

EXPERIENCING OUR GREAT DIVERSITY IN LANGUAGES

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OVERVIEW

With the classrooms becoming more and more diverse, this exercise is a tool to train students to value the knowledge of every single language of the world, especially, those spoken by other students in their classroom.

Themes: Diversity and Intercultural Relations – Migration

Further Subject: Geography

Connection to the Austrian National Curriculum of English:

Bildungs- und Lehraufgabe: „Möglichkeiten der Auseinandersetzung mit interkulturellen Themen“
Lehrstoff: „Hören, Lesen, an Gesprächen teilnehmen, zusammenhängendes Sprechen, Schreiben: A1“
References: BGBl. II Nr. 133/2000 Lehrplan
Lebendige erste Fremdsprache

Goals:

- Students realise that many languages are favoured in the classroom appreciate and value that fact.
- Students get to understand the meaning of “diversity” and the positive potential of such diversity when it comes to languages.
- Students are trained to use question words “Which”, “Why”, “How many”.
- Students discover the language competences gathered in their class through writing, drawing, group discussion, group work exercises.

Time Requirement: 2 lessons

Material Needed:

- Worksheets A, B, C
- Dictionary
- World map
- Pens
- Glue sticks
- Crayons
- 4 posters

PROCEDURE

Preparation

Worksheet A: Work instruction is on the work sheet.

Time requirement: approximately 30min

Worksheet B: You need 4 posters for this part of the lesson. Work instructions are on the worksheet. Time

requirement: approximately 50min

Worksheet C: Work instruction is on the worksheet.

Time requirement: approximately 20min.

Step 1: Tell the students that they are going to conduct an investigation about language diversity in their classroom. Ask them to guess how many languages are spoken in the world (about 7000). How many are spoken in Austria (about 250; source: www.wirlesen.org), in Vienna (about 250; source: wifwien.at), in their school, in their classroom? The last one is what they have to find out.

Step 2: Let the students have the Worksheet A, “Languages inquiry for you and one of your classmates”. Ask them to conduct the inquiry.

Step 3: After the students have completed step 2, let them sit in a circle. Spare enough time for discussion on question 8 of the worksheet A. Now let them put the outcomes together (Which are the favourite languages of their class?). In the circle they search and mark the countries where their favourite languages are officially spoken. That is the question on worksheet B.

Step 4: Students complete individually the writing exercise on worksheet C.

Step 5: Put them in group of 4 students. In the small groups, they tell their stories to each other and come out with the funniest situation of the group. After each funny story, let the other comment the situation. Is this realistic? Could it be otherwise? How would they react if they found themselves in a similar situation?

Step 6: Let the students go to new groups of 4. Tell them that they have to design posters to visualise the information they have collected throughout the exercise. The 1st group should design a poster on which the favourite languages of the classroom are indicated. The second group should work on the countries where these languages are spoken (for example with the flags of the countries or the distance to Austria). The 3rd group should design a poster on how to say “Hello” and “How are you?” in the favourite languages of the class. The 4th group should design a poster illustrating jobs that require knowledge of many languages.

Step 7: Let the students put up the posters in the classroom, after you have run a reflection on the exercise.

Reflection and Debriefing:

- What do you think is positive about the fact that we like so many languages in our classroom?

- How could this be useful for your future?
- Does it matter in your daily life?
- Does everybody in Vienna speak German? Why not?
Could it be useful to speak many languages? Why?
- What other areas of your life do you see diversity in?

Annexes:

- 1 Worksheet A: Languages inquiry for you and one of your classmates
- 2 Worksheet B: What are the favourite LANGUAGES in OUR CLASSROOM?
- 3 Worksheet C: Writing exercise

INFO BOX:

According to Ethnologue.com, there are nearly 7,000 languages spoken across the world today. 94% of the world's population speaks 6% of its languages, while 6% of the world's population speaks 94% of its languages.

The Linguistic Diversity Index measures the diversity of languages spoken in a country.

http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/maps/language-diversity-index/?ar_a=1

Source and literature:

Landscape is a project to increase understanding of language diversity through visualization and aggregation of knowledge. Here you can find lot of data and interactive games on language diversity.

<http://landscape.umd.edu/>

Harmon DAVID and Loh JONATHAN, The Index of Linguistic Diversity: A New Quantitative Measure of Trends in the Status of the World's Languages. 2009.
<http://hdl.handle.net/10125/4474>

Language diversity: This European campaign was dedicated to raise awareness to multilingualism and cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe

<http://language-diversity.eu/>

The celebration of linguistic diversity: Here you will find ready-to-use materials that teachers around the world used in school for the European Day of Languages.

<http://edl.ecml.at>

Annex 1

Worksheet A: Languages inquiry for you and one of your classmates

Answer the questions for yourself in whole sentences (10min)! Then take a pen of different colour and interview your partner and take notes (10min)!

Yourself	Your partner
1. How many languages can you speak?	
2. Which languages can you speak?	
3. Which language(s) do you speak at home?	
4. What are your favourite languages; including those you can not speak (max. 3)?	
5. What countries are your favourite languages officially spoken in? Write down all the countries you think are right:	
6. How do you say “Hallo” in your 3 favourite languages?	
7. How do you say “How are you?” in your 3 favourite languages?	
8. Think of three jobs for which one needs many languages; explain why they are needed in those jobs.	

Annex 2

Worksheet B: What are the favourite LANGUAGES in OUR CLASSROOM?

Write down all of them! Answer this question together with you teacher.

MARK where your favourite languages are spoken.
 Mark also the results of your classmates in a different colour



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Annex 3

Worksheet C: Writing exercise

Imagine your family has moved to another country and you don't speak the language. Describe your first day at school and think of a funny situation.
