Concept-Based FL Curriculum: Bridging Learner, Intellect, and Language

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Outline of presentation

• FL Challenges ➔ Solutions
• Example 1: Translation
• Example 2: Political Art
• Example 3: Truth (in Context)
FL-Specific Challenges

1 of 3

• Language/Meaning Relationship
  – Language is object and vehicle (Long 1983)
  – Language precedes meaning in the FL classroom
  – Topics become excuses to talk, not reasons
FL-Specific Challenges
2 of 3

• Student Capabilities and FL Content
  – Access to Bloom’s (whole) taxonomy (1956)
  – If this weren’t an FL class, would this be educationally appropriate? Meaningful?
FL-Specific Challenges

3 of 3

• Language as developing for a future reality.
  – Proficiency for future travelers/consumers/foreigners
  – Sustainable/stable linguistic proficiency not established in immediate context with relevance to students’ selves.
Solutions in a Concept-Based Curriculum

• Working with concepts allows:
  – Language and meaning to be co-developed
  – Appropriately complex ideas; appropriately simple language
  – Immediate relevance to student thinkers
Examples

- Idea/Concept
- Curricular Structure
- Assessment Type
- Language (level, example)
- Scaffolding Example
Example 1: Translation

- **Concept:** Translation involves choices.
- **Curricular Structure:** Recurring/Emergent
- **Assessment:** (formative)
- **Language:**
  - Advanced: Yo habría usado X porque...
  - Intermediate: Yo pienso que X es mejor porque...
  - Beginner: En inglés X significa A y B.
**Translation Scaffolding Example**

*Friends (1998) The One with the Worst Best Man Ever*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inglés</th>
<th>Español</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stare at the wall</td>
<td>Mira la pared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardly move</td>
<td>No te muevas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be white</td>
<td>???</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inglés</th>
<th>Sé blanco</th>
<th>Está blanco</th>
<th>Vuélvete Blanco</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sentido</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humor</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Example 2: Political Art

• **Concept:** Cultural opinion is dynamic
• **Curriculum:** 2 week mini-unit
• **Assessment:** Oral or written analysis of how varied cultural opinions are evident in different pieces of art about one topic.
• **Language (high beginner):**
  – compound sentences (y, que, porque, pero)
  – contrasting opinions (present tense)
Political Art Scaffolding Example
Political Art Scaffolding Example

1. **Decide** en una de las dos obras de arte.

2. **Describela** (2-3 frases)

3. **Explica** la opinión del artista (3-5 frases)

4. **Ofrece** tres reacciones posibles y diferentes del público.

5. **Explica** por qué ésta es una indicación que la gente española no tiene una opinión fija de las corridas de toros (puedes referirte a otras obras).
Example 3: Truth

- **Concept:** Truth is different for everyone.
- **Curricular Format:** Concept-Based Unit
- **Context:** The Dirty War in Argentina
- **Assessment:** Write a page-long dialogue demonstrating how two people involved in the Dirty War may not understand the same versions of the (historical) truth.
Truth (continued)

• Language (intermediate):
  – Difference between simple past tenses
  – Focus on 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} person forms of preterit/imperfect
  – Conversational “functions”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roberto: Señora, señora no lo haga. Soy inocente.</th>
<th>Ruego, _______________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paulina: Está confeso, señor.</td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberto: La confesión, señora... La confesión es falsa.</td>
<td>Explicación</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paulina: ¿Cómo que es falsa?</td>
<td>Pregunta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberto: Mi confesión la fabricamos, la inventé.</td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paulina: A mí, me pareció sumamente verídica...</td>
<td>_______________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Starting Questions

• What type of meaning will stay with my students?
• How is this lesson fostering student identities as thinkers in this language?
• What type of language will students be capable of expressing/developing these meanings in? How can I scaffold this?
• How can language and meaning support each other’s development? What does that mean for assessment?
• How do I determine the role of accuracy and grammar in this lesson/unit?
References

