Activities and Strategies for Building Language Awareness

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Plans for Today

• A Situated view of language
• Types of language awareness
  • Metalinguistic
  • Metacognitive
  • Sociocultural
• Examples from the classroom
A Situated View of Language

- Language must be understood in relation to
  - speakers
  - purpose of communication
  - audience
  - context of use

- Knowledge about “ways of being in the world, ways of acting, thinking, interacting, valuing, believing, speaking, and sometimes reading and writing, connected to particular identities and social roles”

(Gee, 1992, p. 73)
Through social interaction, learners gain exposure to the language, engage with it, and notice how language works.

Noticing leads to language awareness.

When students develop an awareness of how language works, they become more confident in their own language abilities.

As they develop an understanding of their language learning processes, they become more autonomous as learners.
Types of Language Awareness
(Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit, 2014)

- Metalinguistic Awareness
- Metacognitive Awareness
- Sociocultural Awareness
Metalinguistic Awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Classroom Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Awareness of the forms of the language. Recognition that language is a</td>
<td>• Analyzing rules for language use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>system with patterns (rules) and exceptions</td>
<td>• Comparing the similarities and differences of forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Awareness of properties of language, its creativity, playfulness and</td>
<td>and structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>double meanings</td>
<td>• Transferring information and literacy across languages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Can you think of examples from your own classroom?
## Vocabulary Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Word</th>
<th>Spanish Word</th>
<th>Common Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>encounter</td>
<td>encontrar</td>
<td>meet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>observe</td>
<td>observar</td>
<td>watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maintain</td>
<td>mantener</td>
<td>keep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ultimate</td>
<td>último</td>
<td>last</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equal</td>
<td>igual</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entire</td>
<td>entero</td>
<td>whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quantity</td>
<td>cantidad</td>
<td>amount</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **groom**: the man who will become the husband of the bride.
- The groom wore a black suit for the wedding.
Vocabulary Activities

Shades of Meaning

small
tiny
miniscule
microscopic
Teach classroom scripts for active participation

- Teach one or two scripts at a time
- Post charts with the expressions on the classroom walls
- Add expressions over time, according to language functions
Linguistic Landscape Activities

- Why is English being used instead of Spanish?
- Can you translate these English expressions to Spanish? What is the effect?
- Contextual analysis: Audience? Location? Intended message?
Correct the error

- Why was the wrong spelling chosen?
- What is the effect?
## Metacognitive Awareness

### Definition

- Awareness of how language is learned and developed
- Awareness of strategies and processes for language learning and development

### Classroom Examples

- Reflecting on preferred language learning styles. “Thinking about thinking”
- Practicing different strategies for language learning
- Linking new learning to prior knowledge
- Conducting self-assessments

Can you think of examples from your own classroom?
Cognitive Strategies

- **Summarizing**: Making mental, oral or written summary of information gained at certain points in learning process

- **Deduction/Induction**: Use a rule/Make a rule

- **Imagery**: Make a mental picture from the information

- **Auditory Representation**: Mentally replay a word, phrase or piece of information; self-talk

- **Making Inferences**: Use context clues to guess meaning and predict upcoming information; questioning for clarification
Reading in Reverse

**Figure 9.6 Reading “Nomads” in Reverse**

**Step 1. Apply to real life.**
Talk about:
- personal experience with moving.
- immigration experiences.
- experiences with frequent moves to seek employment, other reasons.
- migrant worker experiences.

**Step 2. Discuss in class.**
Talk about the following:
- Is moving from place to place “fun?” Why/why not?
- Does it feel different if the move is voluntary or forced?
- Compare leaving school, friends, and family behind to taking it all with you.
  (This is the time to introduce the word and the concept of *nomads.*)
- Look at pictures in the text to compare differences among nomad homes and students’ homes.

**Step 3. Read the questions—and the section and subsection headers.**
Ask the following:
- What is this section about?
- What information will this section focus on?
- What is the main idea of this section?

**Step 4. Read the text.**
- Read one section at a time.
- Follow each section reading by discussing the questions in Step 3.
Note-taking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Ideas</th>
<th>Details/Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Nomads are groups of people who</td>
<td>1. move from place to place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Nomads are hunters or herders...</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Nomads are people who live (where?)</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bedouins</td>
<td>1. in the desert</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. are  
2. travel  
3. herd  
4.  
5.  
6.  
Graphic organizers
Mind Maps and Word Clouds

popplet.com

Tagul.com
Reconstructing information with technology

http://storybird.com/

http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/
Sociocultural Awareness

**Definition**

- Awareness of the connection between language and culture
- Awareness of the close relationship between language and ideology (critical language awareness)

**Classroom Examples**

- Recognizing different situations for language use
- Learning to use language appropriately according to settings, speakers, purposes (including how to behave in class)
- Using own culture as resources for learning

Can you think of examples from your own classroom?
Social Identity

(Norton, 2012)

“Language teaching and learning is always about acquiring new identities in a context where learners’ previous identities are respected and leveraged in the service of acquiring new ones”

(Hawkins, 2004, p. 4)
Adapt Content to Reflect Students’ Realities

(Sayer, 2010)
Identity Texts
(Cummins, 2006)

http://www.iamplurilingual.com/
Discourse Analysis

Data Collection Chart for Observing Discussions

Setting:

Participants:
- number:
- relationship/hierarchy (Is there an appointed discussion leader?)
- seating format (make a quick sketch - use another sheet of paper if necessary)

Discussion Strategies:

What does the discussion leader do to promote discussion?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion Leader’s Remarks</th>
<th>Discussion Leader’s Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(What did he/she say?)</td>
<td>(What happened?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What do the discussion participants do to contribute to the discussion?

<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional notes (on impressions regarding effectiveness, individual contributions, etc.):

Student-Generated List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Discussion Participants Do (functions)</th>
<th>How They Do It (phrases used)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Give opinions</td>
<td>I believe that... In my opinion...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Agree</td>
<td>I agree that... Yeah, that’s how I feel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Disagree</td>
<td>I disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I think that... But I don’t believe...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ask for information</td>
<td>But isn’t it true that...?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Nominate other speakers</td>
<td>What do you think, ________?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Give feedback to others</td>
<td>Excellent point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Clarify or ask for clarification</td>
<td>That’s not what I meant. Do you mean that...?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Discussion Leaders Do (functions)</th>
<th>How They Do It (phrases used)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Encourage people to participate</td>
<td>What do you think?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Manage turns</td>
<td>Could you expand on that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thanks. Let’s hear from someone else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Provide feedback to participants</td>
<td>Good point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Summarize, paraphrase, draw conclusions</td>
<td>So you’re saying that...?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So, it seems that we all agree that...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Think of a critical issue that affects you**
- Pollution in my town
- Lack of access to the playground at my school
- Too much homework assigned by teachers
- Etc.

**Discovery Project**
- Choice of Topic
- Survey
- Poster Presentation
- Interview with an Expert
- Final Oral Presentation
- Action: Write a letter, Present findings to other audiences, Publish on the web

Dantas-Whitney, 1998