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"Kognitívne aspekty vyučovania materinského jazyka v primárnej edukácii", Ľudmila Liptáková, Prešov 2012 : [recenzja]

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**Review of the publication:
Ľudmila Liptáková,
“Kognitívne aspekty vyučovania
materinského jazyka v primárnej edukácii”
[Cognitive Aspects of Teaching Mother
Tongue in Primary Education]**

The monograph, *Cognitive Aspects of Teaching Mother Tongue in Primary Education* (2012), is another significant publication by Ľudmila Liptáková, a Professor in the Department of Communicative and Literary Education at the University of Prešov. The book is a synthesis of the author's theoretical and empirical research in the field of linguistics and language pedagogy, which includes the results of numerous scientific and research projects. The aim of the publication, as stated by the author, is to analyze and interpret such aspects and relations of language-communication education that are based on the relationship between language and cognitive abilities of pupils, and that intentionally lead to it.

Ľudmila Liptáková introduces a didactic conception of teaching the mother tongue, as a reaction to) the present-day educational system in Slovakia, and the current needs of pupils. Living in the knowledge society requires good communicative as well as mental flexibility, the ability to adapt to demanding conditions, critical thought and the creation of a strong system of moral values. For this reason, the author emphasizes a cognitive aspect in designing content and procedures for mother-tongue teaching. She points out that the inseparable relationship between language and cognition reflected in a child's ontogenesis cannot remain without its reflection in language-communication education. In this regard, she presents convincing arguments and justifications in

favour of a cognitive approach in didactics of mother tongue for primary education.

The first chapter, entitled *Cognitive Aspect in Language-Communication Education*, deals with the relationship between language and cognition from the points of view of cognitively oriented linguistics, pedagogy and psychology, due to the fact that these disciplines are part of the conceptual curriculum of the mother tongue. Building on the analysis of the cognitive aspect, Ľ. Liptáková specifies the basic features of cognitive education of the mother tongue and explains the impact of applying cognitive linguistics to the educational process. The integrated development of the cognitive and communicative competence of pupils is an important part of the presented didactic conception. Special attention is paid to the stimulation of a pupil's metacognitive processes in order to prepare him/her to communicate effectively, to learn and to live in a society as well. After presenting the linguistic, pedagogical and psychological conceptual starting points of cognitive education, the author shifts the focus to the cognitive taxonomy of educational objectives. This taxonomy serves as the basis for a cognitive approach to the categorization of language-communication curricula of the mother tongue.

The following subsection illustrates how the indicated conceptual starting points are reflected on the level of the didactic system. Ľ. Liptáková provides a look at the new didactic *Integrative Cognitive-Communicative and Experience Conception*, which was introduced in the collective publication *Integrovaná didaktika slovenského jazyka a literatúry pre primárne vzdelávanie* [*Integrated Didactics of Slovak Language and Literature for Primary Education*] (Liptáková et al., 2011). The author highlights the need for a new conception which would reflect the dynamics of changing social and scientific systems. The analysis and characterization of selected parts of the conception are supported by various domestic and international research sources as well as the author's own research activities.

The second chapter, entitled *Cognitive Approach to Categorization of the Mother Tongue Curriculum*, deals with the structuring of curricula in order to make the learning process effective. As a reaction to the cur-

rent state of teaching the Slovak language in primary school, the author provides an overview of different criteria for categorizing curricula of mother tongue. The presented categorization of curricula is based on the categories of knowledge dimension in the revised Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives. The further subsections are devoted to the determination and categorization of the curricula, in particular content areas of teaching the mother tongue; meaning the areas of communicative competence. This involves the development of a pupil's productive textual competence and receptive textual competence, as well as partial speech competences: phonetic-phonological, orthoepic, orthographic, morphological, lexical and syntactic competence. These competences represent the complex of a pupil's abilities used in text reception and production. The focus is put on the practical application of presented metalingual and metacommunicative terms rather than on memorization of definitions.

In the third chapter, entitled *Reflection of Cognitive Function of the Language within the Content of Language-Communication Education*, the author presents the results of theoretical and empirical research exploring the possibilities of applying the principles of cognitive linguistics to the process of designing mother tongue curricula. Special attention is paid to text comprehension, especially comprehension of non-literary informational texts, as the key area of mother tongue curricula. Ľ. Liptáková argues that effective comprehension of any text requires the reconciliation of language and cognitive processes as well as the stimulation of metacognitive processes. Many of the author's research findings are presented as recommendations for developing the comprehension of informational (instructional) texts by primary school pupils. In this regard, word-formation motivation is considered to be a reception support and one of the possible means of text comprehension. Research findings and their implications are applicable in the development of a pupil's reading literacy as well as in the development of his/her general learning skills.

The subsections that follow detail the possibilities of language-communication education in order to demonstrate the cognitive function of language through the use of vocabulary. To reveal the formation of

a pupil's linguistic picture of the world, the author has applied a prototype approach focused on the connotative meaning of lexical items. Building on the results of derivative research and using metaphoric derivatives, she also projects the way of developing a conceptual system for primary school pupils.

The final chapter, entitled *Cognition in Language-Communication Education*, deals with the subject of didactics and analysis of educational process from the viewpoint of the cognitive and communication framework, "Evocation – Realization of Meaning – Reflection", and the significance of its application in the parallel development of a pupil's communicative, cognitive and metacognitive abilities. The result of the author's effort to create and introduce the conception of cognitive education of mother tongue can be found in the final summary, in which she proposes the procedure for designing the integrated development of primary school pupils' language and cognitive abilities.

Prof. Ľudmila Liptáková's monograph provides deep insight into the didactic conception of teaching the mother tongue, emphasizing the cognitive aspects of education. It is based on the author's theoretical and empirical research, which is presented as arguments supporting the application of a cognitive approach. As the author finally concludes, by preferring cognitive aspects of education, she does not deny other aspects of complex development of any person. Cognitively oriented didactics of the mother tongue and intentional stimulation of pupils' language and cognitive abilities are presented as a precondition for success not only in educational, but also in everyday-life situations. For this reason, we consider this monograph to be an important and significant publication dealing with still very current questions of effective teaching and learning processes. Its contribution lies in its many professionally and clearly formulated recommendations, suggestions and instructions that can be appreciated by the scientific community as well as students and teachers of Slovak (or generally of any other) language in primary school. Using the Slovak language material provides an opportunity to compare the conception with lingual-didactic concepts of different mother tongues. Moreover, many new and valuable theoretical inspirations and starting

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points offer a perspective for further investigation, development or even application in the area of theory and practice of teaching the mother tongue.

Reviewed publication:

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