Developing intercultural competence in lower-level language courses

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DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN LOWER-LEVEL LANGUAGE COURSES

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THE CHALLENGE

• Balancing focus on the linguistic & cultural dimensions of language learning (Kearney, 2016)

• Integrating the linguistic & cultural dimensions of language learning in a principled way (Arens, 2010; Furstenberg, 2010)
TEACHING & ASSESSING CULTURE LEARNING: YOUR EXPERIENCES

- Take the next 4 minutes to complete the four questions on page 1 of your handout individually.

- Now, turn to your neighbors, introduce yourself and discuss your responses to Questions 3 & 4 with a group of 2 or 3 other people.
CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF CULTURE LEARNING IN L2 EDUCATION

- intercultural sensitivity (Bennett, 1993)
- domains of cultural competence (ACTFL, 1996, 2015)
- intercultural competence (Byram, 1997)
- symbolic competence (Kramsch, 2011)
- transcultural competence (Meyer, 1991)
- linguaculture (Risager, 2007)
- meaning-making potentials (Kearney, 2016)
INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

“[A] combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills applied through action which enables one, either singly or together with others, to … understand and respect people who are perceived to have different cultural affiliations from oneself; … respond appropriately, effectively and respectfully when interacting and communicating with such people; … establish positive and constructive relationships with such people; … understand oneself and one’s own multiple cultural affiliations through encounters with cultural difference” (Huber & Reynolds, 2014, pp. 16–17, cited in Byram & Wagner, 2018)
WHAT DOES AN INTERCULTURAL INSTRUCTIONAL ORIENTATION ENTAIL?

- Teachers “guid[e] the learning process … as [learners] explore, discover, analyze, and evaluate meaningful information through primary and authentic texts, audio, video, and media” (p. 4)

- Learners experience “how to appropriately use language to build relationships and understandings with members of other cultures. They can examine their own beliefs and practices through a different lens, negotiate points of view different from their own, and gain an insider’s perspective of another culture” (p. 14)

Moeller & Nugent (2014)
HOW CAN DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURALITY BE ASSESSED?

• A process of inquiry whose direction depends on learners’ backgrounds, life experiences, world views, etc. (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006)

• Incorporation of formative and summative assessments (e.g., projects, quizzes, self-reports, portfolios, and learning logs) in which students are positioned “as both language users (performers) and learners (analyzers)” (Scarino, 2010, p. 328)
**INTERCULTURALITY IN A COLLEGIATE FRENCH LANGUAGE PROGRAM**

- Elementary French (FRE 101 and 102)
- Public R1 Midwest university, multi-section, graduate student instructors
- Multiliteracies-oriented curriculum
- 5 formative assessments of intercultural competence per semester (15% of final grade) or “culture activities”
- 2 summative assessments of intercultural competence per semester as part of mid-term and final written exams (5% of final grade)
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT MODEL

Stage 1: Introduction to the cultural theme & schemata activation

Stage 2: Exploration of the cultural theme through reading & viewing of multiple texts

Stage 3: Analysis of cultural practices & perspectives that inform the content of the texts explored

Stage 4: Reflection on new understandings of the cultural theme
# Formative Assessments in FRE 101

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Theme/s</th>
<th>Cultural Context</th>
<th>Texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: The French language in the world</td>
<td>Francophone N. America, Africa, Asia, &amp; France</td>
<td>Video campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Campaign posters</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Article &amp; maps from textbook</td>
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<tr>
<td>2: Inclusivity &amp; language in the</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Journalistic article</td>
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<tr>
<td>French-speaking world</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 videos</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Website</td>
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<tr>
<td>3: Young people’s perceptions of their</td>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>Journalistic article</td>
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<td>generation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Infographic</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Video</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Representations &amp; experiences of</td>
<td>France &amp; Gabon</td>
<td>2 journalistic articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>one’s hometown</td>
<td></td>
<td>Article from textbook</td>
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<tr>
<td>5: Reasons for expatriation</td>
<td>France &amp; Quebec</td>
<td>4 infographics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Journalistic article</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Radio broadcast</td>
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<td>Cultural Context</td>
<td>Texts</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: Studying abroad by Europeans</td>
<td>Belgium &amp; Switzerland</td>
<td>2 journalistic articles Video Article from textbook Maps from textbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Types of tourism</td>
<td>Senegal &amp; Niger</td>
<td>Website 2 journalistic articles Brochure from textbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Traditions &amp; customs of cuisine</td>
<td>Antilles &amp; France</td>
<td>Article from textbook 2 videos Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Ready-to-wear vs. high fashion</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Infographic from textbook Video Journalistic article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: University living experiences</td>
<td>Laval, Canada</td>
<td>Article from textbook 2 websites Video</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FRE 101 - CULTURE ACTIVITY 1

Objectives:

- Identify the number of member states/governments in the OIF
- Identify the ranking of the French language worldwide & in the US for number of users
- Identify the three major contexts for the use of the French language worldwide: educational, diplomatic, & professional
- Describe & reflect on personal associations with the French language and its role in the world
FRE 101 - CULTURE ACTIVITY 1
FRE 102 - CULTURE ACTIVITY 1

Objectives:

● Identify the linguistic communities of Belgium & Switzerland
● Demonstrate comprehension of typical identity traits of well-known Belgian & Swiss citizens
● Identify trends in Erasmus participation over the years, as well as who the typical Erasmus participant is & the most popular Erasmus destinations for the French
● Demonstrate comprehension of the advantages of living in Brussels for Erasmus participants
● Describe one’s ideal Erasmus destination & provide justification for this choice
LA RÉUSSITE DU PROGRAMME
ERASMUS

Depuis sa création en 1987, le programme Erasmus a permis à plus de 3 millions de jeunes Européens d'aller étudier dans un autre pays européen.

L'étudiant Erasmus en chiffres

- 60% de femmes
- 23,5 ans moyen
- 67% en bachelor

L'ESPAGNE : CHAMPIONNE ERASMUS

- 37 235 étudiants envoyés
- 39 277 étudiants reçus

22% des étudiants en mobilité ont choisi Erasmus pour partir en stage à l'étranger.

Les pays qui envoient le plus d'étudiants à l'étranger

- Espagne
- Allemagne
- Italie
- Royaume-Uni

La bourse Erasmus mensuelle moyenne allouée aux étudiants

€ 274

Source : europa.eu (Enquête 2016-2017)
INVESTIGATING INTERCULTURALITY IN A COLLEGIATE FRENCH LANGUAGE PROGRAM

- Participants: 33 learner cohort

- Data sources:
  - Surveys
  - Formative assessments (FRE 101 & 102 CA 1)
  - Summative assessments

- How did participation in culture activities influence learners’ interculturality? Which components of the culture activities contributed to their influence?
FINDINGS: INTERCULTURALITY & COLLEGIATE FRENCH LEARNERS

Importance of learning about cultures of the French-speaking world

- Not at all important: Start of semester - 2, End of semester - 0
- Somewhat important: Start of semester - 5, End of semester - 4
- Moderately important: Start of semester - 7, End of semester - 2
- Important: Start of semester - 12, End of semester - 16
- Very important: Start of semester - 7, End of semester - 11
FINDINGS: INTERCULTURALITY & COLLEGIATE FRENCH LEARNERS

Cultural learning compared to expectations

- I learned considerably more than I expected: 14
- I learned somewhat more than I expected: 9
- I learned about as much as I expected: 5
- I learned somewhat less than I expected: 1
- I learned considerably less than I expected: 0
FINDINGS: INTERCULTURALITY & COLLEGIATE FRENCH LEARNERS

*Influence of culture activity for first-semester learners*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What shifted?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>knowledge</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>perspective</em></td>
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<td><em>disposition</em></td>
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</table>
FINDINGS: INTERCULTURALITY & COLLEGIATE FRENCH LEARNERS

*Influence of culture activity for second-semester learners*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What shifted?</th>
<th>SHIFT (n = 19)</th>
<th>NO SHIFT (n = 8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>16 (55%)</td>
<td>3 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perspective</td>
<td>3 (10%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disposition</td>
<td>2 (7%)</td>
<td>3 (10%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FINDINGS: INTERCULTURALITY & COLLEGIATE FRENCH LEARNERS

Sources of shifts: Which materials influenced students?

- knowledge: 52 activities
  - statistics: 30 activities
  - ad campaign/testimonies: 22 activities
  - textbook: 5 activities
  - personal experience: 1 activity
  - unspecified: 4 activities

- perspectives: 9 activities
  - statistics: 2 activities
  - ad campaign/testimonies: 5 activities
  - textbook: 1 activity
  - personal experience: 1 activity

- dispositions: 6 activities
  - statistics: 1 activity
  - ad campaign/testimonies: 4 activities
  - textbook: 1 activity

Number of activities that indicated shifts (N = 58)
FINDINGS: INTERCULTURALITY & COLLEGIATE FRENCH LEARNERS

- How did participation in culture activities influence learners’ interculturality?
  - Perceived culture learning as more important at end of term
  - Contributed to knowledge, perspective, and disposition shifts

- Which components of the culture activities contributed to their influence?
  - Statistics → knowledge shifts
  - Ad campaign/testimonies → perspective and disposition shifts

DISCUSSION: What aspects of the findings do you find most interesting or surprising?
IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

- Authentic materials can be used to integrate meaningful cultural learning into FL curricula

- Type of materials used can impact outcomes & use of multiple modes/text types appears critical

- Development of intercultural competence is highly variable & dependent on learners’ lived experiences