Enhancement of Oral Production through the Teaching of Culture in Content-Based Instruction

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Abstract

This present study explores the practice of enhancing oral production by teaching culture within a Content-Based Instruction approach, and it was done at the *Centro de Estudios en Inglés Conversacional* (CEIC), an outreach program from *Universidad Nacional* (UNA) with a group of intermediate English as Foreign Language students. The aim of this study was to determine whether the students enriched their oral production from including cultural topics into communicative tasks. As a main finding, the participants enhanced their oral performance, focusing on content rather than on the language forms; likewise, the participants efficiently incorporated cultural content into their oral production.

Key words: Content-Based Instruction, teaching of culture, oral production enhancement, communicative lesson plans, oral tasks

Resumen

Este estudio explora la práctica de enriquecimiento de la producción oral al enseñar cultura bajo un enfoque de instrucción basada en contenido, en el Centro de Estudios en Inglés Conversacional (CEIC), programa de la Universidad Nacional (UNA) con un grupo de estudiantes de nivel intermedio de inglés como idioma extranjero. El objetivo de este estudio fue determinar si los estudiantes enriquecieron su producción oral al incorporar temas culturales en actividades comunicativas. Se demostró que la

mayoría de los participantes enriquecieron su desempeño oral enfocándose más en el contenido que en las formas del idioma; de igual manera, los participantes lograron incorporar la temática cultural en su producción oral de manera eficaz.

Palabras claves: instrucción basada en contenido, enseñanza de la cultura, enriquecimiento de la producción oral, actividades orales

Language methods and approaches have switched their attention to the role of context which involves culture as a micro skill or fifth language skill. Ever since the 1970s with the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), the role of culture gained significance in EFL classrooms. Communicative competence, the core of CLT, certainly encompasses culture since learners should know how to use the language according to given situations influenced by cultural codes such as language use, behaviors, social norms, beliefs, among others. A speaker who wishes to be proficient needs not only to be fluent and accurate in a language, but also to raise awareness of the cultural differences embedded in a given situation. Culture thus is a key element in EFL teaching and learning. Consequently, the role of context is necessary, and the interest of including cultural aspects in textbooks, materials, and courses has increased noticeably as a way to help students to get immersed in the underlying aspects of any language. As a result, this study aims to investigate the role that culture teaching has in students' oral production when implementing Content-Based Instruction (CBI), a methodology derived from CLT, by answering the following questions:

RQ1. How can the teaching of culture enhance oral production in CBI?
RQ2. Can students incorporate cultural knowledge in communicative tasks?

Literature Review

Perspectives on the Teaching of Culture and Language

The concept of culture has gained relevance to the extent that many scholars have considered it as the fifth skill in language learning. In order to learn about culture meaningfully, Kramsch (1991) proposed the idea that teaching culture should include aspects beyond the four cultural F's in isolation: "food, fairs, folklore, and statistical facts" (p. 236). Moran (2001) proposed the Cultural Knowings Framework as the process that students should use to learn culture and as a way teachers should proceed when planning to integrate culture in their lessons:

The cultural experience (…) elicits four kinds of culture learning, or cultural knowings: knowing about, knowing how, knowing why, and knowing oneself. In other words, learners go through an interactive cycle of acquiring cultural information, developing

cultural behaviors, discovering cultural explanations, and articulating personal responses to what they are (p. 8).

The *cultural knowings* are a means of joining language content and culture process. As an illustration, Moran's framework inspired Li (2012) who referred to another framework proposed by Moran called the Experiential Learning Cycle, which is described as follows:

In terms of the stages of the [Experiential Learning] cycle, concrete experiences become participation, where the task is direct or indirect engagement in the culture, with an emphasis on knowing how. Reflective observation becomes description, with a focus on knowing about. Abstract conceptualization becomes interpretation, where the learners concentrate on knowing why. Active experimentation becomes response, with an emphasis on self-awareness, knowing oneself (p. 19).

The Effects of Cultural Instruction on EFL

Learning about culture in the EFL classroom can have positive and negative effects on the learners. Research regarding teaching culture in the EFL classroom describes teachers as skeptical of whether to integrate culture into language teaching or not, due to lack of knowledge on how and what to teach regarding culture. Wenli (2005) suggested that "teachers either do not talk about the target culture in their classroom or only mention parts of the target culture that has been included in the textbook" (p. 40). As a result, if teachers themselves lack real experience with the target culture, they most likely do not consider culture as an important skill to teach in their classrooms. Solano (2009) acclaimed that teachers should "find objectives that integrate cultural objectives with academic and language objectives" (p. 387) so that they might match the learning of both culture and language in their current syllabus at one time; in addition, this author explained that "for any cultural material or activity to be successful, academic, linguistic and cultural objectives must be carefully selected and integrated" (p. 388). Valverde (2005) proposed that a way to deal with students' negative attitudes against the target culture is to state the differences and similarities of the native and target culture and claimed that cultural aspects should be taught as early as possible during the EFL learning process (p. 96).

Pesola (1991) stated that "without cultural insight and skills, even fluent speakers can seriously misinterpret the messages they hear or read, and the messages they tend to communicate can be misunderstood" (p. 331). Thus, cultural and communicative competence should complement one another. Carpenter and Torney (1973) stated that "language competence may be attempted directly without prior immersion in the culture. But in the absence of culture experience, a dearth of motivation, achievement, and enjoyment is probable in the arduous task of language learning" (p. 11).

Culture in a Communicative Language Setting

Currently, the teaching of English is mostly based on CLT principles, and the aim of both culture inclusion and

communicative skills' development turns out to be part of the overall aim of language learning. Principles of Content-Based Instruction (CBI) are listed as follows:

- Interaction between the learner and users of the language.
- Collaborative creation of meaning.
- Creating meaningful and purposeful interaction through language.
- Negotiation of meaning as the learner and his or her interlocutor arrive at understanding.
- Learning through attending to the feedback learners get when they use the language.
- Paying attention to the language one hears (the input) and trying to incorporate new forms into one's developing communicative competence.
- Trying out and experimenting with different ways of saying things. (Richards, 2006, p. 27)

As part of CLT, CBI is an approach that focuses on the learning process rather than the learning product. Stoller (as cited in Pessoa, Hendry, Donato, Tucker, & Lee, 2007) discussed the relevance that CBI has on the students' language learning process: "language as a medium for learning content and content as a resource for learning and improving language" (p. 103).

Incorporating Culture in the EFL classroom

Teaching culture in the EFL classroom becomes a fundamental aim for instructors and for students as well. Seelye (1993) clarified that for tasks to be purposeful, these should relate in a reasonable way to one of these seven goals:

- The student should demonstrate an understanding that people act the way they do because they are using options the society allows for satisfying basic physical and psychological needs.
- The students should demonstrate an understanding that such social variables as age, sex, social class, and place of residence affect the way people speak and behave.
- The students should indicate an understanding of the role convention plays in shaping behavior by demonstrating how people act in common mundane and crisis situations in the target culture.
- The student should indicate awareness that culturally conditioned images are associated with even the most common target words and phrases.
- The student should demonstrate the ability to evaluate the relative strength of a generality concerning the target culture in terms of the amount of evidence substantiating the statement.
- The student should show that s/he has developed the skills needed to locate and organize information about the target culture from the library, the mass media, people, and personal observation.
- The student should demonstrate intellectual curiosity about the target culture and empathy toward its people (p. 48-57).

Regarding materials used to teach culture, Peterson and Coltrane (2003) claimed that "using authentic sources from the native speech community helps to engage students in authentic cultural experiences" (p. 1).

Method

Setting and Subjects

The *Centro de Estudios en Inglés Conversacional (CEIC)* from *Universidad Nacional* (UNA) was the setting of this investigation. CEIC has two sites: Heredia and Alajuela; the latter is where the group of fifteen students, participating in the study, attended classes during the second bimester of 2013. The participants in this study were taking Level V, which is the seventh course out of twelve in CEIC's program. They attended classes twice a week for two and a half hours at night. In other words, students who were in the program from the beginning had already taken 240 hours of instruction. Another participant of the study was the teacher, who had taught at CEIC for over four years. The research team highlights that they were non-participant observers throughout the data collection stage of the study.

Procedures

First, lesson plans based on cultural topics were designed (see sample of lesson plan in *Appendix A*). As suggested by Solano (2009), a plan based on culture should integrate cultural and language objectives; therefore, the plans designed for these study included both a culture goal, which was taken from the list proposed by Seelye (1993); and a language goal, which was derived from the study plan at the CEIC. In order to obtain information on students' cultural background, the participants completed an opening questionnaire during the first week of class (see *Appendix B*); the data collected from this instrument allowed the improvement and modification of the lesson plans according to students' needs in terms of culture teaching.

In addition to the plans, the researchers designed four different oral tasks: a demonstration, a recording, a debate, and an open disscusion (see sample of oral tasks in *Appendix C*); in these tasks, the participants worked on four different culture-oriented topics: food, time management, social norms and culture shock. The participants' oral production in oral tasks was obtained by means of a rating form containing two sections; the first one was a rubric scale intended to evaluate participants' oral production *per se*, and the second section was a checklist aimed at collecting data on participants' inclusion of cultural knowledge, the accuracy in cultural facts included, and the focus on the task rather than language forms (see *Appendix D*). The lesson plans and the oral tasks were not implemented in all sessions due to the study plan, policies, and the course chronogram at the CEIC; for instance, the program allows and encourages the implementation of other communicative approaches and methodologies; also, in other sessions, time was allotted for test taking or language laboratory practicing; therefore, some features of the setting remained unchanged in order not to intrude with the regular teaching process of CEIC program. A number of eight lesson plans was made; these plans were implemented along the eight-week course; this means that students were exposed to the lessons plans and oral tasks at least once a week, taking into account they attended classes two days per week.

Data about the participants' perceptions toward their enhancement of oral production, and the assimilation of cultural knowledge was collected in a closing questionnaire (see *Appendix E*). Finally, the course teacher provided specific data related to methodological implications of CBI for teaching culture through an interview (see *Appendix F*). Unlike the materials and the course goals stated at the CEIC study plan, the lesson plans and the oral tasks designed by the researchers were specifically aimed at enhancing oral production through the teaching of cultural themes following CBI principles as listed by Richards (2006). In other words, the designed materials served as a supplement to the goals of the course in general; also, this supplementary material focused on culture, an aspect that is not explicitly included in the course syllabus (see *Appendix G*).

Results and Discussion

Opening Questionnaire

Students were asked about their cultural background knowledge. Participants mentioned that listening to songs, watching TV shows and reading texts in English outside the classroom were the most frequent input activities for them. However, celebrating holidays from other cultures and having interaction with native speakers were the less frequent ones, as can be seen in Figure 1 below. As can be noticed, participants were going through the interactive cycle of acquiring cultural information explained by Moran (2001); in other words, learners continue "developing cultural behaviors,

discovering cultural explanations, and articulating personal responses to what they are" (p. 8). Item 3 of the opening questionnaire intended to prove how much participants knew about the culture from countries where English is spoken natively and/or officially. Conversely, results showed that 11 out of the 15 participants knew *something* about cultural aspects from the United States; also, 10 out of the 15 participants knew *a little* about cultural aspects from England. When asked about facts from other English speaking countries, the results revealed that most of the participants checked *a little* or *nothing*, as detailed in Figure 2.

Figure 1
Level of Exposure to the Target Language and Culture, Conversational English (CEIC), UNA, Second Bimester, 2013
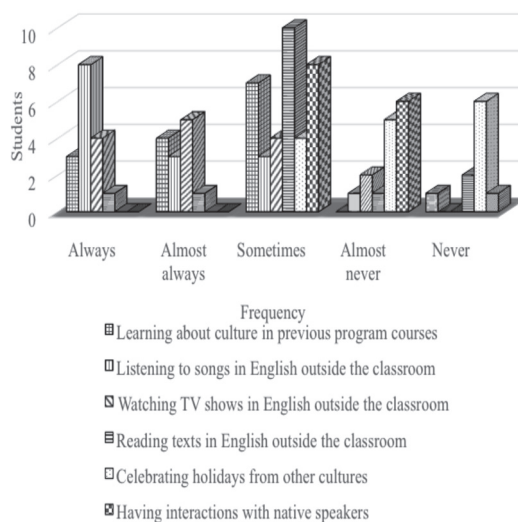
Source: Opening questionnaire administered to 15 students

Figure 2
Background Knowledge about
Cultural Aspects from English Speaking
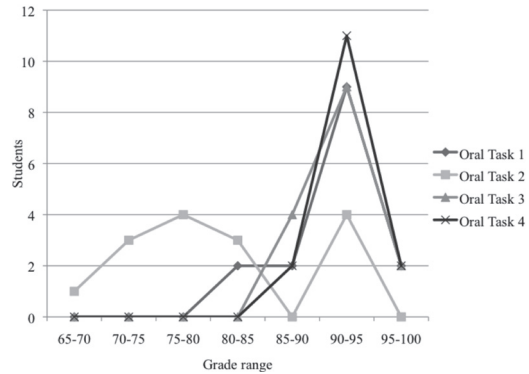**Countries, Conversational English**
(CEIC), UNA, Second Bimester, 2013

Source: Opening questionnaire administered to 15 students

Figure 3
Grades in Oral Tasks,
Conversational English (CEIC),
UNA, Second Bimester, 2013
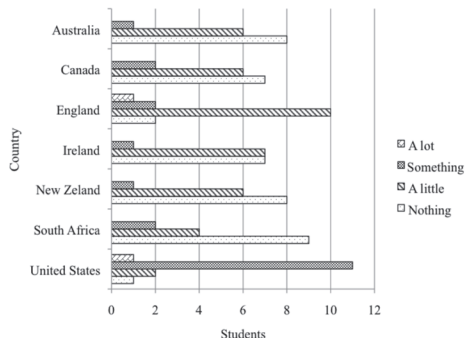
Source: Rating form administered to 15 students per task

Since most of them had been in the program for about a year, it was expected that they would know *a lot* of cultural facts regarding the United States and England, two of the most well-known English speaking countries.

Students' Performance in Oral Tasks

Every other week, participants were asked to perform an oral task. A rating form collected data on the students' oral production grades. Results revealed overall effective oral production in terms of grades. Most of the participants were rated between 90 to 95 in the first, third and fourth task. On the other hand, oral task 2 presented a significant difference since half of the participants' grades ranged from 70 to 80. The grade rates can be observed in Figure 3.

The reasons why the grades in the second oral tasks dropped can be explained if the nature of the tasks is further explored. While in the other three tasks the participants were asked to collect the information needed beforehand, in the second task the participants were asked to record themselves.

The second section of the rating form valued the participants' incorporation of cultural content in their oral tasks, being accurate while incorporating cultural facts, and focusing on cultural content rather than on language forms. Regarding the first aspect, 10 participants fully incorporated cultural knowledge in the first oral task. The second time, six of them did include cultural knowledge, and on the other hand, six of them did not include any cultural knowledge. In the third oral task, 15 of them partially included cultural knowledge; finally, in the fourth oral task, nine of them partially included cultural knowledge (see Figure 4).

Figure 4
Inclusion of Cultural Content,
Conversational English (CEIC),
UNA, Second Bimester, 2013
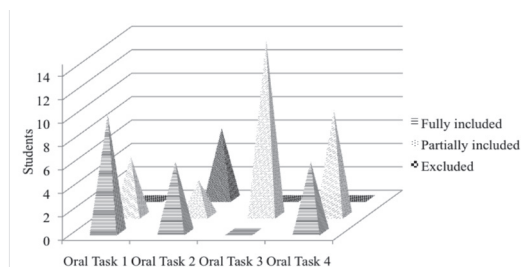
Source: Rating form administered to 15 students per task

The participants were further rated for their accuracy in the inclusion of cultural facts. In general terms, culture was incorporated accurately in all of the oral tasks; 11 out of 15 and eight out of 15 participants were fully accurate in the first and second tasks, accordingly. Oral task three displayed that all of the students achieved partial accuracy. On oral task four, nine participants were partially accurate, as can be seen in Figure 5.

Figure 5
Accuracy of Cultural Facts,
Conversational English, (CEIC),
UNA, Second Bimester, 2013
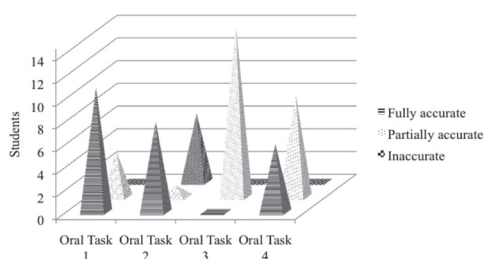
Source: Rating form administered to 15 students per task

While performing orally, the participants' focus was on cultural content rather than on language forms. The results revealed a tendency for participants to focus on the task, and thus on the content. In the first oral task, 14 out of the 15 participants focused on the content. In the second oral task, six out of them did not pay attention to language forms; in the third oral task, all of the participants focused on the content partially; and in the last oral task, nine out of the 15 participants either completely or partially focused on content as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6
Focus on Cultural Content
rather than on Language Forms,
Conversational English (CEIC),
UNA, Second Bimester, 2013
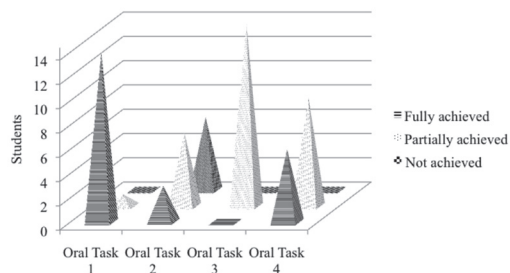
Source: Rating form administered to 15 students per task

Curtain and Haas (as cited in Pessoa, Hendry, Donato, Tucker, & Lee, 2007) affirmed that following CBI principles is "a way of providing a meaningful context for language instruction while at the same time providing a vehicle for reinforcing academic skills" (p. 117). Some of the oral tasks helped participants to enhance their oral production more accurately, while some others did not fulfill this objective thoroughly.

A possible explanation can be that certain topics and activities oriented for the teaching of culture can promote students' oral production more than others. Nonetheless, CBI is a process-based communicative approach in which participants' performance must be analyzed beyond their grades that could represent isolated results.
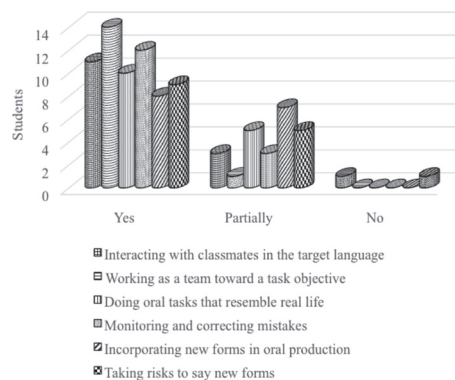
Closing Questionnaire

Upon finishing the course, participants were asked to complete a self-assessment form of their performance. They were asked to answer *yes*, *partially* or *no* to a set of statements in order to evaluate themselves. Each of these statements corresponded to a CBI principle. One of the most relevant responses was that 14 participants considered that they worked as a team toward a task objective. It was also reported that 12 of them attended the feedback to monitor and correct mistakes, 11 of them interacted with classmates in the target language, 10 of them did oral tasks that resembled real-life activities, nine of them took risks to say new forms, and eight of them incorporated new forms related to culture in their oral production (see Figure 7). These results provided some support for the researchers' expectation of implementing CBI in lesson plans and oral tasks since "people," as stated before, "learn a language more successfully when they use the language as means of acquiring information, rather than as an end in itself" (Richards, 2006, p. 28).

Another question asked students if they considered that the cultural content learned in the course would be useful for them to communicate in future-real life situations. Participants were given four possible answers: *I agree, I partially agree, I partially disagree* and *I disagree*; however, just the first two answers were chosen by the students. The results indicate that nine out of the 15 participants answered *I agree* and the other six of them answered *I partially agree.* Similar to Valverde's study (2005), the participants in this study also confirmed the fact that "language becomes the essential medium for cultural transmission" (p. 94).

Figure 7
Self-assessment of Performance in the Course, Conversational English (CEIC), UNA, Second Bimester, 2013

Source: Closing questionnaire administered to 15 students

The participants were also asked to mention three examples of cultural contents that they had learned in the course, as shown in item 3 (see *Appendix F*). Most of them agreed that food, traditions and differences among countries and cultural groups represent three main content areas from which they meaningfully learned, as can be seen in Figure 8 below.

Figure 8
**Examples of Cultural Content Learned
in the Course, Conversational English
(CEIC), UNA, Second Bimester, 2013**

Source: Closing questionnaire administered to
15 students

By implementing CBI-based lesson plans and assigning oral production tasks, the participants could actually enrich their cultural knowledge, which allowed them to explore unusual contents. Some responses revealed that participants were able to "confront, comprehend, accept, and overcome cultural differences" (Moran, 2001, p. 119), as can be read in some of the participants' responses:

(1) "I learned that of American people ask for a specific question, I only have answer to that question (*sic*)"

(2) "[I learned about] Annoying thing[s] in other countries (*sic*)"

(3) "I learned how to give descriptions about my country (*sic*)"

Teacher Interview

The relevance of culture in EFL instruction was explored by means of a guided interview with the teacher. This EFL educator confirmed the fact that specific techniques and activities for culture teaching, "still remain unclear" (Wenli, 2005, p. 40); specifically, the teacher reports, "Culture is not really included. It seems that culture is part of EFL instruction, but sometimes the focus is on structure and form of the language". Nonetheless, this teacher is aware that culture should be included for students to "apply their knowledge to real-life" (personal communication, May 23, 2013).

The interview also shed light on the participants' degree of enhancement of their oral production. The teacher shared insights about the treatment participants were exposed to: the positive and the negative aspects during the process, the relationship between culture and oral production, and how participants' oral performance improved. The teacher claimed that,

> The students discovered new things by doing research for their presentations and sharing their findings; also, they were willing to know something new about the countries or cultures taught in the class. Students were free to communicate what they knew or what they found out about the topic; mostly important they could do so in a context, not in isolation. (personal communication, May 23, 2013)

As stated by the teacher, participants accomplished the ultimate goal of CBI approach: focusing on the content promoted in a task over paying attention to language forms to achieve a task due to the fact that "contents got integrated with the language skills taught in the course pretty well" (personal communication, May 23, 2013). Above all, when asked which of the aspects of the lesson plans motivated students to speak and participate more, the teacher emphasized that the topics, the target culture, and the types of activities and materials fostered CBI principles,

which in turn enhanced participants' oral production.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The main conclusion that the researchers arrived at is that teaching culture by following CBI principles enhances EFL students' oral production. Regarding the first research question of this study, students' oral production can be enhanced if the lesson plans and oral tasks are focused on content rather language form; specifically, cultural topics fulfilled such purpose.. As for the second research question, it was found that students could easily incorporate cultural content into their oral production. Student participants were able to compare their own cultural background knowledge with the new input taught and discover cultural differences. On the other hand, some insights and concerns merge when teaching culture in the EFL curriculum. First, to be linguistically competent means communicating an idea while focusing on the different social aspects culture conveys in daily life interactions; therefore, a language class should prepare students to manage these cultural aspects. Second of all, theory has shown that EFL teachers are concerned about students' accuracy; on the contrary this research study also reveals that the core in a communicative language teaching-learning setting can easily be shifted into having students focused on the content rather than on language forms, obtaining a significant enhancement in students' oral production as the main result.

The researchers would also like to list some suggestions derived from the study:

- Teaching culture, as well as following CBI principles, must be done constantly and gradually based on the cultural knowings framework proposed by Moran (2001). First, students are exposed to cultural information. Then, they develop cultural understandings, internalize this information, and finally, express their reactions using this information.
- Teachers should integrate culture not as an isolated element, but as a means to language teaching and learning. Therefore, to implement objectives that integrate cultural aspects as well as academic and language objectives becomes a key element when planning a class.
- Lesson plans to teach cultural content should follow consistent scaffolding for learners to have enough opportunities to achieve the goals leading these plans.
- Culture, as the fifth language skill, must be integrated in language instruction regularly. Therefore, it is advisable that language programs offer coaching for the teaching staff to integrate culture in conversational courses on a regular basis.

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Appendix A

Sample of Lesson Plan

Plan n°6: "Wedding Traditions around the World"

Content: Relationships

Session time: 1 hour

Cultural goal: Ss will be able to demonstrate an understanding that such social variables as age, sex, social class, and place of residence affect the way people speak and behave.

Language goal: The Ss will be able to analyze the way people make relationships work.

Objectives: By the end of the lesson, Ss will be able to…

- identify the most common wedding traditions around the world.
- compare the common wedding traditions with the ones practice in one's culture.
- express ideas about wedding traditions.
- analyze wedding traditions from a specific culture and the traditions from one's culture.

Note:

Video taken from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2HAUmII_hcg

Abbreviations

T: teacher, **Ss**: students, **P**: pairs or peer (s), **I**: individual (ly), **G**: group(s), **S**: speaking, **L**: Listening, **R**: Reading, **W**: Writing.

Stage	Objectives	Procedure	Useful Language	Strategies	Skills	Assessment Criteria	Materials	Time
WARM UP	1	T calls on volunteers to describe a picture of couples getting married in different parts of the world. Ss are required to answer some questions based on the pictures. T writes some ideas on the board.	They are wearing… The groom is… The bride is… The guests are…	Inferring information	S L	Identification of wedding traditions and the place of origin.	Flashcards with pictures of weddings.	15 minutes
PRE-TASK	2	T plays the video "My Big Bag Gypsy Wedding". Ss are allowed to take notes while watching it focusing on aspects such as wedding arrangements, clothes, ceremony, reception, others		Note-taking	W L	Analysis of Gypsy wedding traditions	Video beam, computer and speakers	15 minutes
MAIN TASK	3	Ss get in pairs. T distributes the questions to answer based on the video.	They were wearing… The bride… The groom… The couple…	Discussing details	W L S	Discussion of ideas from the video	Handout with questions	15 minutes
POST-TASK	4	In G of 4, T distributes Ss with a Diagram Venn copy in which Ss compare Gypsy weddings with My Own Country's weddings. General discussion.	I think… Probably… Kind of, and in a way… Soften comments Use *tough* to give contrasting ideas.	Synthesizing information	W S L	Identification of specific ideas from a video. Expressing my own personal perspective on an issue.	Venn diagram handout	15 minutes

Materials for Lesson Plan
Finding Wedding Traditions
Look at the picture and describe what the wedding tradition is about.

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1. What is the couple wearing?

Note for teachers:
Include an image of a Scottish couple.

2. Whose hands are these?

Note for teachers:
Include an image of a Hindu bride's hands.

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3. What kind of dance are they performing?

Note for teachers:
Include an image of the dance performed
at a Greek wedding.

4. Who is holding them?

Note for teachers:
Include an image of a Jewish couple sitting
on chairs and being held by guests.

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5. What is the groom doing?

Note for teachers:
Include an image of a Latino-American groom
taking a band off the bride's leg.

What kind of wedding are the pictures related to?

… a Hindu one
… a Latinoamerican one
… a Scottish one
… a Greek one
… a Jewish one

What do the traditions shown in the pictures
tell you about these ethnicities?

Discussion of the video "My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding"

After watching the video, discuss and answer the following questions:

- What do the men and women wear for Gypsy weddings?
- What did the bride wear?
- What did the groom wear?
- Who were part of the wedding celebration and traditions?
- How would you describe the traditions in Gypsy weddings?
- What aspects did you like about Gypsy wedding traditions?
- What aspects did you not like about Gypsy wedding traditions?

Discussion about Gypsy and One's Country's Wedding Traditions

Venn Diagram

Complete the following diagram based on the similarities and differences that you observed in the video and compare it with the information from your country's wedding traditions.

Discussion exercises designed by Montero, T., Mora, J., & Rodríguez D. (2013)

Appendix B

Opening Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of the graduation project from the *licenciatura* program in the *Teaching of English as a Foreign Language* at *Universidad de Costa Rica.* This study focuses on the enhancement of oral communicative skills through the teaching of culture, and it also intends to collect information on the exposure to and perception of culture students may have. The data provided will be handled anonymously. We really appreciate your help.

Instruction: Choose with an X or provide the answer accordingly.

1. In what level did you start this program?

From the beginning, so I started in Intro A

I took a placement test, so I started in Intro B

Level I

Level II

Level III

Level IV

Level V

2. Check the box that best describes the frequency of the following statements:

	Always	Almost always	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
I was exposed to cultural aspects of other places in my previous English courses in the program.					

I watch TV shows in English outside the classroom.
I read written texts in English outside the classroom.
I listen to songs in English outside the classroom.
I have regular interactions with native speakers.

I celebrate holidays from other cultures.

Check the degree of cultural knowledge about the following places:

I know …. about aspects of this country (e.g. historical facts, politics, cuisine, behaviors, traditions, holidays, religion, art, among others)	a lot	something	a little	nothing
United States				
England				
Canada				
Australia				
New Zealand				
South Africa				
Ireland				

Appendix C

Sample Oral Task

Demonstration
Topic: Food Choices
Grouping: pair or individual work

What is a demonstration?
In this kind of presentation, you explain a topic while showing how to do something.

Plan
Think about a traditional dish from any place, and fill in the spaces.
Dish: _____
Ingredients:

_____   _____
_____   _____

Prepare
As a take-home project, you are going to study the complete recipe for this dish (traditional ingredients and preparation), and the historical background of the recipe.

Present
A. Make sure you explain the ingredients, preparation and serving step by step. Use the following transitions:

First, …
Then, …
After that, …
Later, …
Finally, …

B. Talk about the background of the recipe.
What's the **origin** of the recipe (country, world region, ethnic group…)?
Where, **when** and **why** do people eat it (setting, time, eating habits, table manners, meaning of the recipe…)?

Notes
You can bring pictures or props to show the ingredients instead of the actual ingredients.
The dining area has been reserved for you to bring the ingredients and share a small sample of the dish with your class.

Task designed by Montero, T., Mora, J., & Rodríguez D. (2013)

Appendix D

Oral Production Rating Form

Student: _____　　**Date:** _____

Rater: _____　　**Task:** _____

Instruction: Check the box that best describes the performance of the learner in each aspect, and provide feedback in the space provided.

Criteria / Rubrics	Needs improvement	Somewhat accomplished	Partially accomplished	Accomplished with some limitations	Successfully Accomplished
COMMUNICATION Ability to comprehend and make oneself understood	1	2	3	4	5
ACCURACY Use of grammar and syntactic structures	1	2	3	4	5
VOCABULARY Use of contextualized lexical items	1	2	3	4	5
INTERACTION Ability to use conversation strategies	1	2	3	4	5
PRONUNCIATION Clear speech, articulation and intonation	1	2	3	4	5
FLUENCY Speed, flow, naturalness and comfort with words	1	2	3	4	5

Points: _____ out of 30　　　　Score: _____ out of 100

Rating form adapted from McCarthy, McCarten & Sandiford (2011)

Feedback on cultural content (section for the use of instructor and researchers)

Student: _____　　**Date:** _____

Rater: _____　　**Task:** _____

Description	*Yes*	*Partially*	*No*
1. Did the student incorporate cultural knowledge in his/her oral production in this task?	☐	☐	☐
2. Were the cultural facts incorporated by the student accurately?	☐	☐	☐
3. Focus on task and fluency: Did the student's oral production seem focused on cultural content rather than language forms?	☐	☐	☐

Rating form section designed by Montero, T., Mora, J. & Rodríguez, D. (2013)

Appendix E

Closing Questionnaire

Instruction: Choose with an X or provide the answer accordingly.

1. Read the following sentences and select the option that best describes your performance in this course.

Description	Yes	Partially	No
I interacted with my classmates in English.			
I worked with my classmates to accomplish the tasks in the course.			
I think my oral production in class resembled real-life activities.			
I learned from and paid attention to my mistakes in order to correct them.			
I incorporated new language forms (i.e. *words*) related to culture in my oral production.			
I took risks to use new ways to say things.			

2. Do you consider that the cultural content learned in this course will be useful to communicate in future real-life situations?
   I agree
   I partially agree
   I partially disagree
   I disagree

3. Mention three examples of cultural content learned in this course that you used when doing oral tasks:
For example: *I learned how to ask for directions when traveling in another country.*
   a.
   b.
   c.

Appendix F

Interview with the Instructor

Instruction: Complete the following instrument in the space provided.

Based on your teaching experience, is cultural content generally included in EFL instruction? Explain.

Do you consider that teaching culture is important when teaching an EFL oral communication course? Explain.

Which are the positive aspects that you observed in students from teaching culture in this course?

Which are the negative aspects that you observed in students from teaching culture in this course?

Did you notice any improvement in the student´s oral production while performing orally in the different culture-based tasks that were carried out in the course? Explain.

If you noticed improvement, do you think it was due to the teaching of cultural content? Explain.

Which aspects of the lessons do you consider motivated students to participate and speak more during the course? You can check more than one option.
Topics
Teaching approach (i.e. Content-Based Instruction)
Target culture
Types of activities
Materials
Other. Specify:

How much cultural content did the students incorporate during the oral tasks?

How would you teach culture for oral communication purposes in future courses?

Appendix G

Course Syllabus

PROGRAMA DEL NIVEL V
SECUENCIA DE CURSOS DE
INGLES CONVERSACIONAL

PRESENTACIÓN
Este es el quinto curso de la secuencia de diez, el cual le permite al usuario ampliar y reforzar sus conocimientos del idioma inglés. Desde un enfoque comunicativo, el curso pretende que el usuario desarrolle la competencia lingüística: la habilidad de comunicarse en inglés de acuerdo con una situación y propósito determinado. El énfasis del curso se basa en desarrollar la comprensión auditiva y la expresión oral. En este curso, el usuario tendrá la oportunidad de desarrollar la habilidad de la expresión oral de una manera más fluida y coherente. La comprensión de lectura y la escritura serán complementos de los objetivos generales del curso.

PERFIL DE ENTRADA DEL USUARIO
El perfil de entrada del usuario se refiere al conocimiento adquirido de la lengua inglesa (sea en otra institución o de manera autodidacta) que el usuario posea y que cumpla con los requisitos para poder ingresar al nivel V. Este perfil de entrada se basa en el Cuadro Común Europeo (CEFR), el cual procura dar al usuario una idea de las funciones que es capaz de cumplir de acuerdo con el libro que utiliza y el nivel que está cursando. El ingreso a éste nivel se aprueba de dos maneras: por medio del examen de ubicación o por haber aprobado el nivel anterior. Los usuarios que ingresen al nivel V deben contar con un nivel B1 básico.

OBJETIVOS GENERALES
Al finalizar el curso, el usuario:
1. Ampliará sus conocimientos del idioma inglés.
2. Desarrollará estrategias para comunicarse oralmente en inglés con mayor fluidez y coherencia, en situaciones comunicativas reales de carácter formal e informal.

OBJETIVOS ESPECÍFICOS
Al finalizar el curso, el usuario estará en capacidad de:
- Comprender material auditivo
- Desarrollar los siguientes parámetros fonéticos:
Acentuación de nueva información
Reducción de *want to*, *you'd better*, *going to have to*, *ought to* y *have got to*
Acentuación de frases verbales
Entonación de preguntas largas
Pronunciación de los fonemas
Utilizar las formas lingüísticas apropiadas para expresar las siguientes funciones del lenguaje:
Compartir información acerca de hábitos alimenticios
Discutir diferentes maneras de cocinar y preparar alimentos
Hablar sobre el futuro: planes, compromisos, predicciones y agenda personal
Ofrecer concejos y plantear soluciones
Hablar acerca de hábitos al usar el teléfono
Describir amigos y hablar acerca de amistades y noviazgos
Hablar acerca de experiencias ce convivencia con vecinos
Discutir situaciones y eventos imaginarios y aspectos a cambiar
Discutir cómo manejar problemas que se presentan a diario

PERFIL DE SALIDA DEL USUARIO

Para finalizar, el perfil de entrada del usuario se habrá reforzado con mayor profundidad en el nivel V, con dicho refuerzo ingresará al nivel VI, de acuerdo con la guía del CEFR. Finalmente los usuarios que egresen del nivel V contarán con las mismas habilidades del nivel B1 aunque de manera reforzada. Dichas habilidades son las siguientes:

Comprende y expresa clara y fluidamente el uso de expresiones y oraciones de uso frecuente relacionadas a área de importancia tales como familia, empleo, estudio, compras, planes, deportes, salud, entretenimiento, industrias etc.

Puede expresarse con mayor soltura ante temas de conversación conocidos y relacionados con su vida, así como temas un poco más complejos como el uso de tecnologías y otros. Así mismo es capaz de poder comunicarse adecuadamente en países donde se hable la lengua inglesa, siendo comprendido con gran facilidad.

Puede describir diversos aspectos de su entorno, tales como eventos, sueños, esperanzas, ambiciones y otros.

Es capaz de mantener conversaciones a un nivel que le brinde suficiente confianza en sí mismo.

Puede dar razones y explicaciones acerca de sus opiniones y planes.

METODOLOGÍA

El profesor, en su papel de facilitador, será el encargado de propiciar el ambiente adecuado y las condiciones necesarias para el uso intensivo del idioma, a través de actividades individuales, en parejas o en grupos. El usuario por su parte es responsable del aprovechamiento del curso, así como de su progreso individual en el mejoramiento de su competencia lingüística. El profesor podrá diagnosticar el nivel de conocimientos de los usuarios durante la primera semana y recomendar la reubicación del usuario si lo considera necesario.

EVALUACIÓN

Participación: 10%
(Uso de la lengua meta, seguimiento de instrucciones, actitud, interés, esfuerzo, etc.)

Pruebas cortas: 50%
(Actividades de comprensión auditiva, gramática y pronunciación, diálogos, debates, entrevistas, grabaciones en el laboratorio, etc.)

Evaluación continua: 10%
(Workbook, Video Activity Book, tareas complementarias, progreso individual, ejercicios de escritura, lectura y vocabulario, etc.)

Examen final: 30%
Comprensión auditiva (10%)
Producción oral (20%)

La nota mínima para aprobar el curso del NIVEL V es 80

NOTAS:

- Los profesores son libres de decidir de qué manera distribuir la evaluación de acuerdo a cada rubro, respetando siempre los porcentajes. Igualmente queda a criterio de cada docente si realiza o no repeticiones de pruebas cortas o trabajos a cualquier usuario que por algún motivo no las haya podido realizar.

- Este curso no tiene créditos universitarios.

- Debido a la naturaleza del curso, la asistencia es obligatoria, y se especifica que:
Para aquellos estudiantes que reciben lecciones dos días por semana, sólo podrían ausentarse dos días; es decir, cinco horas de clase. De lo contrario, se perderá el curso.
Para quienes reciben lecciones un día por semana, sólo podrían ausentarse un día; es decir, cinco horas de clase. De lo contrario, se perderá el curso.

- El CEIC no permite el uso de fotocopias del libro de texto.

- Todo aparato electrónico deberá permanecer apagado durante las lecciones.

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

McCarthy, M., McCarten, J., & Sandiford, H. *Touchstone Level 3*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Diccionario Español/ Inglés - Inglés/ Español

Material audiovisual del laboratorio de idiomas y adicional suministrado por cada docente.