Teaching World Language Topics through the Lens of Social Justice

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Webinar
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Webinar Agenda

1. Relationship between Social Justice and World Language and Rationale.

2. Key Concepts, Categories, and Activities.


4. Questions
Words and Actions:
Teaching Languages Through
the Lens of Social Justice

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Foreword by Sonia Nieto
What is social justice?

“A philosophy, an approach, and actions that embody treating all people with fairness, respect, dignity, and generosity.”

(Nieto, 2010, p. 46).
Four Components of Social Justice Education

1. It *challenges, confronts, and disrupts* misconceptions, untruths, and stereotypes that lead to structural inequality and discrimination.

2. It provides all students with the *resources* necessary to learn to their full potential.

3. It draws on the *talents and strengths* that students bring to their education.

4. It creates a *learning environment* that promotes critical thinking and agency for social change.

(Nieto, 2010)
Key Concepts

“If we are to teach for and about social justice, understanding what it looks, sounds, and feels like is critical” (Wade, 2007, p. 4).

- Equality
- Equity
- Privilege
- Marginalization
- Oppression
- Dehumanization
Key Concepts

- **Equality** = equal access to funding, opportunities, resources, assistance.

- **Equity** = recognition of differences among students and appropriate differentiation for students.

- **Privilege** = advantages, favors, and benefits based on gender, race, class, sexual orientation, native language, and other identity markers.

- **Marginalization** = process of relegating people to the “margins” of society and confining them to an inferior social position.

- **Oppression** = unjust exertion of power over a group

- **Dehumanization** (Freire, 1993) = the taking away of one’s humanity
Link between Social Justice and WL

- Teaching for social justice helps us to move beyond teaching languages for pragmatic and instrumental purposes.

- Global Competence: “The ability to communicate with respect and cultural understanding in more than one language” (ACTFL, 2014).

- Intercultural Communicative Competence: An individual can see relationships among different cultures and mediate among them (Byram, 2000).
Rationale *aligned with Nieto’s (2010) four components of social justice

- The world language classroom is uniquely suited to challenge, confront, and disrupt misconceptions, untruths, and stereotypes that lead to structural inequality and discrimination based on social and human differences.

- WL teachers are halfway there
  - Direct comparisons, question stereotypes and myths students have of people of other cultures.

- The world language classroom has great potential to provide all students with the resources necessary to learn to the full potential, including both material and emotional resources.
  - “Care, love and solidarity – or the absence of them – are among the constitutive building blocks of one’s identity” (Apple, 2013).
Rationale

- The world language classroom regularly draws on the talents and strengths that students bring to their education.

- Students are regularly invited to look at their own cultures and identities.

- Extend beyond the visible to the invisible.

- The world language classroom easily transforms into a learning environment that promotes critical thinking and agency for social change.

- Teachers do more than teach content; they teach students how to think, whom to trust, what to believe, what to value, and more.
Our Categories of Social Justice Issues

1. **Products**: Social justice issues that focus on access to and relationships with tangible and intangible resources.

2. **Practices**: Social justice issues that arise from how people interact.

3. **Perspectives**: Social justice issues stemming from attitudes and values.
Some examples of the 3 Ps and themes of social justice

❖ Products: access to clean water and fresh foods, immigration laws, educational systems and language policies.


❖ Perspectives: impact of beliefs about the humanity of individual groups on access to employment or other opportunities, evolution of beliefs about homosexuality and marriage laws, ways that politicians and political writers express beliefs through speeches.
Our Categories of Social Justice Activities

1. **Problem-posing activities**: Focus on discussion, critical inquiry, and interactive participation (Reagan & Osborn, 2002).

2. **Text analysis activities**: Activities with not just the written word, but also the spoken word, audio and videotape, media elements, images, etc. (Kramsch, 1993).

3. **Rights and policy investigations**: Explores how groups and individuals might be affected by externally-imposed rules and regulations, often in the form of policy and laws.
4. **Individual experience investigations**: The activities allow students to see the individual perspective in new ways through face-to-face interviews, simulations, social media, online communities, etc.

5. **Reflective activities**: Journaling, multicultural awareness tasks, comparisons to others, etc. Allow students to see how social justice issues affect (or don’t affect) their daily lives.
Social Justice in the WL Classroom

• What are some textbook topics that work well with topics of social justice?

• How can a vocabulary list be more than just a vocabulary list? How does social justice come into play with vocabulary?

• How can action be a part of the WL classroom? How can teachers and students take the next step?
Backward Design

🔹 Identify Desired Results
🔹 Determine Acceptable Evidence
🔹 Plan Learning Experiences and Instructions
Our Steps to Adapting a Textbook Chapter

**Step 1:** Identify the point of entry, connect with state and national standards, and identify the social justice take-away understandings.

As you look through the text:

- Is there a **history behind this cultural topic** that might reveal past or present inequalities?

- Are there **accepted truths** about this topic that can be challenged?

- Is this a topic that **people from different groups** might view differently?
Les saines habitudes du monde francophone

Point of Entry: Healthy Lifestyles

Social Justice Take-Away Understandings:

✦ There are numerous views of a healthy lifestyle in the francophone world.

✦ The ability to maintain a healthy lifestyle is dependent on access.

✦ The empowerment of individuals in their own communities can lead to sustainable sources of fresh foods and income.
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World Readiness Standards:
- Interpersonal Communication
- Interpretive Communication
- Relating Cultural Practices to Perspectives
- Making Connections
- Cultural Comparisons
- School and Global Communities

Types of Social Justice Issues Addressed:
- Products
- Practices
- Perspectives

Social Justice Activity Types:
- Rights and Policy Investigations
- Problem-posing Activities
Our Steps to Adapting a Textbook Chapter

**Step 2:** Identify social justice and language objectives.

- What should students know and how will they make sense of topics of social justice in this unit?
- Is there any overlap between these social justice and the textbook-provided language objectives? Can they be articulated jointly?
Social Justice Objectives

- Students will be able to explain the way in which socioeconomic status influences French-speakers’ ability to maintain healthy lifestyles in France, Canada, Senegal and Haiti.

- Students will be able to discuss the mission of Heifer International and how empowerment of people in their own communities can have long-lasting benefits.

- Students will be able to recognize and describe how their agency as students to work toward sustainability in Haiti and Senegal can carry over to agency in other aspects of their own lives.

- Students compare and contrast the availability of fresh foods in large cities, such as Montreal and Paris, with large cities in the United States.
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- **Language Objectives:**
  - Students will be able to name foods, activities, and habits related to a range of healthy and unhealthy lifestyles.
  - Students will be able to describe their healthy and unhealthy practices using reflexive verbs.

- **Social Justice and Language Objectives:**
  - Students will be able to describe the types of animals and resources they will provide for Haiti and Senegal through Heifer International and how such as resources can be used by the community.
  - Students will be able to list and describe the types of foods that are often missing urban areas due to food deserts.
Our Steps to Adapting a Textbook Chapter

**Step 3:** Create and adapt the assessments.

**Option 1:** Use and adapt the publisher-supplied assessments.
- Alter the context or background material of the assessment items.
- Extend the assessment to add a social justice component.

**Option 2:** Develop original summative and formative authentic assessments.
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- **French (Novice-Mid to Novice-High) Integrated Performance Assessment**

- *Les saines habitudes du monde francophone*

- **OVERVIEW:** Students complete three tasks (interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational) at the end of the unit that allow them to compare and contrast food deserts in Montréal, Canada and Paris, France with those in urban areas of the United States.
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🎉 Interpretive Task: Students complete a Webquest that allows them to read and listen to clips about food deserts in Montréal, Paris, Los Angeles, and Washington D.C. Students complete a comprehension guide that asks them to compare and contrast food deserts in each of these locations.

🎉 Interpersonal Task: The World Health Organization (the teacher) brings representative from the four urban areas together. In groups of four, students play the roles of the representatives. They discuss the situations in their communities and their eating habits due the existence of food deserts.

🎉 Presentational Task: Working in the same groups assigned to them by the World Health Organization, students write the script for a video campaign ad to create awareness of this issue in various cities around the world.
Our Steps to Adapting a Textbook Chapter

**Step 4:** Develop the learning activities.

- What kinds of authentic materials are provided in the textbook, and what materials must I find on my own to support these activities?

- If direct, teacher-centered instruction is needed to introduce material, what types of activities can help students to process the material?

- What activities provide opportunities for students to investigate and examine products, practices, and perspectives of the target culture through a lens of social justice?
Profiles of Habits of French Speakers: Students receive profiles of French speakers from France, Senegal, and Haiti and must adopt this profile as their own.

Preparation for Heifer International in Senegal and Haiti: Students examine the animals and resources on the Heifer International website, identifying them in French. They choose the animals and resources most appropriate for Senegal and Haiti and justify their choices by listing ways the resources they chose could provide sustainability.
German Example: Where and How We Live

Textbook Chapter: City or Country (Komm Mit, chapter 7, level 2)

Proficiency Level: Novice High

Unit Theme: Wo und wie wir wohnen (Where and how we live)

Social Justice Take-Away Understanding: Where and how we live is influenced some by choices, but also by a variety of outside factors imposed on us.

ACTFL Standards

1.1: Students engage in conversation, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange information.

1.2: Students understand and interpret written and spoken languages on a variety of topics.

1.3: Students present information, concepts and ideas to an audience of listeners on a variety of topics.

2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.

2.2: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

3.1: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.
German Example: Where and How We Live

Social Justice Objective(s):

1. Students will be able to identify groups of people who live in particular areas of German-speaking cities (inner-city versus suburbs) and in rural areas of German-speaking countries.

2. Students will be able to describe and explain factors such as SES, ethnicity, interests, benefits, etc. that influence where and how people live.

Language Objective(s):

1. Students will be able to describe various options for where and how people live in German-speaking countries using appropriate vocabulary, adjectives and prepositions.

2. Students will be able to compare and contrast the benefits and drawbacks of different places to live using comparatives and superlatives.

3. Students will be able to express opinions about living in the city, suburbs, or rural areas.
Social Justice and Language Objectives:

(1) Students will be able to compare and contrast the factors that influence the way in which groups of people in German-speaking countries and in the United States live.

What might our assessments look like?
Spanish Example: Identity, Nationalities and Nativism

**Textbook Chapter:** Nationalities

**Proficiency Level:** Novice Mid/High

**Unit Theme:** ¿De dónde somos? (Where are we from?)

**Social Justice Take-Away**

**Understanding:** The ways that individuals choose to identify themselves are often very different than the labels that are typically ascribed to them by others.

**ACTFL Standards**

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**Social Justice Objective(s):**

- Students will be able to explain the implications of using catch-all terms like “Latino” or “Hispanic” versus labels that individuals choose themselves.

- Students will be able to describe the concept of nativism (the idea that certain immigrant groups are inferior, while native-born US citizens are superior).

**Language Objective(s):**

- Students will be able to describe individuals’ ethnicities in Spanish.

- Students will be able to describe their countries of origin and those of others using *ser + de*.

**Social Justice and Language Objectives:**

- Students will be able to identify the countries of origin and ethnicity descriptors for the top 10 immigrant groups to the US.
Spanish Example: Identity, Nationalities and Nativism

- **Interpretive Task:** Students will analyze data charts in Spanish published by the U.S. Census that depict the diversity of ethnicities represented and population representation across states. A worksheet will help guide them to create a simplified graph and profiles of fictional individuals’ backgrounds and basic demographic information.

- **Interpersonal Task:** Based on the profiles, students will interview one another and will ask and answer questions about the individual’s name, country of origin, preferred ethnic description, and current state of residence.

- **Presentational Task:** Students will create a bulletin board geared toward other high school students that depicts the student immigrant profiles and a few basic statistics related to Latino immigrants today.
What might our key instructional activities/formative assessments look like?
“We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It’s easy to say, It’s not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.” Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes.”

- Fred Rogers (1994)
Thank you!

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