



Transformative Learning in a Social Justice Oriented Language Classroom

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CERCLL

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The Plan for Today

- Context
- Transformative Learning
- Teaching practices contributing to transformation

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

WHAT SOCIAL JUSTICE
ISSUES YOU WANT
YOUR LANGUAGE
COURSE TO ADDRESS?

SOCIAL JUSTICE
CONTENT IS
NOT ENOUGH.

Multilingualism, for example.



'Speak English, You're in America,' Woman Tells Latina Shoppers in Rant Caught on Camera

Man Screams at Spanish-Speaking Restaurant Staff to 'Speak English'

"This Is America, Speak English": Latinas On The Fear Of Speaking Spanish In Public

"[He was] saying that we shouldn't be speaking Spanish, that we should speaking English and that we should go back to wherever we came from."

ANDREA GONZÁLEZ-RAMÍREZ
MAY 16, 2018, 2:57 PM



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Dr. Ed Hull
@doc_hull

I'll never drink another Coke again!! How can you have a commercial where they sing God Bless America in a foreign language? '#Merica

6:51 PM · Feb 2, 2014



brad potter
@TallCottonBrad

Who in the hell, thought of singing "God Bless America" in any language other than English. May not drink Coke.

6:51 PM · Feb 2, 2014



Lisa Lewis
@lisa_mlewis

Ok sorry Coke but you can't sing god bless America in different languages, that defeats the purpose

6:49 PM · Feb 2, 2014



Caleb Callahan
@05_ccallahan

That coke commercial was the stupidest thing I've ever seen! This is freaking America

6:50 PM · Feb 2, 2014

A multilingual
Version of "America
THE BEAUTIFUL" is
Sung in a soda
commercial at the
2014 super bowl...

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Students also bring these assumptions into the language classroom...

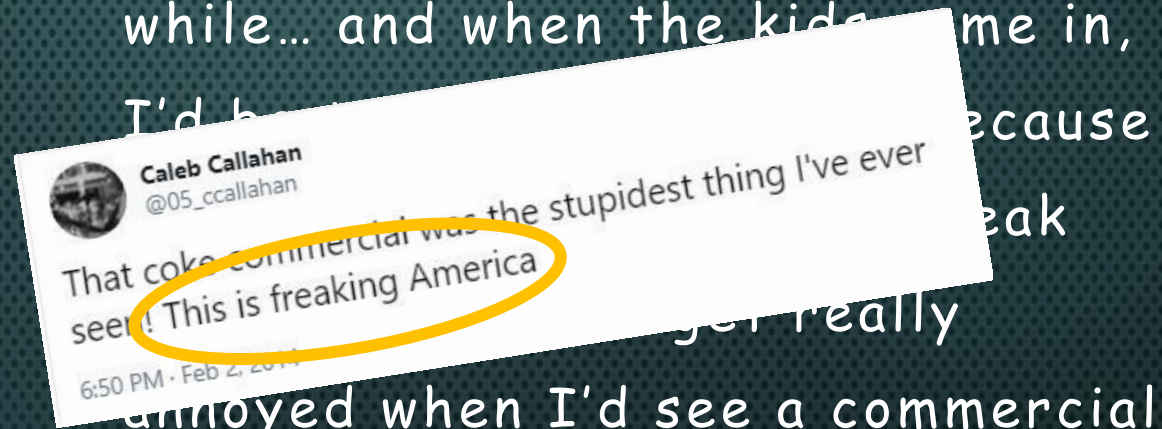
I thought that somebody who is teaching in an American school should have English as their first language. I know that sounds ignorant, but with the accent, it's like I have to do a little more work to understand what she says sometimes, when I shouldn't have to. Other than Spanish, which I have to figure out, I also have to play with her English.

Students also
bring these
assumptions
into the
language
classroom...

I used to get really mad when I'd
be driving and I'd see a billboard in
Spanish. I worked at the zoo for a
while... and when the kids came in,
I'd be talking to the kids, because
the parents don't f***ing speak
English. I used to get really
annoyed when I'd see a commercial
in Spanish. You know, last time I
checked, this was the United
States of America.

Students also bring these assumptions into the language classroom...

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annoyed when I'd see a commercial in Spanish. You know, last time I checked, this was the United States of America.

What is Transformative Learning?

ADULTS REEVALUATE PREVIOUSLY HELD BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES AND BEGIN TO INTERPRET EXPERIENCE IN A NEW WAY

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Transformative Learning is not...



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Transformative Learning is

- ▶ Not a one-time event
- ▶ Not inevitable
- ▶ Not consistent across instances
- ▶ Not a process we can micromanage or force

Instrumental

Declarative and Procedural Knowledge

Course Content

Grammar, Vocabulary, and Language Skills

Learning and Acquisition

Transformative

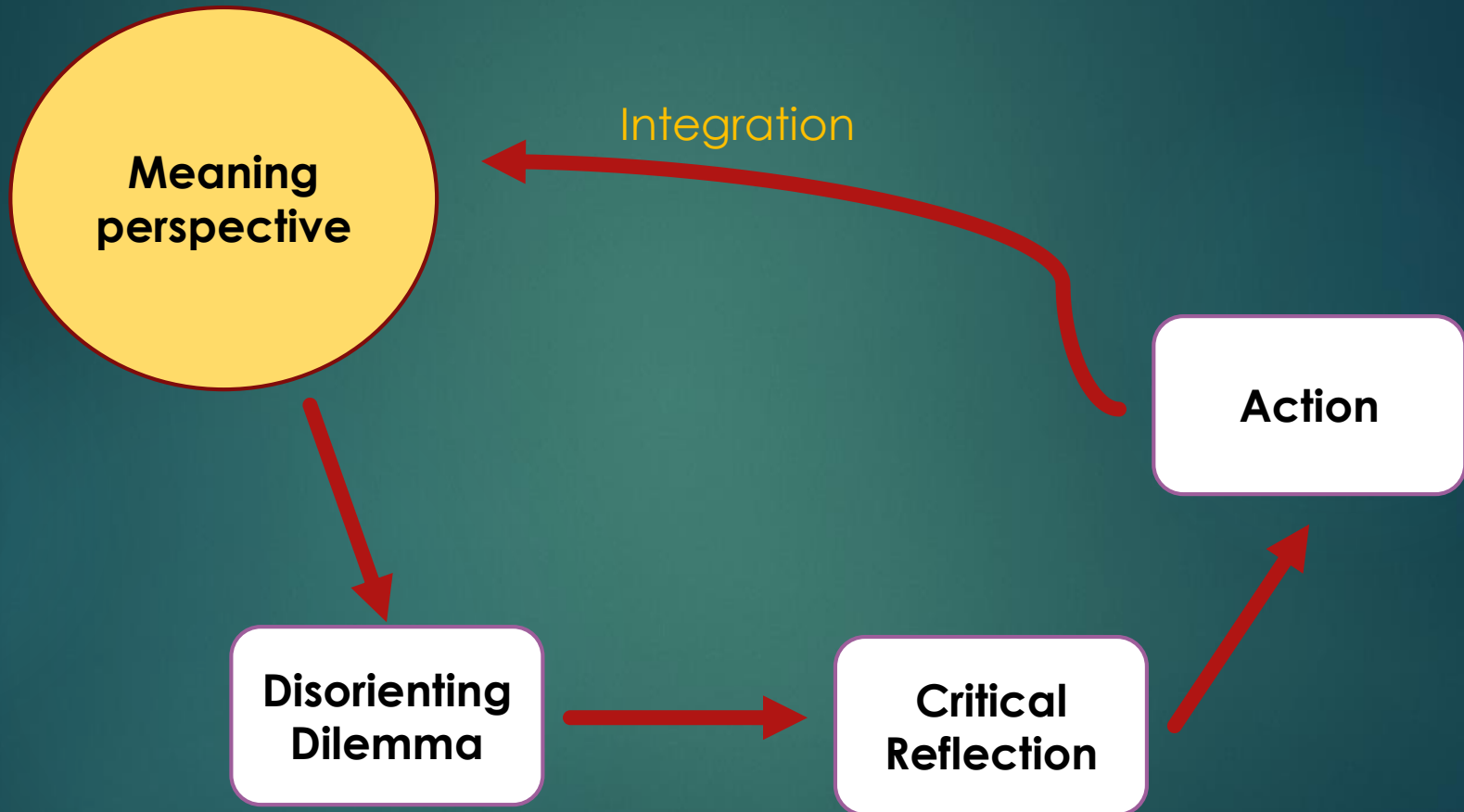
Social Justice Outcomes

Making Sense of Experience in New Ways

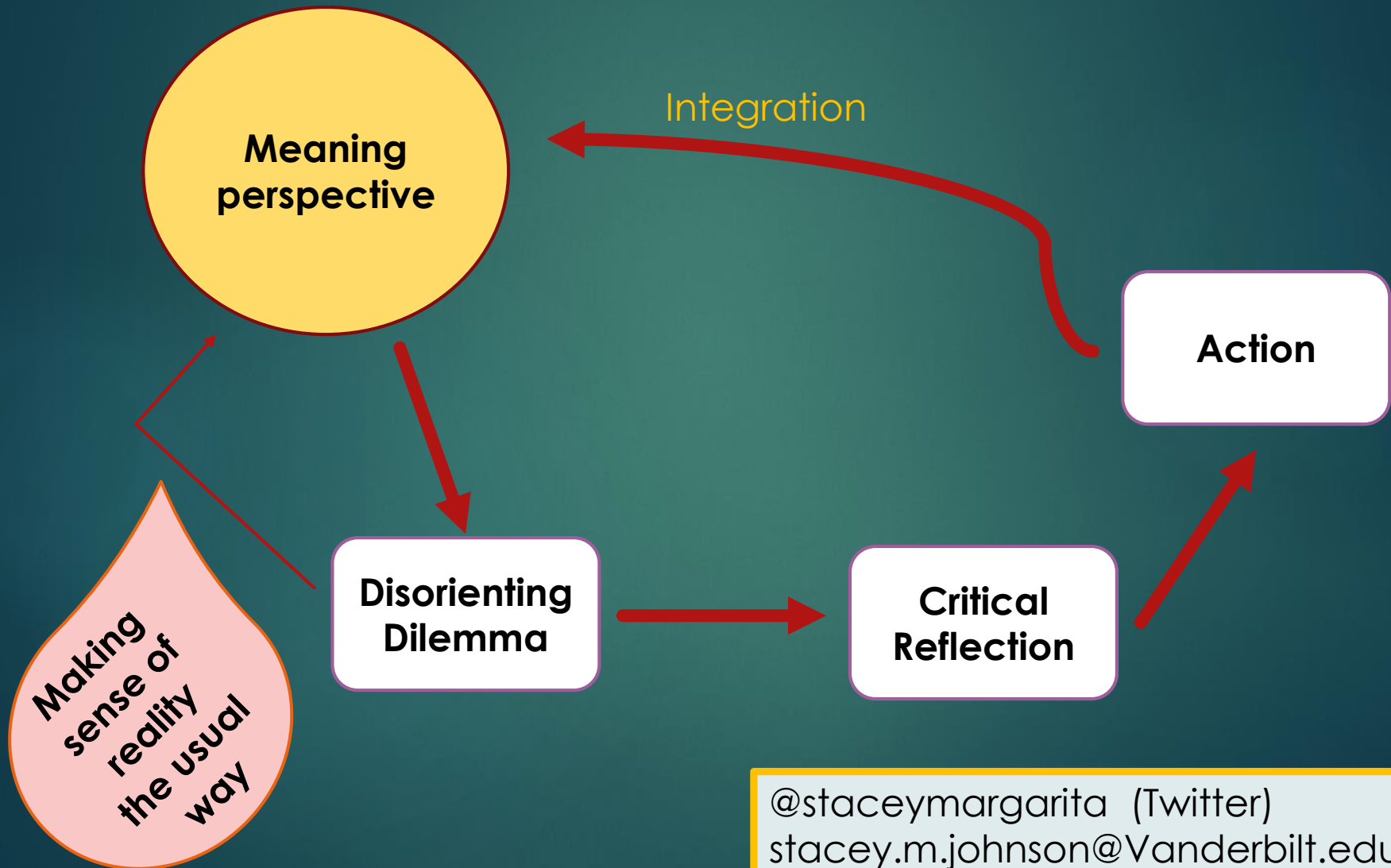
Critically Reflecting on and Adopting Language Ideologies

Intercultural Competence

STAGES OF TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING



STAGES OF TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING



REFLECTION QUESTION

IN YOUR EXPERIENCE,
WHAT KINDS OF ACTIVITIES
PROMOTE TRANSFORMATIVE
LEARNING IN YOUR
LANGUAGE CLASSROOM?

Stages of transformative Learning

1. A disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame
3. A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions
4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
6. Planning a course of action
7. Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
8. Provisional trying of new roles
9. Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships; and
10. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective. (Mezirow, 1991, p. 168-9)

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Disorienting dilemmas

1. Contact with L2 communities either in person or through authentic resources
2. Exploring cultural and linguistic differences
3. Confronting one's own limitations as a language learner

Internal Reflective Processes

1. Exploration of own emotional and rational responses
2. Critical assessment of one's own assumptions
3. Charting trajectory, planning next steps

See Crane & Sosulski (2020) in Foreign language Annals for a detailed exploration of Critical Reflection towards transformative learning

Relational Processes

1. Recognize membership in a group of peers who are also experiencing transformation
2. Develop meaningful relationships through the language of study

Action



1. Imagine next steps or chart a trajectory
2. Explore, try out, and develop competence and confidence in new roles

Students built a positive relationship with their instructor...

I don't have the random anger that I had before... Now, as opposed to getting mad when I hear [Spanish], I try to, more than anything, pay more attention to it because I kind of want to figure out what they're saying. It's kind of flipped. I don't shun it like I did before. And a lot has to do with [the instructor's] presentation of who she is and how it's being presented to me in a way I'm seeing as a positive thing.

Every day, Students were asked the question, “Has anything happened outside of class that connects to what we are doing in class?” ...

I am trying to integrate the things she's teaching. I like how she presents the class and I like those things that we fill out every day that say, “has anything happened outside of class?” I really like that and just that question. Just being asked that, it makes me want to have an answer. Just the fact that you care or you want to know is any of this sh*t affecting my life other than just for school and grades. It makes me want to have a good answer for that.

CHARTING OUR TRAJECTORY

WHAT CLASSROOM PRACTICES ARE
ALREADY IN YOUR TOOLBOX FOR:

- GENERATING DISORIENTING
DILEMMAS?
- CREATING SPACE FOR REFLECTION?
- BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS?
- TAKING ACTION?