IN OTHER WORDS

Source

This activity was developed by Oana Nestian Sandu.

Themes

- ▶ Social and political context
- ▶ Differences in perspectives
- ▶ Stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination

Competences addressed

- ▶ Attitudes: openness and curiosity towards diversity
- ▶ Knowledge of stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination
- ▶ Skills: critical thinking

Complexity : Level 4

Group size : any

Time : 90 minutes

Objectives

- ▶ To develop participants' critical thinking
- ▶ To reflect upon the role of the media in promoting stereotypes
- ▶ To understand the potential of media to promote diversity.

Materials

Newspaper articles in which stereotypes are present, a handout with guidelines for the critical analysis of newspaper articles.

Preparation

This activity can be preceded by the activity "Alternative narratives". After analysing different types of stories, participants can engage more actively in combining the stories and discussing how an unbiased, diverse and intercultural perspective can be presented in the media.

The activity can also be preceded by "The intercultural history line". In this flow, participants get to first analyse the diversity or lack thereof in history teaching and then analyse how diversity is present in current news reporting.

Prepare the handout with the guidelines for each small group of participants of 4-5 people. Prepare two articles per small group (you may use the same article twice).

Instructions

1. Tell participants that they will work in small groups to analyse newspaper articles and rewrite those that promote stereotypes.

2. In groups of 4-5 people, participants receive a newspaper article (a different article for each group) that presents migrants or minorities in a stereotypical manner.

3. Participants are asked to identify the stereotypes promoted in the article through key words, phrases, images, biased statistics, lack of context, statements, etc. The guidelines given as a handout can help them. Once they have analysed the article, ask them to rewrite the article from an intercultural per- spective, without stereotypes and promoting diversity.

4. Participants return to the larger group and share their rewritten article.

5. A debriefing discussion follows.

Debriefing and evaluation

Discuss stereotypes and the role of the media using the following questions.
- ▶ How did you find analysing the article? What about rewriting it?
- ▶ Do you often encounter this type of article or is it an exception?
- ▶ Which groups do you think are presented more often in a stereotypical way in the media?
- ▶ How can we verify that information is accurate and reliable?
- ▶ How can we raise awareness of cases of stereotypical representations? What counter-strategies could work best?

Tips for facilitators

You can adapt the guidelines and include other aspects relevant to the articles you are using.

Participants might need internet access to check facts and events presented in the article.

Variations

With a less experienced group you can do only the first part of the activity – analysing the article – and skip the rewriting part or run it as a second session.

You can provide participants with articles to analyse or ask them to choose their own articles (either on the spot or beforehand).

Media other than the written press can be used (TV shows, TV news, social media postings, blogs, etc.).

Suggestions for follow-up

This activity can be followed by "Where do you stand?", an activity that gives participants the opportunity to share different opinions about relevant topics.

Participants can engage in a media monitoring action for a set period of time (a week, a month) of the newspapers most read by young people in their country/city/region to identify the level of bias in their reporting.

Handout: guidelines for the critical analysis of newspaper articles

1. Sources and context
   - – Are the sources clearly provided and are they reliable?
   - – Is there sufficient information about the context in which the news happened?

2. Intentions: look for words and phrases that:
   - – contain stereotypes about a group or racist remarks or present the group in a bad light
   - – incite hate or violence
   - – blur the lines between facts and opinions.

3. Images: look for:
   - – stereotypical representations and images that do not represent the context of the news.

4. Statistics and data: look for:
   - – arguments based on statistics or data and whether they come from reliable, attributed sources.

5. Representation of diversity: look for:
   - – a diversity of perspectives on the situation
   - – representation of ethnicity and cultural affiliations that is not relevant for the topic and reinforces stereotypes about a group.