Notes on didactic and pedagogical practices based on intercultural education

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ABSTRACT. The need for research and studies on intercultural education is justified by two intensely growing processes, namely, international academic mobility and migration of families with school-age children. Current analysis discusses possibilities of a significant assessment practice of students' Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). It also comprises recommendations for teaching and pedagogical practices for Spanish language classes in basic education. Discussion points out that assessment by dimensions Discovery Knowledge, Empathy, Respect for Others, Tolerance in Ambiguity, Behavioral Flexibility and Communicative Consciousness didactically transfers to the presentation and practice of the syllabus of the formal curriculum of school years, including the elementary school.

Keywords: interculturality, students' mobility, assessment of Intercultural Communicative Competence.

Considerações sobre práticas didático-pedagógicas sob a perspectiva da educação intercultural

RESUMO. Dois intensos e crescentes processos têm justificado a necessidade de pesquisas e estudos voltados à educação intercultural. Trata-se da mobilidade acadêmica internacional e do fluxo migratório de famílias com filhos em idade escolar. O presente artigo discute possibilidades de uma prática significativa de avaliação da Competência Comunicativa Intercultural de estudantes, incluindo-se recomendações de práticas didático-pedagógicas para aulas de língua espanhola na educação básica. Evidencia-se, com a discussão, que a avaliação pelas dimensões Descoberta de Conhecimento, Empatia, Respeito ao Outro, Tolerância à Ambiguidade, Flexibilidade Comportamental e Consciência Comunicativa transpõe-se didaticamente para a apresentação e a prática dos conteúdos programáticos do currículo formal dos anos escolares que compreendem o ensino fundamental.

Palavras-chave: interculturalidade, mobilidade estudantil, avaliação de CCI.

Introduction

Two intensely growing processes explain the need of researches and studies addressing intercultural education. We refer to international academic mobility and the migration of families with children at school age.

Student Mobility Programs (SMP), through which students can expose themselves to university and culture of other countries, have been developed with the help of agreements. The SMP growing is explained through the enlargement of the chain of international cooperation of higher education institutions (HEI) as well as the appreciation of an international formation, both by society and the potential employers. The Program Science without Borders (SwB) joined the SMP in Brazil in 2011. Due to its dimension and numbers, this federal government program can become acknowledged as the greatest initiative towards international academic mobility of higher education students of all times. Until the first months of 2015, 77.806 scholarships had already been implemented. According to the program schedule, the government hopes this number reaches 101.00 scholars until the end of 2015.

Concerning migration, Brazil has been highlighted as a destination of young people and families from Latin America countries as well as other continents. According to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2010), the country received 86,7% more foreigners than in 2000. Regarding official data from the Ministry of Justice, in 2010, Brazil welcomed 459 Haitians. In the following year, the number rose up to 2.644 and it keeps growing in geometrical progression. Only in 2013, the number of immigrants with permanent residence visa achieved nearly 14.000.

All these new immigrants already demonstrate interest in going to a Brazilian school, which places the country in a demand situation similar to North American and European countries.

Based on studies concerning intercultural education in Portugal, for instance, we assume that new and major migration in Brazil start to impose, both upon the teacher and the one under formation, especially the Portuguese Language teacher, the challenge to deal not only with a culturally diverse Brazilian population, but also with children, teenagers and young adults from neighbor and distant countries.

Indeed, as Sequeira (2011, speech presented at the 10th Congress of International Association of Lusitanian, Faro, Portugal) observes, the European organs that deal with educational issues derived from the process of unification intend to establish a hard balance between the strictly communicative contents and the intercultural ones. By the way, the Educational Scientific Council of Continuing Education of Portugal has been emphasizing the formation of teacher on an international and intercultural base. Some programs demonstrate this experience as follows: 'the foreign languages teacher: a cultural mediator"; 'communicating through difference – growing and alternative methods of communication'; 'Portuguese language and integration in the welcoming community'; 'the others and I; 'educating towards the linguistic and cultural diversity'.

The experience of the Portuguese HEI concerning interculturality is justified through the importance of the theme around the entire world, especially for Portugal. The thesis *The Intercultural Competence in Teaching,* presented by Diana Manuel Sousa Branco, in 2011, aims to measure the necessity of a teacher training based on intercultural education. Using a structured methodology through questionnaires and interviews with teachers of basic education, the author proves not only the necessity of initial training, but also the continuous training for teachers in the scope of intercultural competence. As for the author, it deals, if not only, with the demands related to the growing necessity of dealing with the cultural heterogeneity present in society and at the schools that welcome students and citizens with linguistic and cultural diversities.

If, on one hand, mobility programs such as SwB are fully developed, on the other hand, the achievement of their aims is at an incipient stage of scientific treatment. For maintenance and, ideally, the addition of awareness and engagement of academic community, the programs of internationalization must be monitored and assessed systematically. Our defense for an assessment is supported by Deardoff (2004, p. 90),

> In concert with growing demands for accountability and improvement, there is also increasing pressure to evaluate the educational effectiveness of such internationalization efforts within curriculum and programs, and with a specific focus on what students know and can do as a result of their college learning experiences. Student learning outcomes (SLO) assessment has been promulgated as the primary means for providing evidence of student learning to be used in strengthening programs.

Although studies concerning the evaluation of Intercultural Communicative Competence are not numerous, we can claim that, as in any other process of evaluation, this also benefits the management of international cooperation, as it can diagnose problems and point the necessary intervention.

The incipient nature of researches and studies concerning contributions towards the didactic-pedagogical practice in multicultural classrooms is also realized in Europe and Brazil. From researches such as Branco's (2011), we can claim that most of basic education teachers working at the moment does not know the fundamentals, neither the meaningful practices of recognition, appreciation and a consequent development of the ICC dimensions of their students.

Assuming that, in a brand-new growing family migration flow, the Brazilian school lacks, as well as in Portugal, principles and procedures in order to foster and evaluate the students' ICC, this paper focuses on basic education. Our aim is to discuss possibilities of a meaningful practice of evaluation of students' ICC, including recommendations of didactic-pedagogical practices for elementary school Spanish classes.

About ICC

The concept of culture we deal with comes from two authors. The first one, Deardorff (2009), explains that culture is related to values, attitudes, rituals/customs and behavior patterns to which people are exposed since their birth (for instance: respect, religious events, behaviors, dance, culinary, monuments, beliefs, among others), and they are passed on to later generations and kept by them. In turn, Bennett (1993) created and defined two relevant concepts for our study: Objective Culture and Subjective Culture. As for him, the first one regards concrete products, such as movies, songs and works of art, institutionalized by people who belong to a certain social group. On the other hand, the Subjective Culture is related to psychological aspects that characterize a group of people, such as their daily thought and behavior. In other words, whereas for the Objective Culture the institutions

created by the subjects of a society itself are considered, the Subjective Culture includes more abstract levels of manifestation, for instance, values, beliefs and behavior.

The Subjective Culture comprehensiveness turns the target language knowledge an element to be didactic-pedagogically pursued. Besides the knowledge regarding the elements that rule a language functioning, we claim that the cultural knowledge integrates a foreign language teaching. Therefore, according to Hanna (2013), a foreign language learner will need an intercultural approach in the teaching process.

Genc and Bada (2005) claim that learners must, through a new language acquisition, understand and interact with people who are culturally different. This context allows suggesting what Hanna (2013) calls 'natural extension' of the concept of communicative competency. We refer to the concept of ICC, more specifically, which concerns the movement of going beyond our own culture and stimulating the ability to relate with individuals belonging to different cultures and languages.

Fantini (2006, p. 12) defines this competence as "[...] a complex of abilities needed to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself". Deardorff (2009), in turn, understands intercultural competence as appropriate and effective management of interaction among people who represent affective, cognitive and behavioral differences concerning the world.

Then, we mean ICC involves well-succeeded interactions with individuals from different cultures, as they will not only deal with linguistic information, but they will also know how to relate with people from other culture and language.

Deardorff (2009) explains that each individual has native communicative competence (CC1) and, when keeping intercultural contacts, it is developed, resulting in the cultural competence 2 (CC2). Thus, the author claims that an individual who only communicates in their own vernacular or a person who has exclusive contact with their native culture does not develop intercultural competence. Keeping this line of reasoning, it is possible to infer that the development of communicative competence extends to individuals who relate with other cultures.

In fact, what can be understood from these assumptions is the need to view foreign languages teaching from a different perspective. We refer to intercultural education, whose foundations are better expressed by the definition of interculturality, designed by Fornet-Betancourt (2004, p. 12, author's emphasis) as "[...] attitude or willingness through which the human being

gets capable of and gets used to living 'their' indentitarian references regarding the so-called Others".

When brought into the educational practice, it is clear this concept brings some different implications. First, there is the demand of an open attitude from the teacher to embody different contents and activities when designing their lessons and, secondly, new knowledge on how to develop ICC in classroom is required. Thus, it concerns the encouragement of a 'dense description', according to Geertz (2014). By this concept, the teachers and learners are recognized as modern ethnographers and the classroom as the villages, characterized by essentially meaningful contents.

The teacher's challenge to intervene interculturally seems to be greater in times of migration flows resumption in Brazil. The teacher is acclimated to school, which traditionally has some difficulties in dealing with plurality, being more comfortable with the homogenization and standardization (Moreira e Candau, 2003). Then, this professional is invited to open spaces for diversity, difference and culture crossing. It is a teacher's practice which must aim at:

- the political right to interact with the Other, to learn to respect the diversity in its otherness;

- the political right to a dialogue where I is not egocentric; and

- the right to a public space of political intervention, which ensures visibility and social representation (Luna, 2015).

For a practice of ICC assessment

According to what was discussed along the text, a multicultural classroom demands a comprehensive didactic of knowledge related to intercultural education. According to Fleuri (2001), intercultural education must involve, in pedagogy of meeting until its last consequences, all the subjects within the school scope, questioning the monoculture and its prevailing paradigms. Notably, what we intend to express in this article is that the school can aim at a systematic formation, in a way it develops, in major or minor groups, attitudes, behaviors and competences of understanding other cultures and greater communicative and social interaction. Thus, a meaningful practice of ICC assessment allows identifying the current state of learners' ability facing real situations, including the interaction with the Other.

The teacher is in charge of diagnosing the real state of these abilities and then it allows a planning that values and allows this competence development. The teacher can make use of several manifestations through which we can verify the existence and degree of ICC. It is given through behaviors or how we interpret them. In other words,

when receiving external stimulus from the Other, their behavior, their most peculiar cultural manifestation, we react through verbal, written or spoken manifestations. These reactions can demonstrate more or less opening towards the different, bigger or smaller behavioral adaptability and bigger or smaller knowledge upon a culture of contact. These reactions to the diverse cultural contact become input for the ICC assessment. As an example, for Barrocas (2008), a foreign language speaker who has acquired ICC can eliminate causes of misunderstanding that interfere in a certain meaning or connotation in the foreign language. Another illustration, according to this author is

> The interculturally skilled foreign language speaker is aware of the fact that their culture prevails in their particular home context and that was why they assimilated this culture instead of their country's subculture (Barrocas, 2008, p. 16).

For the ICC assessment – viewed as the individual's ability to interact appropriately with people from other cultures and show opening, knowledge and adaptability in these intercultural meetings – these inputs and reactions can come from three different approaches: the ones that use indirect tools, such as questionnaires and inventories; the ones that use direct tools, such as interviews, dramatization and task simulations; and yet, the combination of both. Agreeing with Schaefer (2014), Fantini (2006) and Straffon (2003), we stand for the purpose of the combination of direct and indirect methods, which reveal more layers and nuances in the process of evaluation of intercultural competence than in the ones which are discerned by indirect evaluations themselves.

The ICC assessment tools proposed in this study are grounded in European authors such as Byram (1997), who created the project INCA (Intercultural Competence Assessment Project) [1], which aims to develop evaluation tools of ICC, including online, among others.

The dimensions for the evaluator are the following: 1. Tolerance towards Ambiguity: ability to accept ambiguous situations and know how to deal with them; 2. Behavioral Flexibility: ability to adapt the individual's own behavior in cultural situations different from themselves; 3. Communicative Awareness: ability to relate linguistic components to cultural contents and deal consciously in different cultural contexts; 4. Discovery of Knowledge: ability to acquire new culture knowledge and use it, together with abilities and attitudes, in the interaction between several cultures; 5. Respect to the Other: ability to respect the other's culture, deconstructing stereotypes of foreign culture and the pretension to only the

individual's own culture is worth; and 6. Empathy: ability to understand what the others think and feel, put oneself on the others' shoes in concrete situations. For the assessed one, there are three dimensions, i.e., simplifications of the six evaluator's dimensions. 1. Opening: it means to be open to the other in different cultural situations (Tolerance towards Ambiguity + Respect to the Other); 2. Knowledge: it means to want to know not only facts concerning the other culture, but also know the other's feeling. (Discovery of Knowledge + Empathy); and 3. Adaptability: the ability to adapt behavior and styles of the individual's communication. (Behavioral Flexibility + Communicative Awareness).

The group of ICC assessment tools to which we referred was developed by Schaefer (2014). Proved the lack of methodological studies on ICC, this author's study was characterized as a proposal of ICC assessment of university students. This group is composed of[2]

> [...] two dynamics of dramatization (role-plays): Dynamic 1 and Dynamic 2; A scenario, i.e., an open questionnaire about the content of a video named Building the Multicultural Team, available at *bigworldmedia.com*; Finally, a self-evaluation, i.e., an open questionnaire (debriefing) with questions concerning the subjects' development during the three activities. (Schaefer, 2014, p. 48).

Tested in university students groups, the tool focuses, especially but not exclusively, on students in mobility. As we can infer from Table 1[3], the tool is composed of the following components: activities (which can be scenario, dynamic, tasks simulation and debriefing); question / role (which refers to the number of the question, or the role / function 1 of the subjects); identified ICC (concerning one of the six dimensions previously described); and level (of ability, basic, intermediate or full).

In order to ease visualization, we created a recurrence table, whose aim is to gather the appearances of each dimension and afterwards classify them into Basic, Intermediate and Full. In the end, the sum allows to observe which level the student could reach (Table 2).

The teacher's knowledge regarding the ICC level of their students, considered as integrant of a multicultural group, no matter their nationality, becomes essential for the (re)planning of their lessons. If, for instance, the teacher identifies that a student's or group's ICC if Full, but in a specific dimension it is Intermediate or Basic, their planning can focus on such need through activities that may develop it. Similarly, dimensions that appear in

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[1] The site of the *Intercultural Competence Assessment Project* (INCA) is available at: <http://www.incaproject.org/index.htm>.

[2] To access the description of the table of activities, see Schaefer's research (2014, p. 48 a 63).

[3] This table gathers the partial data of a research on ICC of university students in mobility by the Program Science without Borders, presented by Luna and Sehnem (2015).

lower numbers can be (re)dimensioned to receive attention for its development in class. As an example, we note that 'Discovery of Knowledge' was ten times recurrent and the obtained assessment was Intermediate and, on the other hand, 'Respect to the Other' was only once recurred, with Full evaluation. We want to claim that the recurrence and the evaluation itself are complementary and allow the teacher a comprehensive view of the needs and possibilities to enlarge their student's ICC collection.

The combination proposed by the assessment model can be efficient, for it allows the appearance of all dimensions of this ICC model. The lack of one or more tools can avoid the appearance of one or more dimensions, making a more comprehensive and complete observation difficult. Another relevant aspect is that this model allows using different activities to be adapted for the target-audience, due to age and schooling.

We claim that a meaningful assessment of ICC needs to count with proper tools. The recommended model is not single, although as it was observed, it works as a student's diagnosis and allows the prospection of following activities for the foreign language teacher and, by extension, for the Basic Education teacher. We point out activities that develop intercultural abilities, which can be taken from already existing materials, such as authentic texts in circulation or didactic books of foreign languages or related subjects, such as the ones we propose here.

For classes as cultural meetings

Our conception of a classroom as a village may have been made clear, as well as the teachers and students as modern ethnographers, a situation in which we put the intercultural activities into practice through new linguistic contacts.

The following suggestions derive from the adaptation and application of activities that were produced from the theoretical constructs with intercultural basis by the authors in learning situations. As a summary cutout and to demonstrate how to develop a unit of teaching, as well as to cover the aim of creating an intercultural proposal in foreign language teaching, we selected activities of the didactic book of Spanish *Español Sin Fronteras 2* (2007).

Table 1. ICC assessment table.

Activity	Question/role	Answer/behavior	identified ICC	Level
SCENARIO	1	Because Tom, the leader, wants to start the business meeting and she thinks he does not care about people. (sic)	Empathy; Discovery of Knowledge	F – B
	2	Tom thought the reason why Fernando would come would be something more important than his daughter's birthday. That's why he was surprised with the reason. (sic)	Empathy; Discovery of Knowledge	F– F
	3	I think it was for changing the subject after the conversation between Fernando and him. (sic)	Behavioral Flexibility	I
	4	Because when saying they could get to know better during dinner he soon said today they would talk about business.(sic)	Empathy;	I
	5	He didn't understand, because Omar told him everything was fine. (sic)	Tolerance towards Ambiguity	F
	6	Because going on with that talk would not help as the books were not ready. (sic)	Tolerance towards Ambiguity; Behavioral Flexibility	I – I
	7	The reaction was of surprise as she didn't expect to be asked that. (sic)	Empathy; Discovery of Knowledge	F – B
	8	His reaction was of interrogation, as he didn't know what *quinciniera* means. (sic)	Discovery of Knowledge	B
	9	I think he wanted to talk about things that did not concern business. (sic)	Empathy	F
	10	Because he wanted to talk and get to know him, not about business. (sic)	Discovery of Knowledge; Empathy	F – F
Dynamic of the Antropologist	Antropologist	He realized when it was said yes or no. He didn't realize the command of not talking to men and kept on trying, even when one of them left the room.	Communicative Awareness; Discovery of Knowledge	I – I
Tasks simulation	B	She kept happy and positive, according to the perceived profile. 'I was always praising and touching people to motivate them. Hey, you draw very well'. (sic)	Behavioral Flexibility; Empathy	F – F
Debriefing	1	I think that the performed tasks made me integrate with the group, as I don't have much contact with some of them, and I felt good about it. I learned, or better, I remembered how to work in group as in my field we don't have such integration among people.	Behavioral Flexibility	F
	2	I can apply it in my daily life at home where I live with people with different customs and culture regarding good relationship.	Discovery of Knowledge; Behavioral Flexibility	F – F
	3	Responsibility and discipline.	Respect to the Outher; Behavioral Flexibility	F – F
	4		Discovery of Knowledge; Behavioral Flexibility	I – I
	5	In my opinion everybody must have the chance to go on an exchange program because besides empowering their field, the culture we experience and learn are taken for the rest of our lives.	Behavioral Flexibility; Discovery of Knowledge	F – I

Source: Research Data.

Table 2. Recurrence of CCI.

Dimension	Recurrence	Basic	Intermediate	Full	Level
Discovery of Knowledge	10	2	3	5	I
Empathy	7	-	1	6	F
Respect to the Other	1	-	-	1	F
Tolerance towards ambiguity	3	-	2	1	I
Behavioral Flexibility	7	-	2	5	F
Communicative Awareness	1	-	1	-	I

Result: Intermediate.

The collection *Español Sin Fronteras* (2007) composed of three books is grounded on an updated method which is adapted to Spanish learners. It focuses on the communicative competence and in situations and grammar contents. Similarly, sociocultural aspects are present in the content of lessons aiming to complement the studies and enrich the learner's cultural range concerning the target-language. We chose activities from this book due to considering the presented cultural contents more complex and varied in relation with the previous volumes, as in volume 2 learners should have already learned basic linguistic-cultural contents referring the previous volume.

Afterwards we present a proposal of intercultural practice through a didactic unit. For that, we selected a song from the book: ojalá que llueva café, which is found at page 50. This song, translated into English as 'I hope it rains coffee', is about a specific economic-cultural aspect of Dominican people: the agriculture, according to what will be presented afterwards. By using this activity, the teacher can explore the cultural content of that country as well as the grammar content of unit 4: the present of subjunctive.

Content of the lesson:

Song[4] (Figure 1) ojalá que llueva café[5], from the book Español sin Fronteras 2 (2007).

Contextualization (for the teacher)

This song is in the section *un paso más.* It aims at developing the learner's linguistic ability through reading texts that deal with cultural contents, which in turn, are connected with the grammar contents of each lesson.

In unit 4, the students learn the grammar content 'present of subjunctive', which can express probability, suppositions and wishes. Along the lyric of the song, there is great recurrence of the subjunctive, either by the adverb *ojalá*, which needs this verb tense use, or by conjugated verbs.

In order to perform the activities, the teacher will have to use the following materials: the book *Español Sin Fronteras 2* (2007), a computer and a multimedia projector to show the song and its video clip. Based on these resources, the teacher will prepare the students for the intercultural proposals previously described.
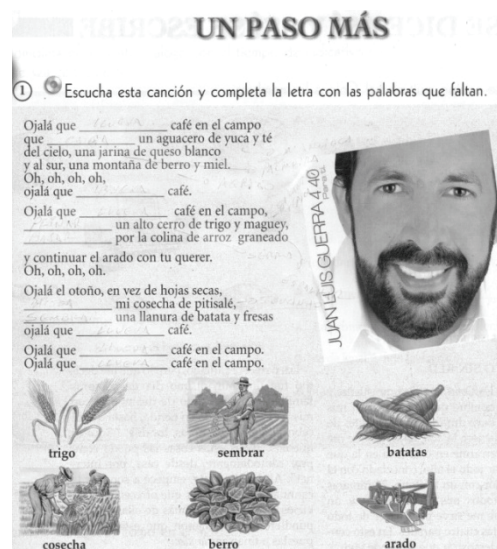

Figure 1. Song *ojalá que llueva café*, from the book *Español Sin Fronteras 2* (2007, p. 50).

Aims of the class

As specific aims, we establish the following: a) learn the grammar content 'present of subjunctive' – as this verbal tense is related to the song content; b) understand the vocabulary of the lyrics, with the aim of learning the words of the song to discuss the lyrics content afterwards; c) know cultural elements regarding the Dominican Republic – combining the grammar content with discussion about cultural aspects; d) develop the students' ICC.

Methodology and strategy

- Testing the students' previous knowledge.

Before working with the song itself, the teacher can diagnose the previous knowledge regarding the song content.

First, the teacher writes the title on the board and asks: '*¿sobre qué piensan ustedes que trata la música?*'('What do you think this son gis about?'*) '¿Reconocen el uso del presente de subjuntivo en el título de la canción?*'('Do you recognize the use of the present of subjunctive in its title?') '*¿Qué palabra/as les dan esa información?*' (Which word gives this information?') Thus, students give their

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[4] The lyric of the song can be found at: <http://letras.mus.br/juan-luis-guerra/163420/>, recovered on April 20, 2014.
[5] The song video, sang by Juan Luis Guerra, can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= XZOLOggfWp0>, recovered on May 12, 2014.

opinion, and the teacher has the chance to promote a discussion and instigate students about the likely linguistic-cultural content of the song.

- Show the video clip of the song *ojalá que llueva café*.

At first, the teacher shows the video clip without the lyrics transcription. At this stage, the teacher must warn students not to excessively focus on the grammar content or the full understanding of vocabulary. In other words, students must be able to, in the end of the video, answer the following questions: *¿Ya han escuchado esa canción?*(Have you ever heard this song?) *¿Les gustó?*(Did you like it?) *¿Por qué sí / no?* (Why?) *¿Cuál es el probable origen del compositor de esa canción?*(Where do you think its composer is from?) *¿Qué saben ustedes sobre ese país?*(What do you know about this country?) *¿Es así también en el país de ustedes o es diverso?*(Is it the same or different in your country?) *¿Quién es el cantante?* (Who is the singer?).

Concerning the vocabulary of the song, the teacher can ask: *¿Qué palabras comprendieron?* (What words do you understand?) *¿Hay palabras desconocidas?* (Are there words you don't know?) *¿Hay palabras diversas a las que ya habían escuchado?* (Are there different words from the ones you heard?) The teacher lists the words provided by the students on the board.

The described procedure in the previous paragraphs are consonant with, as seen before, the Educational Scientific Council of Continuing Education of Portugal, viewing the teacher as a cultural mediator and a professional who educates for cultural and linguistic diversity. Note that the suggestions of questions establish a direct connection between grammar content and sociocultural contents of Spanish.

- Working with the lyrics of the song *ojalá que llueva café*.

After testing the learners' previous knowledge, the teacher can ask them to follow the lyrics. In the activity, the students are asked to fill in gaps, i.e., verbs in the 'present of subjunctive', such as *llueva* and *caiga*, and verbs in the infinitive, such as *sembrar* and *bajar*. Note that these words do only not refer to verbs conjugated in the 'present of subjunctive', but also to verbs in the infinitive, as *sembrar*.

This grammar content is associated with a cultural-economic aspect of the Dominican people: the agriculture. Evidently, the agriculture was the economic basis of the Dominican Republic since the beginning of the economic development of the country (Villaverde, 2008).

Words such as *café*, *té*, *quesoblanco* and *batata* refer to food that can be taken from the countryside, respectively, in English: coffee, tea, white cheese and sweet potato; whereas words like *arado* and *cosecha* indicates, respectively, the preparation of land and then, the harvest. Therefore, according to Deardorff (2009), the formal knowledge of a language alone is not enough for effectively learning it. Thus, we observe that the book integrates a grammar content connected with a cultural content which is strongly related to the country at issue.

The teacher can work with the meaning of unknown words. For instance, the word *yuca* means manioc in English, as well as *mapuey,* other word which is little known by learners that also means 'manioc'.

Similarly, the teacher can take a chance and present a video or text about the Dominican Republic. The students can discuss about cultural traits that most characterize the country, about economy, about tourist attractions, about the inhabitants' ethnicity and about the variety of Spanish language spoken in the country. For example, the students can watch a video about the Caribbean beach Punta Cana, one of the most important tourist areas of the Dominican Republic. As mentioned before, due to the fact that agriculture is characterized as one of the main economic basis of the country, the teacher can show a video that portrays the development of agriculture in the Dominican Republic since the beginning of the economic development of the country until its current economic situation.

Although it focuses on a Spanish language country, the presented activity in the book *Español Sin Fronteras2* (2007) does not mention ways of working the content of the song with students within an intercultural approach. Therefore, in what way can we insert, through the content of the song *ojalá que llueva café*, an intercultural practice? That is what we will deal with now.

After studying the content of the song *ojalá que llueva café* with students, and clearing any doubts about vocabulary, the grammar content 'present of subjunctive' and the cultural characteristics of the Dominican Republic, and any other explanations, the teacher can ask students to answer, a written self-evaluation, as follows:

ACTIVITY 1 – SELF-EVALUATION

Cuestión 1 –¿Qué aprendiste de esa actividad?

Question 1 – What did you learn from this activity?

Cuestión 2 - ¿Te gustó participar de esa actividad? ¿Por qué?

Question 2 – Did you like this activity? Why?

Cuestión 3 - ¿Después de aprender un poco sobre el país, te gustaría visitar la República Dominicana?

Question 3 – After learning a little about the country, would you like to visit the Dominican Republic?

Cuestión 4 - ¿Para ti, qué rasgos culturales se hacen más evidentes en relación con la República Dominicana?

Question 4 – For you, what cultural traits are more evident regarding the Dominican Republic?

Cuestión 5 - ¿Qué diferencias notas entre tu país de origen y la República Dominicana?

Question 5 – What differences can you realize between your country and the Dominican Republic?

ACTIVITY 2

The second intercultural practice refers to a dramatization. Given the fact that the students already know something about the focused country, the teacher can apply this activity, which can be performed in pairs. The teacher would explain students the following intercultural proposal:

> Tu amigo (a) te llama por teléfono. Él / ella viajará a la República Dominicana, y él / ella no sabe casi nada de este lugar. Tú le explicarás un poco sobre este país. Puedes tomar en cuenta lo que aprendiste en clase por medio de la canción 'ojalá que llueva café', es decir, aspectos culturales del país y del contenido gramatical Presente de Subjuntivo.

> Your friend calls you on the phone. He/she will travel to the Dominican Republic, and he/she does not know much about this place. You will explain a little about this country. You can use what you learned through the song 'ojalá que llueva café', i.e., cultural aspects and the grammar content Present of subjunctive.

Regarding Activity 1, the teacher can hand out these questions on a sheet of paper and then, collect them. Based on the students' answers, the teacher can identify certain intercultural aspects, such as tourist attractions and the agriculture as economic basis of the country, according to what was mentioned before. In activity 2, the teacher can hand out, for each pair, the intercultural proposal and evaluate the interaction that is established during the performance of the activity. Intercultural elements can be noted and evaluated through this interaction.

After applying these activities, the teacher will be able to assess the students' performance, based on the following criteria: participation and involvement with the activities; cultural and

linguistic knowledge obtained; oral / listening / written / reading skills.

In this section we propose activities that can be elaborated, based on existing materials such as books, authentic materials, newspapers, dynamics and any other didactic probabilities. Our choice attempted to exemplify what, in fact, can happen with teachers in their daily lives, in which, from available material, student's level, age and availability of didactic resources, make their choices and put them into practice.

Final considerations

The construction of a pedalinguistic[6] practice is characterized as concluded with the organization and description of the didactic procedures that can be effectively adopted in classroom. According to what was mentioned, the description of procedures is developed in a circle or unit of language teaching, which is composed of, in general, presentation and practice of the linguistic-cultural content.

The description and discussion promoted here, although claimed as timely, cannot be referred as new, or innovative. In fact, the principle of acquisition and appreciation of cultural knowledge is claimed for at least a hundred and fifty years. The historiographic perspective that was briefly described here is also useful to refer to the destiny of an idea, for instance, that teaching a language is teaching culture. Through her classic *25 Centuries of Language Teaching*, Kelly (1969) supports us, highlighting that the destiny of an idea, its life and death depends on the teacher who develops and applies it, as well as the society who controls it, adjusting it to their values.

The contemporary society, which puts into growing mobility thousands of families with their children, sees school being challenged to assume students as subjects of multicultural groups. This factor makes the historiographic pendulum settles, once again, in the primacy of the cultural studies, this time with a growing evaluation aspect. This appreciation shall come, through the review of the curriculum under the intercultural perspective, to classrooms in general and the language ones in particular. Thus, the classes become cultural meetings between students and teachers in continuous ethnographic record about the Other. With this paper, we make it evident

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[6] The term pedalinguistic was introduced by Luna (2000), to refer to theoretical principles and the didactic procedures effectively related to the languages teaching and learning process in classroom.

that the didactic-pedagogical transposition of the dimensions – Discovery of Knowledge, Empathy, Respect to the Other, Tolerance towards Ambiguity, Behavioral Flexibility, Communicative Awareness – is not only fundamental for the intercultural development, but is also feasible in terms of presentation and practice of a programmatic content. Another contribution we leave here is that the ICC assessment is equally necessary and possible.

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