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[Home](#) > Language as a tool to create awareness in gender issues in a classroom context

Language as a tool to create awareness in gender issues in a classroom context

Mon, 20/10/2014 - 10:39 -- Ece Yilmaz

Type of tool:

Activity

Duration:

0-30 min

Topics addressed:

Gender issues

Language is as a tool for students and teachers to explore their assumptions in gender issues and should be used in a classroom setting to create awareness in how cultural and global gender behavior codes are formed through language. .

Aim:

The aim of the tool is to encourage teachers of foreign languages to bring the discussion of gender issues into their classrooms and show them sample groups of activities to prove how easy it really is.

Methodology:

This is not a study itself, but it can be related to some other language teaching methodologies like communicative language teaching. Thanks to this tool, teachers give their students a topic about which they will be really motivated to talk. In the classrooms I have used this tool, I observed that students are more motivated to talk. The reasons can be as follows: All students have something to say because they all have some assumptions on the issue, the topic is interesting so their motivation increases, this discussion and excitement to share personal experiences make them speak in the target language. With this tool, teachers give their students an authentic and real purpose to talk.

Step by step process:

One of the activities that I want to share, if I have a chance to present, I will share other similar activities.

Teachers can use this tool while they are teaching is can-do statements. While teaching can-do statements, I ask my students complete a list. This list consists of questions like "I am a man, so I can....", "I am a woman, so I can....". Such questions allow students to question their gender stereotypes and raises their gender awareness.

I put my students in pairs or groups of 3-4 depending on the class size. Then I ask them answer these questions with their partners and give them around 10-15 minutes. During this time, I walk around the groups and have small discussion about the items they have come up with.

At the end of the activity, each group shares what they have, and we have a whole discussion about

each item. I ask lots of "why" and "how" questions during these discussions.

Materials and resources:

I adapt the classroom activities that I want to present from <http://www.irex.org/sites/default/files/Liberia%20CSML%20-%20Gender%20Aw...> [1] and http://www.umb.no/statisk/akrsp/06_publications_and_presentations/08_tra... [2]. These files are open sources on the internet and can be downloaded from the links that I provide.

Outcomes:

Gender awareness does not come all of a sudden, but overt discussion of hidden assumptions is really a big step to create gender awareness. During and at the end of such activities, we, me and my students find ourselves questioning many gender assumptions that we take for granted every day. Students are really willing to share their experiences about these gender issues in such contexts.

Evaluation:

The biggest advantage is that it is a step towards gender equality and leads to a very rich discussion in the classroom context, but the biggest limitation is that it aims to create/increase awareness in gender issues which really needs a long time and continuous exposure to the discussion of such issues.

Rating:

Average: 4.5 (2 votes)

Source URL:

<http://educationaltoolsportal.eu/en/tools/language-tool-create-awareness-gender-issues-classroom-context>

Links

[1] <http://www.irex.org/sites/default/files/Liberia%20CSML%20-%20Gender%20Awareness%20Training.pdf>

[2] http://www.umb.no/statisk/akrsp/06_publications_and_presentations/08_training_materials/2_gender_awareness.pdf