a mathematical model that we "run" on a computer, by confronting it with different data.

In this case by imagining many different environments in terms of audiences, objectives, supports, teaching-learning conditions, pedagogical priorities or other parameters of the environment of the didactic action likely to lead to the creation of variants of the model; or conversely by imagining variations of the model and then looking for environments in which these variations would be adequate.

In this way, we can consider the modifications to the model that would be involved if learners were to decide for themselves on the presentation and take charge of it (other activities will inevitably have to be imagined beforehand):

- Applying the model not to a teaching unit or sequence, but to a point of grammar, a lexical field or phonological oppositions.
- Combining the PPP model with the TBL or PBL model in the same class sequence.
- Using one group's production as the basis for another group's presentation.
- Etc.

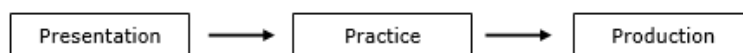
Conversely, we will be asking ourselves, for example, in what cases we might rationally decide to start with production, or with practice (we will see concrete examples of this later).

A reduction of the model to a procedure model, at the expense of other, more complex types of models

The PPP model is a "procedure" model, which can be represented as follows, with the arrows symbolizing the chronological succession of phases:

Figure 3

Standard PPP model

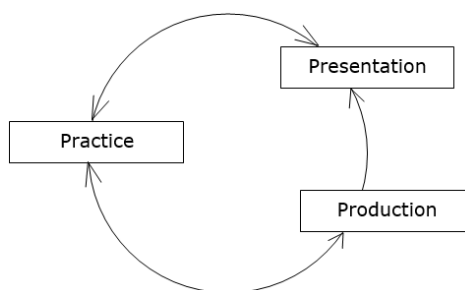


This type of model, simple, fixed and linear, severely limits didactic creativity. To develop praxeologizing activities, there are three other, more complex types of models, i.e. network, process and systemic models.

Transposing the PPP model into a network model gives the following model:

Figure 4

PPP network model



In this type of model, the elements are interrelated in a way that is neither predetermined, chronological nor hierarchical. It is possible to start with practical exercises in grammar or vocabulary, for example, to facilitate immediate comprehension of a presentation document.

A colleague working with illiterate people (adults who had attended school but had lost the ability to write in their mother tongue) told me that he sometimes began his sequences by getting them to write (Production 1) before getting them to work on their text using models (Presentation + Practice), so as to improve their text (Production 2). In fact, he considered that working on their motivation was a priority: by implementing the model Production 1 → Presentation + Practice → Production 2, his learners realized that they already had a certain competence, that they could improve it, and moreover they were working on documents similar to those they needed in their daily lives.

But this is no longer the communicative approach to which the PPP model is confined. In the action-oriented approach, the Presentation may correspond to the presentation by groups to the class of their projects; or to the presentations they have prepared as the objectives of their projects, which therefore also correspond to Productions from which the teacher can then organize collective work of the Practice type. The possible variations of the PPP model in context are innumerable.

The process model implements another complex logic: it incorporates recursion phenomena, i.e. the dynamic return of an activity to a previous activity that has been taken up again (recursion differs in this respect from feedback, which can be limited to a simple return of information).

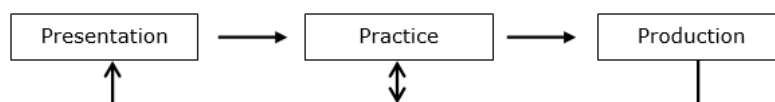
In fact, this is what all somewhat experienced teachers do:

- They will naturally return to the Presentation phase if during Practice, they realize that the Presentation was insufficient during Production.
- They will likewise return to the Practice phase if, during Production, they realize that certain exercises from Practice need to be repeated.
- Following the final evaluation of the PPP sequence, which reveals any shortcomings in the appropriation of the linguistic forms introduced and worked on, they may even repeat the Presentation, possibly using some of the learners' Productions for this new Presentation.

The resulting process model, which incorporates one of the basic forms of complexification, namely recursivity, is then as follows:

Figure 5

PPP process model



The other form of complex model is the systemic model, whose core is a network, but which also includes inputs and outputs. The resulting process model, which incorporates one of the basic forms of complexification, namely recursivity, is then as follows:

Figure 6

Systemic PPP model



This would be a didactic unit or sequence in which the Presentation would be used to fuel core Practice activities that are more varied and complex than simple language exercises. This is not a very speculative hypothesis.

In fact, it is a model that has been widely used since the early XXth century, because it is the most suitable for any unit or sequence in which the priority is no longer language work – a priority in the early stages of learning – but the discovery of culture through work on authentic documents. This Practice with cultural documents,

essential at advanced learning levels, is then the most important phase of the methodological model, consisting of an articulation between comprehension (written and/or oral) and collective oral commentary in class. In this case, the final Production for learners is limited to a personal piece of written work that takes up or extends the classroom Practice. However, we are no longer in the context of the communicative approach, which, like the American audio-lingual methodology and the French audiovisual methodology, was developed specifically for the early stages of learning, but in the context of the French "méthodologie active" ("active methodology"), the official methodology in French school teaching throughout the first half of the 20th century (Puren, 1988, 3rd part).

This doubly reductive epistemological conception of the PPP model is strongly linked, in the developments of most IED specialists, to a series of concrete limitations which it is very difficult to know whether they are the cause, or on the contrary the consequence, or both recursively.

By way of arguments, four major limitations are described below:

(1) To the design of teaching units in textbooks, at the expense of classroom sequences prepared and carried out by the teachers themselves.

IDE specialists have chosen the particular approach of complexifying theoretical debates among themselves on reductionist models from the practical point of view. One can seriously question the real interest, for teacher training, of these theoretical debates which have for practical references only didactic units of textbooks. The fact is that the development of textbooks, like teachers' practices, is subject to much more complex constraints and logic than the simple application of a theory, whatever it may be.

Three of these logics are highlighted below alongside their consequences:

- (a) Each instructional unit in the textbook must be constructed strictly on the same model as all the others. The consequence is that language teachers cannot then bring into play the concrete praxeologization that is indispensable for managing the complexity of teaching-learning practices in the classroom.
- (b) All the contents of the same teaching unit must be consistent with each other, so as to create a synergy effect. If we apply the PPP model, which is a linear procedure model (the phases are predefined and their chronological order predetermined). The consequence is that the organization of language content activities within the didactic unit is very rigid. If teachers are to have any flexibility in their classroom practices while using a textbook, then at least the Practice section must be conceived as a module.
- (c) Each didactic unit must be, if not independent of the previous one, at least "self-sufficient". The consequence is that the PPP model is limited to the limits of the didactic unit, without taking into account the links that teachers must establish between their successive class sequences.

(2) To the early stages of learning, at the expense of more advanced levels.

The PPP model is not very useful for the more advanced levels, as it becomes impossible to sustain a grammatical program –the greatest advantage of this model–

once all fundamental language structures have already been covered. The TBL model can then be more easily imposed, alone or alternating with the PPP model.

(3) To the didactics of language, at the expense of the didactics of culture.

This argument is related to the previous one: the PPP model is no longer relevant at the advanced levels of language learning, in that the documents are no longer simple supports for the presentation of language forms, but become representatives of the foreign culture. Each literary document, chosen for its cultural interest, became the sole object of a macro-task of cultural and linguistic exploitation by means of a collective commented reading. This cultural exploitation goes far beyond what the PPP model foresees in "Presentation", and it precedes its language exploitation by means of exercises on selected forms in the document. But one could just as well consider as central the complex macro-task of cultural exploitation of the text that its collective commentary in class aims at, and propose for this same active methodology the following model, of which the TBL would then become historically a variant:

Figure 7

Model-PTP procedure

Pre-text → Text → Post-Text

(4) To a single methodology (the communicative approach), at the expense of others that are sometimes more suitable, and at the expense of two complex methodological approaches, multimethodological and plurimethodological (Puren, 2022b).

The adequacy paradigm requires us to consider not only variations within a given methodological model, but (chronological) articulations and (simultaneous) combinations between several methodological models.

A certain consensus among IDE scholars is that the communicative approach implements the PPP model. However, the notions of "Presentation", "Practice" and "Production" should not be reduced to the communicative approach, where the three elements are described and linked in a certain way. The interest of these notions, for didactic reflection and teacher training, lies precisely in their capacity, when maintained at their maximum level of abstraction, to describe and design sequences that are very diversified in terms of approaches and contents.

In the Social Action-Oriented Approach/project pedagogy, for example, which is a complex version of PBL, the Presentation will be that of the project once the teacher and his or her learners have designed it together. It will also be the Presentation made by some students of documents they have selected on their own, to convince the others that they are interesting for the documentation of the project. It will also be the Presentation by the different groups of the results of the partial tasks they have carried out separately. It will be the Presentation of their final group productions to the whole class, or the Presentation of the collective class project to the outside world. During the entire sequence that will be devoted to individual,

group and collective self-assessments at the end of each project, there will certainly be moments of Presentation of these assessments.

As soon as it emerged, many IED didacticians realized that the standard PPP model was too reductive, even in the context of the communicative approach, and proposed more complex variants. Readers will easily find some of the examples I have proposed above in the following passage from the 4^e edition (2007) of J. Harmer's IED training textbook, *The practice of English Language Teaching* (1st ed. 1983), in which he cites empirical responses to the theoretical criticisms that have been made of this model, and which he has just recalled:

In response to these criticisms many people have offered variations on PPP and alternatives to it. As long ago as 1982 Keith Johnson suggested the "deep-end strategy" as an alternative (Johnson, 1982), where by encouraging the students into immediate production (throwing them in at the deep end), you turn the procedure on its head. The teacher can now see if and where students are having problems during this production phase and return to either presentation or practice as and when necessary after the production phase is over. A few years later, Donn Byrne suggested much the same thing (Byrne 1986, p. 3), joining the three phases in a circle. Teachers and students can decide at which stage to enter the procedure (2007, p. 66).

But this passage illustrates the limitation of the PPP model to its practical function, a limitation that appeared to me to be general among the IED specialists whose work I consulted: what is cited here by J. Harmer are variants produced by specialists; the heuristic process of variation that teachers themselves constantly carry out in their classrooms by means of real-time praxeologization operations is not taken into account.

This passage also illustrates the lack of consideration for the epistemological dimension, which should be present in any didactic reflection: the variants presented are not put into perspective within the framework of a typology of models.

The intensity of the debates between the promoters of the various models and their variants seems in IED to have made them forget the need for a debate on the very concept of "model" and on the use of the modeling process in DLC research, teaching and training.

As for the four concrete limitations I listed above, I have not seen them systematically pointed out by IED specialists either, even though they drastically reduce the scope of their proposals.

Conclusion

According to the rationale discussed above, it is about considering that beyond the conception and use of models in general in DLC, it is up to each foreign language teacher to build their own models of didactic units, and in particular didactic sequences. Similarly, the students can participate in this models' construction, for which training in praxeological modeling is necessary.

The PPP model functions for many IDE instructors as a complexity reduction model. They conceive it as a "scientific" model to be reproduced, and not as a

heuristic model whose multiple possible variations are to be tested, explored, or manipulated in context.

Discussions about the best model of didactic unit are particularly intense among IDE specialists about the PPP model. These discussions are futile because the interest of any model in DLC is to allow a maximum of internal variations and external articulations-combinations with other models. Only then can it enable researchers to adapt to the complexity of their objects of study, and teachers to adapt to the complexity of managing teaching-learning processes.

This requires, among other things, moving from the optimization paradigm to the adequacy paradigm. That is, moving from considering that there are "problems" to be solved, and we look for the absolute best solution for each of them, to considering that there are only "problematics" to be managed, and we look for a maximum of possible management modes for each of them.

This also requires abandoning all normative pretensions and admitting that teachers can only be offered didactic tools, *i.e.* tools for observation, analysis, interpretation, intervention and evaluation. It's up to teachers alone to select the tools that will be most appropriate and therefore most effective, according to their own goals, objectives, devices and all the other parameters of their teaching-learning environment.

The history of CSD is strongly marked by the constant obsession of its players to master complexity by reducing it. And the privileged tool of reductionism is applicationism: one starts from an element of the didactic problematic in order to extend its logic to the whole problematic.

For the present contribution to RIFOP, a conclusion concerning teacher training seems all the more appropriate as this problematic has naturally appeared several times in the course of the present text.

Beginning teachers cannot do without methodological models that are immediately applicable to their classrooms, but there is a risk that these models will become fossilized. For this reason, at least at the start of their careers, they tend to follow strictly the models proposed in the textbooks they use, whereas a teacher's level of competence in using his or her textbooks is proportional to the number and intensity of the variations he or she is able to make to the models implemented there by the authors (Puren, 2015).

The praxeologization exercise therefore appears to be a privileged initial training activity, so that novice teachers arrive in their classrooms with a minimum ability to vary the proposed models in context. It can be based on classroom observations, textbook analyses, case studies, or even joint classroom preparations which are then compared with their actual implementation in the field. For all these types of exercise, experienced teachers have a clear advantage in continuing education, since each can draw on his or her own experience.

When we speak of initial or continuing training, we usually mean "practical" training. But it is more precisely "praxeological" training that future teachers need, at least if it is conceived, as it should be, not as methodological training, *i.e.* training in the reproduction of methodological models, but as truly didactic training.

References

- Acar, A. (2020). The implementation of educational projects in social-action-based learning. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry*, 11(4), 599–617. <https://doi.org/10.17569/tojqi.767559>
- Acar, A. (2022). Syllabus Design in the Action-oriented Curriculum. *Educational Policy Analysis and Strategic Research*, 17(1), 28-39. <https://doi.org/10.29329/epasr.2022.248.2>
- Acar, A. & Puren, C. (2024). *The Social Action-Oriented Approach in Language Teaching: from Social Goals to Practices*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Anderson, J. (2016). Why practice makes perfect sense: the past, present and potential future of the PPP paradigm in language teacher education. *ELT Education and Development*, 19, 14-22. www.elted.net/uploads/7/3/1/6/7316005/3_vol.19_anderson.pdf.
- Anderson, J. (2017). A potted history of PPP with the help of ELT Journal. *ELT Journal* 71(2), 218-227. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccw055>
- Bilsborough, K. (2013). TBL and PBL: Two learner-centred approaches. www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/teachers/knowing-subject/articles/tbl-and-pbl-two-learner-centred?page=1. [Undated article on the British Council website; the year indicated is the year of the first reader reaction.].
- Byrne, D. (1986). *Teaching Oral Skills*. Pearson Education Ltd.
- Council of Europe (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Modern Languages Division. Cambridge University Press.
- Council of Europe (2020). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Companion volume*. Council of Europe Publishing.
- Courtyllon, J. (2003). *Élaborer un cours de FLE*. Hachette.
- Durkheim, É. (1922). *Éducation et sociologie*. Librairie Félix Alcan. <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k813131/>
- Ellis, R. (2019). Towards a modular language curriculum for using tasks. *Language Teaching Research*, 23(3), 454-475. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688187653>
- Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Seabury Press.
- Harmer, J. (2007). *The practice of English Language Teaching*. 4th ed. Pearson-Longman.
- Huberman, A. M. & Miles, M. B. (1991). *Analyse des données qualitatives*. De Boeck-Wesmael.
- Johnson, K. (1982). The deep-end strategy in communicative language teaching. In K. Johnson, *Communicative Syllabus Design and Methodology*. Pergamon Institute of English. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/37.2.184>
- Le Moigne, J.-L. (1987). Qu'est-ce qu'un modèle ? *Confrontations psychiatriques*. www.intelligence-complexite.org/fileadmin/docs/lemoigne2.pdf.

- Le Moigne, J.-L. (2006). *La théorie du système général. Théorie de la modélisation*. (Original work published in 1994). www.intelligence-complexite.org/inserts/ouvrages/0609tsgtm.pdf
- Morel, L. (1886). Conférence de M. Bréal. *RELV [Revue de l'Enseignement des Langues Vivantes]*, 3(1886-1887), 44-49.
- Morin, E. (1990). *Introduction à la pensée complexe*. ESF éditeur.
- Oxford, R. (2006). Task-Based Language Teaching and Learning: An Overview. *Asian EFL Journal*, 8(3), 94-121. www.researchgate.net/publication/237259483.
- Puren, C. (1988). *Histoire des méthodologies de l'enseignement des langues*. Nathan-CLE international. Available at: www.aplv-languesmodernes.org/spip.php?article813
- Puren, C. (1994). *La didáctica de las lenguas extranjeras en la encrucijada de los métodos. Ensayo sobre el eclecticismo*. Trad. esp. 2021. Available at: www.christianpuren.com/mes-travaux/1994e-es/
- Puren, C. (1999.) La didactique des langues-cultures étrangères entre méthodologie et didactologie. *Les Langues Modernes*, 3, 26-41. Available at: www.researchgate.net/publication/267720744
- Puren, C. (2015). *Manuels de langue et formation des enseignants. Document 3: Échelle des niveaux de compétence de l'enseignant dans l'utilisation de son manuel*. Available at: www.christianpuren.com/mes-travaux/2015e/
- Puren, C. (2016). *La procédure standard d'exercitation en langue*. Available at: www.christianpuren.com/mes-travaux/2016c/
- Puren, C. (2019a). La didáctica en la formación del profesor: entre las teorías y las prácticas, los modelos. En A. Leal et al., *A Linguística na Formação do Professor: das teorias às práticas* (pp. 23-32). FLUP. Available at: www.christianpuren.com/mes-travaux/2019i-es/
- Puren, C. (2019b). L'épistémologie de la didactique des langues-cultures, une épistémologie complexe pour discipline complexe. In A. M. O'Connell & C. Chaplier (coord.), *Épistémologie à usage didactique, Langues de spécialité (secteur LANSAD)* (pp. 187-195). L'Harmattan. Available at: www.christianpuren.com/mes-travaux/2022f/www.christianpuren.com/mes-travaux/2022e/
- Puren, C. (2022a). *Modélisation, types généraux et types didactiques de modèles en didactique complexe des langues-cultures. Essai*. Available at: www.christianpuren.com/mes-travaux/2022f/
- Puren, C. (2022b). *From eclecticism to the complex management of methodological variation in didactics of languages-cultures*. Available at: www.christianpuren.com/mes-travaux/2022g-en/
- Rorty, R. (1995). *L'espoir au lieu du savoir. Introduction au pragmatisme*. Albin Michel.
- Simon, H. A. (1996). *The Sciences of the Artificial*. MIT Press.
- Varenne, F. (2022). Comparer les modèles à l'aide du vecteur caractéristique: fonction, nature, principe et usage des modèles. *Nature Sciences Sociétés*, 30(1), 93-102. <https://doi.org/10.1051/nss/2022014>
- Walliser, B. (1977). *Systèmes et modèles. Introduction critique à l'analyse de systèmes. Essai*. Seuil.