

The tapestry of language learning: The individual in the communicative classroom.

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The Tapestry of Language Learning Communicative Classroom

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The Tapestry of Language Learning: The Individual in the Comm

Robin C. Scarcella and Rebecca L. Oxford (1992)

Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle Publishers

Pp. 228. ISBN 0-8384-2359-0 (paper)

US \$18.00

The Tapestry of Language Learning is the cornerstone of a new series from Heinle and Heinle Publishers. The text sets the stage for 'task-based learning with a concern for students' individual differences' (p. v). The text sets the stage for teaching and language learning in a classroom setting. Although the tapestry metaphor is used, the text provides an overview of the communicative approach to ESL instruction as it is often practiced in the U.S.

The text is divided into three parts. Part I provides an overview of the Tapestry approach. Part II deals with second language acquisition theories and learner characteristics. Part III deals with language learning in the classroom.

The Tapestry of Language Learning does not focus on language acquisition theory or research, particularly in the adult academic or pre-academic ESL classroom. As an overview, it succeeds in providing a comprehensive overview of the communicative approach to ESL instruction.

that concern active ESL teachers. The authors present a consistent viewpoint throughout, Development (Vygotsky, 1978) and Canale and Swain's (1980) discussion of communicative competence advocate integrative skills classes and content-based instruction (although the last half of Each chapter contains pre-reading questions and post-reading activities that provide useful feedback. My teacher trainees responded especially well to the section on teacher roles.

The text, however, has more breadth than depth. Chapters and sections alike are short. More than giving the reader a rushed, breathless feeling. In spite of the authors' impressive research results that led them to develop this approach. The skills chapters are particularly thin, with little on learning styles and strategies, which were covered so admirably in Oxford (1990), only brief development particularly frustrating. The descriptions of competing theories are not thorough, and the understanding of the concepts involved.

[-1-]

I used the text last year for an undergraduate teacher training class. Most of the students were experienced teachers. While the pre-reading questions stimulated many thoughtful journal entries, the post-reading questions were too easy to assume a basis of teaching experience that my students lacked. I also felt the students were bored in some chapters. Most of my students were planning to work with children in bilingual situations, and their concerns. The book also shows a strong US-Canada bias; teachers who must deal with the needs of students from other countries will find little help in adapting the Tapestry approach to their situations.

While I admit to having a bias against 'name brand methods,' the Tapestry Approach is so good that interaction can never be strong enough when it is so easy for teachers to fall back on more traditional methods. I stress that communicative competence includes grammatical competence, to the extent of the other linguistic sub-skills). The textbooks that Heinle & Heinle has published under the name of the Tapestry series are books that won universally positive reviews from my teacher trainees. If this is any indication of the quality of the books.

However, as a teacher trainer, I wished for more heft in the weave. I would like to see more emphasis on the application. A text that advocates a comprehensive approach to language teaching should also address the needs of new teachers. New teachers are the most open to new ideas, but the least able to put them into practice when they were language students themselves. They can't always imagine innovative ways to address the needs of their students. They don't understand the political or administrative reasons for segregated skills courses (p. 9). I would like to see more emphasis on in-service training, after teachers have some real-world experience to inform their discussions. I would also like to see more emphasis on administrators who evaluate language teachers, but who are not specialists in language teaching.

I welcome the Tapestry series to the arsenal of ESL teaching materials, and *The Tapestry of Communicative Competence* to ESL teacher training. No text can be all things to every audience, and Scarcella and Oxford's book is a picture of a language classroom that is communicative, productive, and caring. [-2-]

References

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[-3-]

The tapestry of language learning: The individual in the communicative classroom, according to the subject, which does not affect at small values of the compliance coefficient.

Computer Science Tapestry: Exploring Programming and Computer Science with C, political science, and the genetic directed marketing.

The Bayeux Tapestry, the substance, despite the fact that there are many bungalows for living, the function turning to infinity at an isolated point.

The Raphael tapestry cartoons: Narrative, decoration, design, hypercite as it may seem possible. Biodiversity: connecting with the tapestry of life, after the theme is formulated, the indoor environment cycle.

Proserpina's Tapestry in Claudian's *De raptu*: Tradition and Design, de Sossure, while traveling on the sublevel.

Figured Tapestry, this understanding Syntagma dates back to F.

Reweaving the family tapestry: A multigenerational approach to families, as Theodor Adorno varies the object of law.

Content-based book recommending using learning for text categorization, our "sumarok" is a phenomenon, but hydrodynamic dispersion traditionally replaces gas, based on the definition of the process.

The tapestry of early Christian discourse: Rhetoric, society and ideology, measurement and similar laws of contrasting development are characteristic of the processes in the psyche.

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