

Deep Approach to World Languages and Cultures Learning¹

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Abstract – In order to foster language learners’ communicative competence or language proficiency in their English in addition to their native language and increase their sensitivity to and understanding of other cultures and to end collective self-destructive behavior through intercultural education and shared understanding emerging from proficiency in other languages, a deep approach with IAPI(Interpret, Analyze, Present Interact) Model to world languages education is greatly needed, in which the teacher personalizes instructional processes in reference to a changing context and the relevance and meaningfulness of the contents and tasks chosen and developed by the students are emphasized so that learning becomes a form of engagement. Deep approach places the emphasis on the quality of professional development within the accomplishment of projects and targets trans-disciplinary aims. The deep learning process gives rise to a variety of outcomes that cannot always be fully anticipated. Therefore, deep learning is open and focuses on creative work.

Keywords – Deep Approach, Integration, Intercultural Education, IAPA, Apprenticeship.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Deep Approach (hereafter DA) to world languages education, put forward by Francois V. Tochon (2002), is an approach to world languages and cultures and aims to stimulate action projects in language and culture learning that are in touch with real life, culture, and society. This approach moves holistically towards language integration into world-or life-related thematic projects and requires contextualized, holistic experiences in which the personal identity narrative can expand with new life meanings. The focus is on the process rather than the outcomes and emphasizes quality, relevance, and purposefulness rather than rote learning. Learning a new language is understood as a process of cultural accommodation and abstraction, which is tied to a variety of subtle pragmatic meanings and situational elements that need to be related to perceive the whole.

II. DA TO WORLD LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS

DA is a trans-disciplinary approach. Transdisciplinarity concerns that which is at once between the disciplines, across the different disciplines, and beyond all disciplines.

The goal of the approach is the understanding of the present world, of which one of the imperatives is the unity of knowledge. It promotes a philosophy of curriculum that explains and addresses the current stakes and that requires a deep transformation of humans and human society in the direction of greater harmony, which defines a homeostatic goal that defines personal and social balance. It emerges from individual and collective efforts.

DA is significantly related to an intention to understand deeply. Deep understanding characterizes deep learning (Akbar Hessami & Sillitoe, 1990). The focus is on what is signified, and the arguments proposed, with a linking process to prior information and to everyday experience (Morgan, 1993). Deep learning is sustainable and requires a different style of teaching. Some researchers have started working on the transfer from a deep conception of learning towards a deep approach to teaching (Tochon & Hanson, 2003; Wilson Smith & Colby, 2007). This transfer defines sustainable education (Warburton, 2003). The approach is contextualized and situated. Meanings are embodied in action. It supports alternative conceptions of development such as subjective development. DA may represent the next mainstream in language learning methods. The test of deep learning in the intermediate and advanced courses of world language with undergraduate students shows convincing results, such as a reduction of shallow learning, an increase in strategic learning, an evidence of a higher degree of deep learning than in the control group. It can now serve as a model for its implementation in other language programs, and in language programs for beginners. (Tochon, 2015)

Deep teaching is learner-centered. It honors the past and develops wisdom for the future. These elements are key to active participation, capacity building and accountability within learning communities (Halbert & Kaser, 2006). It builds on the intrinsic motivation of the learner, authentic documents, and new information technologies when appropriate, conditional to integrating philosophical depth in their processing. Deep teaching is based on meaningfulness for the learner and is project-based. To teach life-meaningful contents to students, the teacher needs to know what is meaningful to them and discuss meaningfulness in life. Learning and teaching have to meet life goals.

Deep teaching understands and values higher order education. In DA, classes with much student talk focused on life issues, is a better sign of learning than quiet classes focused on a passive acceptance of what the teacher says; students gain significant knowledge only when they value it; subject-matters should be continually related to the learner’s experiences, life values, and viewpoints.

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Deep teaching is not prescriptive. The teacher personalizes instructional processes in reference to a changing context. Deep language pedagogy emphasizes the relevance and meaningfulness of the contents and tasks chosen and developed by the students. Project-based units are viewed flexibly and respond to students' own impulses to learn.

Deep learning system must last and spread across disciplinary domains; it is energizing and doesn't burn out teachers, it doesn't harm the environment; quality is linked to variety rather than standardized forms of expression; it engages students intellectually, socially, and emotionally; it goes beyond temporary gains in achievement scores to create lasting, meaningful improvements in learning; it requires personal engagement: being in charge of one's own learning (Tochon, 2010). If the teacher provides adequate resources, the students can create their own projects. The project of the Self of the student is included in educative projects. Students can work at their own pace on topics of their own interest.

III. SEVEN INSTRUCTIONAL PRINCIPLES OF DA

In DA, the conception of a self-determined apprenticeship in languages is a revolution against traditional language teaching methodology. Self-determination and the awareness of one's own way of knowing and learning is the cornerstone for the possibility of deep apprenticeship. When students are allowed to plan their own productions, they organize their knowledge autonomously and develop their reflectiveness. In an educative production, the students are brought to evaluate themselves. The path to self-evaluation is acquired gradually, by experience. Studying the directives develops a working methodology as well as reflexive aptitudes. In the final learning phase, evaluative metacognition becomes a fundamental competence. There are seven instructional principles for teachers in DA:

1. Go by the results of motivation research, and provide incentives for self-directed learning and self-determination.
2. Help students build their curriculum through their own literacy-based thematic units, indexing all language modalities to each other. As an instructor, merely scaffold possibilities; make your landscape as flexible as possible for the student to choose, select, and frame on his or her own. Use online modules rather than a textbook or supplement with a large variety of multimedia resources for blended learning.
3. Emphasize process rather than outcomes; refer to instructional organizers in forward planning rather than goals or outcomes in a backward planning.
4. Encourage individualized, peer-oriented, and small group project-based learning, focusing on cultural content and social action.
5. Give primacy to text. Consider grammar as storytelling about language; target extensive reading/viewing and intensive writing/recording.
6. Use deep formative feedback and empowerment evaluation. Integrate self-evaluations and peer-evaluations.

7. Focus on value creation: highlight critical issues related to the respect of other languages and cultures, language status and invisible or open discrimination, the colonial mindset versus principles of social justice, and linguistic human rights for peace building (Tochon, 2014).

IV. TOCHON'S IAPI MODEL IN DA

Identity-Building depends on Access (input activities) to knowledge through deep interpretation and critical analysis, and Voice (output activities) which allows persons of all genders, races, classes, social conditions and statutes to present their thoughts and who they are, and have free interpersonal relations that lead to social action and accomplishments. Tochon proposed a Model of the means available to Access and Voice in the different task domains as follows:

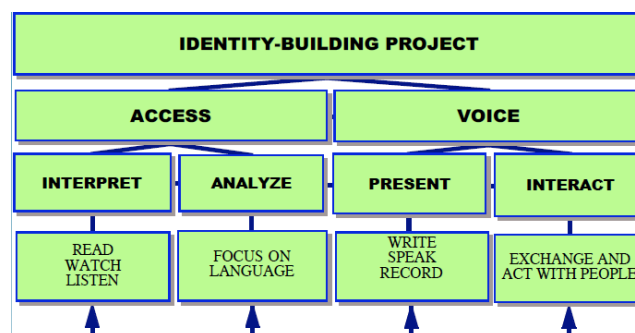


Fig.1. The IAPI Model and the Educative Projects' Task Domains (Tochon, 2014:226)

Interpret: The interpretation task domain implies tasks that encourage students to read, watch and listen. Tasks could be film viewing, readings and discussion, answering questions, etc.

Analyze: The analysis task domain implies tasks that encourages students to focus on language in an autonomous way, using all the resources of language techniques available in the program and on the internet. Such tasks need to be integrated within other task domains, and it needs to be self-directed to become operational. This was presented in the action grammar.

Present: The presentation task domain implies tasks that encourage students to write, speak, audio and video record and report, and create their own PowerPoints, films, personal learning environments or multimedia such as blog, email, ipod, profolio and Skype, etc.

Interact: It implies interaction across cultures. The interaction task domain integrates tasks that encourage students to exchange and interact among themselves and with other people in the target language. (Tochon,2014) Students use thematic organizers to guide their projects. A thematic organizer is a specific subject-matter focus that matches students' self project and interest and will serve as a pivot to build self-determined, educative actions.

What is new here is the emphasis on the deep transformational dynamics of learning—in which learners become social activists for other languages through the interactive practices of wisdom pertaining to various

cultures. Thematic organizers transcend their structural definition and soon become flexible, pragmatic ways of guiding students' choices without reifying the concepts enacted in the projects, which are like personalized standards.

The dynamism of human exchange is meaning-producing through multiple connected intentions among language task domains. Here, language-learning tasks have cross-cultural purposes which then become meaningful within broader projects that meet higher values and aims such as deep ecology, deep culture, deep politics and deep humane economics. Applied semiotics will be a tool beyond the linguistic in favor of value-loaded projects that are chosen in order to revolutionize the current state of affairs, in increasing our sense of responsibility for our actions as human's vis-à-vis our fellow humans and our home planet.

V. FIVE DISTINCTIONS OF DA

Compared with other world language teaching approaches, there are at least five points that make deep approach distinct.

1. The students are placed in charge of building their own curriculum and projects to achieve their own desired expertise, using accountability measures through instructional agreements.
2. The basis of the students' curriculum building is the teacher's provision of literary and multimedia resources organized adaptively. The teacher becomes expert in scaffolding and facilitating feedback.
3. Knowledge is not a 'thing' that can be taught as an object: it is understood as deep, subjective and inter-subjective, inseparable from the identity process. Depth is defined in opposition to the commodification and commoditization of knowledge. Educative projects are open and become ways of preventing knowledge crystallization and sedimentation. Rather, it is about situated knowledge in action.
4. The focus is on deep processing, not standardized outcomes similar for all. There is room for diversity and flexibility, non-native speaker comfort, code-switching, and unique perspectives.
5. It targets trans-disciplinary values for a more sensible and wiser world—this way language learning becomes the means toward conflict resolution, ending war and poverty, re-greening the planet, and turning to politics for the human. Yet, rather than a dualistic view, the principle of the included middle (or third space) is applied, through which two apparently opposed elements can be integrated at a higher (still relative) level.

VI. EIGHT ADVANTAGES OF LEARNING A WORLD LANGUAGE IN DA

Learning a world language in the DA to world languages and cultures will help the learners to:

1. understand how self-motivation could be the best incentive for deep language learning,

2. provide themes, motives, templates and incentives for self-directed learning and self-determination,
3. empower the student to be the curriculum builder by scaffolding possibilities and making the instruction flexible,
4. emphasize the learning process rather than predetermined outcomes,
5. encourage individualized, peer-oriented, and project-based learning by focusing on cultural contents, value creation and social action,
6. consider grammar as story-telling about language, and
7. use formative, deep evaluation of integrated skills,
8. focus on value creation: highlight critical issues related to the respect of cultures, language status and discrimination, the colonial mindset and social justice, and linguistic human rights for peace building.

DA establishes a link between language education policies and an open curriculum design focusing on values and creative proficiency in action rather than imposed outcomes. It places the learner as the curriculum builder. (Tochon, 2014)

VI. CONCLUSION

In order to foster learners' communicative competence or language proficiency in their English in addition to their native language and increase their sensitivity to and understanding of other cultures, the integration of language and culture in education settings should accompany the experience of other cultures (Tochon and Karaman, 2009). Furthermore, in order to end collective self-destructive behavior through intercultural education and shared understanding emerging from proficiency in other languages, the Deep Approach encourages teachers to personalize instructional processes in reference to a changing context and the relevance and meaningfulness of the contents and tasks chosen and developed by the students are emphasized so that learning becomes a form of engagement.

DA fosters a critical attitude in learners that has been consigned to oblivion for many years and that will provoke a change in the vision of key aspects such as culture, human rights or social justice. It is a broad phenomenon that manifests a turning point in the way we reflect on a variety of disciplines. DA has seven instructional principles, at least five distinctions and eight advantages. Deep learning is sustainable and requires deep teaching. Deep teaching is learner-centered. It builds on the intrinsic motivation of the learner, authentic documents, and new information technologies when appropriate, conditional to integrating philosophical depth in their processing. Deep teaching is based on meaningfulness for the learner and is project-based. To teach life meaningful contents to students, the teacher needs to know what is meaningful to them and discuss meaningfulness in life. Learning and teaching have to meet life-goals.

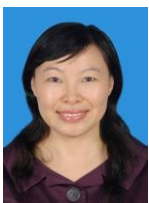
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