

Looking in the Mirror: Fostering Cultural Self-Awareness Through Task-Based Language Teaching

Saturday 2 March 2024 15:50 (30 minutes)

Developing intercultural competence in monolingual contexts such as Japan, albeit extremely important, can be particularly challenging. This presentation discusses a relatively atypical approach to help EFL students in starting to think critically about culture: developing cultural self-awareness. Cultural self-awareness, which is the ability to understand the intricacies of one's own culture, forms a crucial foundation for fostering intercultural competence, which requires one to navigate their own cultural background when interacting with interlocutors from other cultures. This presentation describes a series of lessons based on the framework of Task-Based Language Teaching methodology that were implemented in an EFL class in a Japanese university to foster the development of cultural self-awareness and knowledge. The tasks that will be outlined in the presentation, such as a YouTube video project and an intercultural exchange activity, may facilitate Japanese EFL students in building deeper knowledge of the complexities of their own culture, understanding how their experiences shape their thinking, and developing the ability to view their cultural practices from different perspectives.

Bio: ARORA Kriti is a graduate student of the Masters in International Language Education: TESOL program at Soka University. She has been engaged with Japanese university students in various capacities as a teaching assistant, discussion moderator, and writing consultant. Her research interests include personal learning environments, global citizenship, and intercultural competence.

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