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J301-SL

Final Paper SL Paper

What I have done

This semester, I have taken Japanese 301-SL, which focused on matters such as global education, social awareness, and equity. Outside of class, we gathered into groups to go and teach elementary and middle school level children about Japanese culture. This program aims to form of global community and global awareness through our lesson in teaching about Japanese Language and Culture. My role was leader of Group 2: my task was to gather the team each week, discuss our plans and create a new lesson. I assigned the team roles, such as gathering materials or gathering information pertaining to the culture lesson that we planned to teach. The lessons can be either lingual or cultural based with emphasis on creative and fun activities as to sustain the interest of the kids during the time we're with them. After each lesson, we were required to write a weekly reflection in Japanese about what we did, what went well and the challenges we faced.

In class, we participated in discussions that talk about topics such as epistemology, social identities, stereotypes, global education, global citizenship, cross cultural ethics, creating a multicultural classroom and so on. From those discussions, we were required to write a journal entry about what was talked about while reflecting on cross cultural aspects, Japanese and American, while citing the text and using internet resources to help support my thesis about the topic.

What I have learned from this experience

From this experience, I've learned to appreciate the teachers of our community. Teaching, especially elementary level kids, is exhausting. The dedication to teaching and educating our kids is a big task as well as their contribution to society. It's one thing to be a student since First Grade, its different now being on the other side of the fence, trying to teach.

However, our influence and presence is limited to only one semester: it's hard to make a big impact/impression on the kids when we only are there for a small time, but it's better than nothing.

Outcomes 1 through 4

1. Self and Social Awareness: Students deepen their understanding and analysis of the social, cultural and civic aspects of their personal and professional identities.

How I met the outcome: Through the readings and discussion in week 1 and 2, “The Dynamic System of Power, Privilege, and Oppression” and “Are marginalized Students Included in Your Lessons?” taught me about epistemology, positionality, and marginalization. `

Epistemology is the philosophy and understanding of the limits of human knowledge. It’s based and limited to one’s own experiences that they’ve had in their life. Positionality, is where one’s place is on this earth. Positionality can be traced to factors such as economic position, race, age, nationality, and life experiences. Through factors such as these, one can assess what their own, and others, epistemology is.

In the article, “The Dynamic System of Power, Privilege, and Oppression” , it said that if done successfully, individuals will come to a realization about their own positionality and the limits of their epistemology, and want to come into contact with new people and have conversations and experiences to further themselves. It isn’t natural to initially consider what another person’s positionality is, or what their epistemology is, but through interaction with others from different backgrounds as our own, we can come to an even greater understanding about who we are and who others are.

My own assessment of my positionality is that I am a white male, 23, whose going to college at CSUMB. Due to my good positionality, I am able to go to school and get an education while it’s being paid for by my family. It’s assumed that since I’m 23, I’m at the end of my college career and should be looking for a job.

Until I came to live in the Monterey Bay area, I didn’t really know much else about California except for where I grew up. Most of my epistemology was changed during the last 5 years of college and especially when I went to live and study abroad in Japan. Living in Japan changed my own views about the world and my own culture and understanding of the world around me.

2. Service and Social Responsibility: Students deepen their understanding of the social responsibility of professionals in their field or discipline, and analyze how their professional activities and knowledge can contribute to greater long-term societal well-being.

How I met the outcome: Through my own experience of being a service learner at King Elementary, I too was filling the position of “teacher” and providing cultural information to the children at the local elementary school in Marina. I was someone who was in a position of responsibility and influence to show the kids the positive aspects of other cultures. It was through our lessons that we were able to

teach kids about another culture outside of the US and promoting positive feelings toward multiculturalism. Due to Americans living in a country that's so greatly multi-racial, it is important to support the well-being of our society through the promotion of respect of other cultures.

Our lessons and games were aimed at providing the children with positive experiences from our lessons as to create a sustainable concept that while different people and cultures look different on the outside, we're the same inside. This is to promote society well-being as to support respect and well-being among one another rather than letting racial division create further social rifts. This was our responsibility to promote well-being among my society.

The professional contribution of teachers to our society's well-being: in their position, it is up to them to provide knowledge and understanding of a discipline to children. Written language cannot initially be understood by a child: they have to sit them down and teach them to focus and practice the language. The commitment of teachers to serving and teaching children to give them the skills and tools to be able to be a part of our society. Same thing with foreign language, mathematics, history, and so on. Unless teachers are there to give their time to provide youth with knowledge and understanding, our society will fall behind and crumble.

3. Community & Social Justice: Students evaluate how the actions of professionals and institutions in their field or discipline foster both equity and inequity in communities and society.

How I met the outcome: We participated in a "community scan" project where we gathered logistics on the area that I was doing my service at. Near King Elementary, the area included 4 different churches, a neighborhood, and was 10 minutes by car from CSUMB. The demographics suggest that most, if not all, of the local residents are Hispanic families. While demographics at King Elementary suggest that there is little racial diversity.

The benefit is that the kids have a sense of group to a community that they can recognize with culturally. For example, speaking the same language or sharing the same religion: from examples such as these they can find a sense of belongingness in this community. However, the disadvantage is that they're staying excluded to a single area and demographic, which is in contrast to how America is structured culturally as a melting pot of cultures around the world.

However, our presence promotes a positive image of those from different cultures and backgrounds, as to prevent negative matters in the future when the kids do come across people from backgrounds not similar to their own.

We also read "Diversity and Inclusion of Sociopolitical Issues in Foreign Language Classrooms: An Exploratory Survey". The article surrounds the question "Does language acquisition lead to the desire/understanding of others' cultures and way of life?" The article provides charts and results that show that basic language acquisition doesn't create interest: rather those who are in the advanced level and been studying the language for a longer time, the interest comes to be.

My time at King Elementary was brief and cannot for sure say that they acquired the language. Rather, this exposure may lead to further interest in other languages and other cultures that may even interest them.

4. Multicultural Community Building/Civic Engagement

Students learn from and work responsively and inclusively with diverse individuals, groups and organizations to build more just, equitable, and sustainable communities

How I met this outcome: I participated in this class's community service with a group that was mixed Japanese and American while going to the local elementary school to King Elementary, which included a class of all from Hispanic background.

My group was diverse and from different cultural and lingual backgrounds. We came together to work for a single purpose. When showing up to King Elementary, we exposed the kids to both Asian and White ethnicities through our presence being there. They worked and played with us in class as to provide racial equity through the introduction of Japanese culture and language.

For this outcome, we read the article "Creating a Multicultural Classroom Environment Childhood Education". The goal of our work is to:

1. Assist children with recognizing differences, as well as similarities, among all people
2. Encourage cooperative social skills. As children learn to accept differences and similarities among people, they can work and get along with others better.

The ways to achieve multicultural environmental classrooms are:

1. The classroom teacher's knowledge of diverse cultures.
2. A culturally diverse classroom environment is an attitude of acceptance and respect for other cultures.
3. The ability to add a multicultural perspective into curriculum planning and classroom management skills