

Ch 7: Connecting Language and Culture In Curran and Dahlberg, Languages and Learners, 5th Edition

Culture in the Classroom

- 75 yrs ago, culture goals were the "Big C" - historical figures, geography, literature, music, and fine art → now includes contemporary media, patterns of everyday life, etc.
- digital world lets learners hear and interact w/ target language in an authentic cultural setting

The World Readiness Standards for Learning Language Goals:

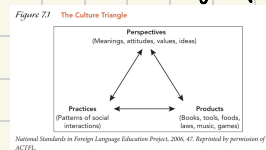
- Learner uses the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship b/t the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied
- Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship b/t the products and perspectives of the cultures studied
- Culture is most important context for language learning → helps students communicate by speaking and reading about presented topics
- Choose cultural topics based on the students' interests
- Culture helps w/ making a meaningful language ^{learning} experience

The Culture Triangle

- Gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures
- Standards define culture to include philosophical perspectives, the behavioral practices, and the tangible and intangible products of society

Building toward Perspectives

- build toward an understanding of perspectives by focusing on products and practices — "why"



- build your lesson plans around perspectives represented in cultural products/practices

Creating Experiences w/ Culture

ex: Students beginning Spanish can learn first the colors on the Mexican flag and then learn how to place the flag on Mexico on a map

- Simple crafts and food activities can provide experiences w/ products of the target culture

ex: building and breaking a pirata

→ helps w/ writing about activities, learning comprehension

→ make sure to always link back to the "why" and "what" and "how"

- Visual representations of target culture can help make connection b/t learner and role of target language

→ magazines, posters, coins → can use to play a board game or a math activity

Learning Cultures

- Students naturally compare new cultures w/ their own

- Students can begin to hypothesize about cultures in general

ex: a map w/ a different color

Identifying Resources for Integrating Culture

Identifying Cultural Information for Units and Lessons

- Cultural Products: flag, significant national or geographic monuments, dance, music, food, movies and TV shows, etc.

- Cultural Practices: forms of greeting, use of space, eating customs/table manners, home and school life, etc.

- Cultural perspectives: importance places on family, gender roles, temporal differences, etc.

- ↑ all starting points → helps learners use target language automatically

Story and Culture

• Values and concepts of culture are embedded in stories and folktales

• Stories are the foundation to understanding of a deeper level

• Can learn personal values/behaviors in target culture

• Stories bridge relationship among products, practices, and perspectives

• Make it interactive: ex: King's cake tradition → students played imaginary ingredients to make cake

Art and Artist

• Could use reproductions of famous paintings to show vocab or concepts

• Can encourage students to learn more about their favorite artist's work, life, and environment

• First introduce artist (maybe tell a story), then show artist's art

↳ students can use language to describe what they see

• Use art to connect to vocab

Fantasy Experiences/Imagining Trips/Virtual Trips

• Can create a vivid, memorable story

• Students can express how they're feeling

Fantasy Activity for Book

• Choosing a name from target culture

Fantasy Activity for Early Stages of Language Acquisition

• Teacher pretending to be sleeping → reminds students to sleep

↳ connects culture to show food, alarm sounds, temporal

• can do a virtual field trip

• Virtual airplane

Planning a Fantasy Experience

1. Pick the major culture-learning outcomes w/ shorter experiences

2. Choose background music that is regular and undistracting

3. Set the scene in a physical way

4. Choose cultural features that have dramatic potential

5. Choose cultural topics that include possibility for movement, prop, and sound as a part of the dramatic sequence

6. Plan the sequence to include a beginning, a middle, and an end

7. Build in elements of humor and surprise

8. Choose a few appropriate props

9. Use similar commands w/ new content or introduce new commands carefully in advance

10. Plan for national communication follow-up during succeeding class periods

Education for Global and Multicultural Awareness

- don't just focus on one country → use a variety because each have differences in culture but also share a lot
- helps make connects to other nations around the world in terms of relationships
- teachers can invite speakers of the target language
- plan lessons w/ sensitivity to racial and ethnic diversity

Classroom exchanges

- combines linguistic and cultural goals by giving students the opportunity to experience aspects of the target culture in a direct and personal way
- ex: Skype connect w/ a school in a Spanish-speaking country
- find partner exchange through pen-pal exchange w/ teachers abroad
- exchange visits
- Plat Stanley

Ortiz, Bárbara C. "Stories From Afar: Using Children's and Young Adult Literature to Teach about Latin America." Social Education, vol. 71, no. 4, May/June 2007, pp. 170-176

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- introducing students to a region by exploring poetry, books helps instill clarity about in Latin Amer.
- student engagement in reading tends to increase when culturally relevant literature and nonfiction are provided
 - ↳ helps students understand sociological aspects of language
- using children's literature is very effective → students can trade books to get different POVs
- folktales very helpful → draw attention to universal human themes
- biography is a good tool - students tend to identify with the characters
- young adult biographies of lesser known people can help students increase their self-awareness of the region and inspire them on a personal level
 - ↳ especially if protagonist is a teenager → feel a stronger connection to them
- helps identify thoughts and feelings of others
- "Book in One Hour" - each student reads their section in 15 mins and summarizes that section while teacher writes characters' names or terminology on the board for reference
- students should have a say in what they read
- Tools to strengthen hearing skills and promote more interest and knowledge about the region:
 - Reflections: sharing insights on reading
 - Diary/Letter Writing: helps w/ viewpoints and perceptions, if historical, they solidify their understanding
 - Mock Interview: done after reading a book and researching the historical period
 - Maps: helps w/ geographic skills
 - Post Cards: helps students synthesize the main points of a story
 - Mural or Diorama: its collaborative and creative
 - Role-Playing and Simulations: recreating scenes from a story or a book