CULTIVATING A LANGUAGE & SOCIAL JUSTICE PRAXIS:
Reflection, Action, and Dialogue for Social Change

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THE STORY OF YOUR NAME

Share with your partner your name story

Listen to your partner's name story

Ask a question about your partner's name story

Critical Empathy

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

Praxis

Community Agreements

Social Justice

Language & Social Justice: Frameworks & Approaches

Language & Social Justice: Case Studies

Equity Literacy Framework

Praxis: Scenarios, Guiding Principles

Now What?

PRAXIS

"Reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire 1972, p. 52)

See also: Mayo (2019) *Liberating praxis: Paulo Freire's legacy for radical education and politics. Brill Publishing.*

See also: https://sustainingcommunity.wordpress.com/2020/03/12/what-is-praxis/, https://annwalkerwea.wordpress.com/2013/08/04/praxis/

Community Agreements

- **Assume positive intent**

- **Be accountable for the impact of your actions and words**

- **Call people In (vs. call people out)**

- **Come to the discussion with kindness for each other and for yourself**

- **Challenge an idea, not the person**

- **Language is important (inclusive, respectful)**

- **Use "I" statements**

- **W.A.I.T. - Why am I talking/Why aren't I talking?**

- **We are all responsible for this space**

- **What's Said Here Stays Here, What's Learned Here Leaves Here**

Adapted from MIIS Symposium on World Languages Education (SOWLE) and Queers & Allies at MIIS

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- **How do you define social justice?**

- **Where does this definition come from?**

- **How specifically are language and social justice connected?**

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Social justice is relational
- Social justice is about solidarity
- Social justice is aspirational
- Social justice is a reimagination of our world

(Avineri & Martinez, 2021)

- Process & Goal

(Bell, 2007)

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PRAXIS

Who am I?
What do I believe?

Where is my context?
(macro, meso, micro, me-cro)

What are my goals?

Who are my trusted colleagues?

What can I do?

EDUCATIONAL PRAXIS & SCALES OF JUSTICE

- **Me-cro:** individual students' and teachers' identities, intersectionalities, experiences, language learning histories (integrated into the teaching/learning experience)

- **Micro:** interpersonal interactions in classrooms, differentiation, lesson planning, textbook/materials selection, assignments, classroom activities, online activities, equity, inclusive teaching practices

- **Meso:** institutional structures, curriculum design & assessment, language varieties, language policies, power dynamics, ethics

- **Macro:** language ideologies, which languages get taught & learned at the global scale, how different languages are valued/perceived, hegemony of English, power dynamics, histories of oppression & structural inequalities in the communities/countries/regions where we teach and learn

Access

Equity

Power

Privilege

Marginalization

**LANGUAGE & SOCIAL JUSTICE
(AVINERI, CONLEY RINER, GRAHAM, JOHNSON, & ROSA, 2019)**

LANGUAGE & SOCIAL JUSTICE TOPICS

The ways we use language to engage with/describe the world

The languages/speakers who do and do not have power

Race

Education

Health

Social Activism

Law & Policy

Avineri et al., 2019, Avineri & Baquedano-Lopez, forthcoming,

Avineri & Ahlers, forthcoming, Baugh, 2018, Bucholtz & Casillas, 2016, Piller, 2016, Riley, Perley, & García-Sánchez, 2022

Language Change + Social Change

1. Noticing, Observing, Reflecting, & Critiquing

2. Centering language

3. Recognizing positionalities

4. Collaborating

5. Raising awareness

"long-term, in-depth understanding of issues, contexts, and communities alongside active engagement in collaboration with others"

Avineri, N., Johnson, E.J., Perley, B.C., Rosa, J.D., & Zentella, A.C. (2021)

**APPLIED LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY:
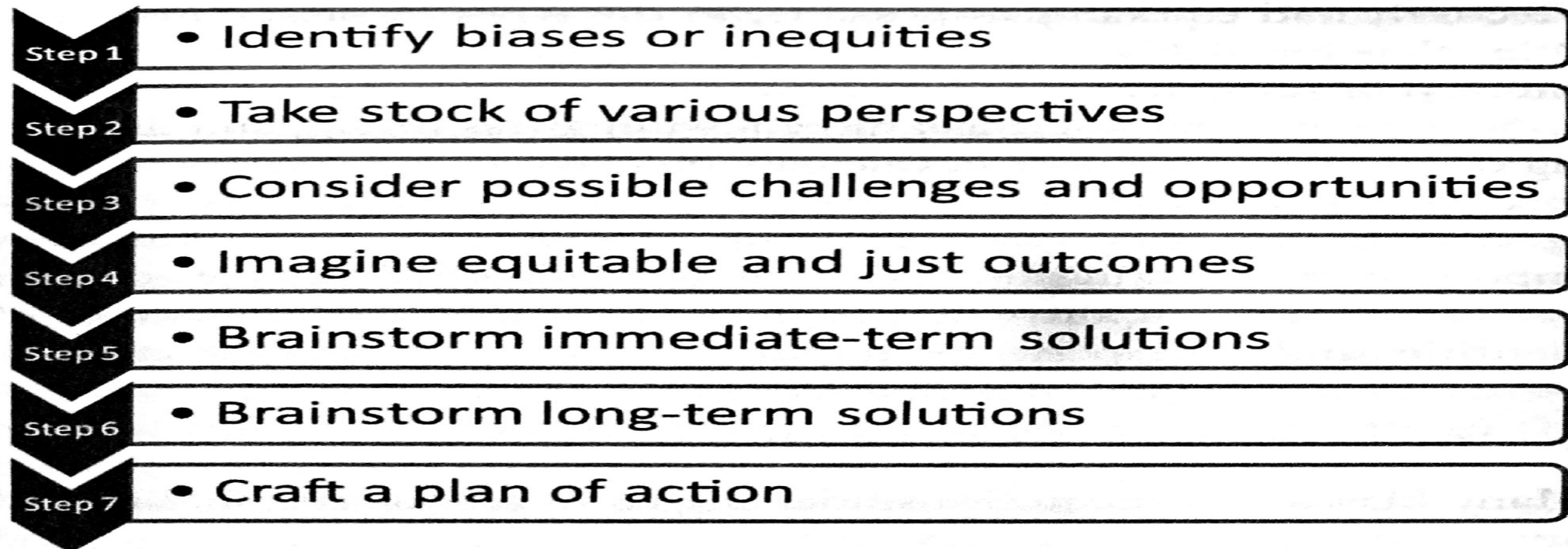5 STEPS**

APPLIED LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY: 4 CASE STUDIES

- **"Language Gap"** **(challenging deficit models) (Paugh & Riley, 2019)**

- **Sports Team Mascot Names** **(redressing public naturalized racism)**

- **I-Word** **(counteracting processes of dehumanization)**

- **Census Categories** **(recognizing communities and languages)**

- **Avineri, Johnson, Perley, Rosa, & Zentella (2021)**

LANGUAGE & SOCIAL JUSTICE REFLECTIONS

- What are the language & social justice topics that are important to you? Why?

- How might you bring these topics into your educational practice?

- What tensions might arise? (E.g., internal, external, ideologies vs. practices)

EQUITY LITERACY FRAMEWORK (Gorski & Pathini, 2014)
(recognize, respond, redress, create/sustain)

Step 1	• Identify biases or inequities
Step 2	• Take stock of various perspectives
Step 3	• Consider possible challenges and opportunities
Step 4	• Imagine equitable and just outcomes
Step 5	• Brainstorm immediate-term solutions
Step 6	• Brainstorm long-term solutions
Step 7	• Craft a plan of action

https://organizingengagement.org/models/equity-literacy

https://gradschool.oregonstate.edu/sites/gradschool.oregonstate.edu/files/equity_literacy_in_college_teaching_0.pdf

PRAXIS: 3 SCENARIOS

#1 Language/Textbook: The textbook you are using includes **language describing different groups of people** in a particular region. You believe that some of the terms the textbook includes are not appropriate in terms of race and ethnicity. How might you approach this situation?

#2 Language/Discussion Board: One of the readings you have assigned mentions differences in the ways that men and women use language. In their discussion board posting a student highlights this, noting that the author should have included the language use/experiences of non-binary people. How might you approach this situation?

#3 Language/Class Paper: One of your students who knows an L1 and is learning English as an L2 submits a class paper to you with English words, phrases, and syntax that are different from what you imagine an L1 English user would use. How might you approach this situation?

PRAXIS: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Creating spaces for dialogue

- Building "Nests" (Comfort & Challenge) (Avineri, 2019)

- Being intentional in our pedagogical and curricular decision-making

- Being "meta" in partnership with our students/colleagues

- Modeling the balance between humility and expertise

- "Yes and"

PRAXIS: NOW WHAT?

Who do you want to be as a language & social justice-oriented educator?

Whom do you want learn from/with?

What are you learning today that you can connect with your professional practice?

Where/when can you use what you have learned? At what scales?

Why do certain frameworks/ideas/ approaches/activities resonate with you?

How will you move forward in your communities of practice (socialization vs. liberation)?