How do others see us? Putting questions to a community

e-lang citizen team

Teacher Sheet

Task

Your students will be given the following task.

> Do you want to know how speakers of the language you are learning see your country?
>
> On a question-and-answer site, you will ask members of the community how they see your country.
>
> You can discuss their answers with them. In class, you can compare these answers with each other and with your own view of your country.

Site

https://www.quora.com

The site is available in 24 languages: Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, Swedish, etc. To access the different versions, replace "www" in the URL with the domain code of the country that usually corresponds to the language: fr.quora.com for French, es.quora.com for Spanish, de.quora.com for German, etc.

Quora is an online social network that allows you to participate in question-and-answer threads.

Other sites can be used. The teacher will choose according to the popularity and their relevance to the learners in the given context.

- https://www.reddit.com

CEFR level - For A2 level and above

Objectives

Digital citizenship and literacy

	Dimensions covered in task	(Potential) specific objectives
Digital Citizenship	Critical	Be aware of the strengths and limitations of an automatic translation tool to understand a text in a foreign language (if learners use one to understand the replies).
	Safe	Be aware of the information you give about yourself and the possible impact of this action.
Interaction Literacy	Technologically mediated communication literacy	Know how to address the users of a platform to elicit their feedback. Be aware of the differences between various platforms and communities (if you have done the same task on several platforms).

Main language activity

- Written interaction: Initiating, reading and reacting to an online discussion.
- Written reception: Understanding the replies to the initial question.

Intercultural aspects

This task has a strong intercultural dimension. It allows learners to:

- compare ways in which the learner's country is seen from outside the country;
- try to understand where these perceptions may come from;
- become aware of factors surrounding stereotypes;
- learn how to respond to stereotyped opinions.

Possible steps

It may be interesting to carry out this task in several steps:

- Ask the students to formulate the question and include who they are and why they are asking the question (if all the learners come from the same country, one account will suffice for the whole class and can be used for other collective tasks related to other questions).

- Ask the students to answer the question themselves (how do they see their own country?) on a piece of paper and collect the answers.

- Post the question yourself or have it posted at a strategic time to reach a large amount of readers and therefore receive as many responses as possible (for example, choose an early evening in the country whose users you are targeting - if you are asking the question in Spanish, you could choose an early evening in Spain).

- After a day or two, look at the answers. This can be done online. You can also print the answers out for students or make screenshots and project them on-screen in class.

- Initiate a class discussion on the different ways of looking at the country, try to find/understand the reasons behind them and compare these with the students' answers, which may have been collected in a single document or a document suitable for projection.

It could be interesting to ask the same question on several online platforms to see if differences in the answers emerge. This will also allow a discussion on the ergonomic and technological choice of platforms.

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Student Sheet

Task

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You can discuss their answers with them. In class, you can compare these answers with each other and with your own view of your country.

Site

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Quora is an online social network that allows you to start and participate in question-and-answer threads.

Other sites can be used. You may choose a site you already know and/or use, or try a new platform in order to discover differences and similarities between them.

- https://www.reddit.com

CEFR level - For A2 level and above

Objectives

Digital citizenship and literacy

While completing this task, you can:

- learn how to address users of a platform to receive their answers;

- learn about the impact of giving out personal information on a platform;

- learn about the different ways of looking at the same thing due to different values and attitudes;

- If you are using a machine translation tool to understand the responses, be aware of the strengths and limitations of such a tool

Intercultural dimension

This task should help you to reflect on how people see a country in different ways, depending on their history, origin, values and attitudes.

Hints

Keep in mind who you are addressing

To discover the social rules of the site, you can read the "Acceptable Use Policy": https://uk.quora.com/about/acceptable_use. If you wish to consult the same page in another language, replace "uk" (in the URL) with the domain of the country corresponding to its language ("de" for German, "es" for Spanish...). If there is no version in the language you are looking for, Quora will propose to redirect you to the English version.

You can make a list of do's and don'ts.

Think about the best way to ask your question to receive answers. For example, explain who you are and why you are asking the question.

Work on the language-related aspects

You can look at several questions asked on Quora and analyse how these questions are formulated.

Consider the advice given by Quora in the window where you will post your question.

Note that your question can be posted anonymously.

If you have trouble understanding the answers, you may want to use a machine translation tool, such as DeepL: https://www.deepl.com/translator.

For you to think about

While completing this task, you can reflect on the following:

- What did you learn from the comparison of the different points of view?

- Did you publish the question anonymously or under your real name? Why? If you want to post on this platform with a personal account, what approach would you adopt (anonymously or identified)?

- When you register on the site, you must choose a number of fields of interests. What do you think about this? In your opinion, why does the site ask for this information? What does it mean for you? What does it mean for the site owners?

- If you used a machine translation tool to understand the answers, how helpful was it? What seemed to cause problems for the translator? Were you able to grasp the original responses with the help of the translator? Did it help you understand everything? How would you rate the linguistic quality of the translations?

- If you are a member of another community similar to Quora, what differences do you notice in terms of ergonomics, technological choices, etc.? Which platform do you prefer? Why?