

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

TEACHING CULTURE WITH THE INTERNET:

A web-based teaching material package  
for grades 5-6 of the comprehensive school

A Pro Gradu Thesis

by

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# HUMANISTINEN TIEDEKUNTA ENGLANNIN KIELEN LAITOS

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## TEACHING CULTURE WITH THE INTERNET:

A web-based teaching material package for grades 5-6 of the comprehensive school

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Nykykäsityksen mukaan kulttuuritietoudella on olennainen osa kielenopetuksessa. Kielenopetuksen päämääränä on antaa oppilaalle valmiudet toimia kulttuurienvälisenä viestijänä, joka tuntee sekä oman kulttuuritaustansa että kohdekulttuurin ominaiset piirteet.

Tietoverkkojen kehittyminen on avannut paljon uusia mahdollisuuksia kulttuuritietouden opetukselle. Internetin välityksellä on mahdollista lukea, katsella ja kuunnella autenttista materiaalia suoraan kohdekulttuurista. Lisäksi sähköposti, uutisryhmät ja reaaliaikaiset keskusteluryhmät tarjoavat mahdollisuuden olla yhteydessä eri-ikäisiin ihmisiin ympäri maailmaa. Autenttisia oppimateriaaleja ja kontakteja pidetään yleisesti tärkeänä kulttuuritiedon opetuksessa.

Tämän opetusmateriaalipaketin tarkoituksena on opettaa kulttuuritietoutta peruskoulun viides- ja kuudesluokkalaisille käyttäen Internetin soveltuvia palveluja. Osatavoitteena on myös kehittää positiivinen asenne muita kulttuureja kohtaan. Materiaalipaketin lähtökohtana on suomalainen kulttuuri, johon muita kulttuureita verrataan. Paketti sisältää materiaalia neljästä erilaisesta englanninkielisestä maasta: Isosta-Britanniasta, Yhdysvalloista, Intiasta ja Australiasta. Internetin palveluista käytetään www:tä, uutisryhmiä, sähköpostia ja reaaliaikaisia keskusteluryhmiä.

Opetusmateriaalipaketti on Internetissä (URL: [www.jyu.fi/~sasakkin/cultureweb](http://www.jyu.fi/~sasakkin/cultureweb)), ja sen aihealueita ovat 1) maantieto: sisältää maantietoa, mutta joiltakin osin myös poliittisia ja historiaan liittyviä aiheita, 2) ihmiset: eri ihmisryhmät, stereotypit, uskomukset ja käyttäytyminen, 3) perinteet: kulttuuriperintö ja jokapäiväinen elämä sekä 4) henkilökohtaiset kontaktit. Paketin näkemyksen mukaan kulttuuri jakautuu sekä jaettuun kulttuuriin että jokaisen ihmisen omaan kulttuuriin. Tämä heijastuu aihealueissa ja tehtävissä siten, että kolmen ensimmäisen aihealueen avulla on tarkoitus tutustua jaettuun kulttuuriin ja neljännen aihealueen, henkilökohtaisten kontaktien, avulla pyritään tutustumaan yksilöiden omiin kulttuureihin.

Opetusmateriaalipaketin käyttö jakautuu kolmeen vaiheeseen. Ensimmäisessä vaiheessa (orientation/sensitization) orientoidutaan ja herkistytään kulttuurin oppimiseen. Käytännössä tämä tapahtuu käymällä läpi oppilaiden kotitehtävänä ollutta kulttuuri aiheista pohdintatehtävää. Toisessa vaiheessa (observing/collecting information) on tarkoitus havainnoida ja kerätä tietoa Internetin avulla tekemällä pakettiin liittyviä tehtäviä. Aluksi materiaalipaketin toisessa vaiheessa painottuu sähköpostin käyttö, mutta myöhemmin käytetään www:tä ja uutisryhmiä sekä ajoittain sähköpostia. Toisen vaiheen lopussa käytetään myös reaaliaikaista keskusteluryhmää. Kolmannessa vaiheessa (comparison/reflection) vertaillaan kohdekulttuuria oppilaiden omaan kulttuuriin pohdintatehtävien avulla. Tämän vaiheen oppilaat tekevät itsenäisesti kotitehtäväänsä. Pohjustuksena kotitehtävälle myös toisen vaiheen tehtävät sisältävät jonkin verran vertailua suomalaiseen kulttuuriin, jotta oppilaat herkistyisivät kulttuurien välisille eroille ja samankaltaisuuksille jo tehtäviä tehdessään. Tämä helpottaa kotitehtävän tekemistä. Tehtävä tehdään verkon välityksellä yhteisössä, joka on perustettu materiaalipakettia varten, ja jossa on mahdollista käyttää sekä reaaliaikaista keskusteluryhmää että uutisryhmätyyppistä palvelua. Käytännön syistä uutisryhmäkeskustelu on näistä kahdesta useammin käytetty vaihtoehto. Seuraavalla tunnilla edellisen tunnin kolmas vaihe, eli oppilaiden kotitehtävä, toimii orientoitumis- ja herkistymisvaiheena. Täten eri vaiheista muodostuu jatkumo.

Asiasanat: Internet. teaching material package. culture. computer assisted language teaching.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Acquiring cultural knowledge is today acknowledged to be an integral aspect of language learning. In many countries, including Finland, the ultimate goal of language education is intercultural competence, which means understanding and accepting the similarities and differences between the target culture and learners' own culture, and knowing how to behave in a culturally appropriate manner in communicative situations. (POPS 1994; Huttunen 1997.)

Despite the general agreement on the importance of cultural knowledge, many teachers feel unsure of the appropriate interpretation of "culture" in their teaching context (Byram and Risager 1999). Culture is a wide and complex concept, however, it has not been seriously discussed or criticised over the last two decades (Atkinson 1999). A comprehensive teaching methodology for teaching culture has not been developed either. Therefore, more research on this topic is needed.

The purpose of this teaching material package is to introduce ways of using the Internet in teaching cultural knowledge. Many researchers support the use of the Internet for two equally important reasons (Lee 1997; Kaikkonen 1998; Kohonen 1998). First, the Internet offers new ways of interacting with native and non-native speakers, for instance, via e-mail or on-line chatrooms. Second, it enables learners to explore in a digital format some authentic artifacts of the target culture. Both authentic contacts and authentic materials have been argued for in current research on teaching intercultural competence (Fischer 1996; Kaikkonen 1998).

The present teaching material package is designed for grades 5-6 of the comprehensive school. This level was chosen because earlier studies have focused on using the Internet in teaching language and/or culture with older students (Blyth 1999; Lee 1998). Research has suggested that it is not even clear whether young children can learn concepts of other cultures as quickly as linguistic codes (Byram et al. 1994). Moreover, material on the Internet is often linguistically difficult, thus presenting a challenge for using it in primary education.

The main educational goal of the material package is developing cultural

knowledge using the services on the Internet. An emphasis is also placed on developing pupils' attitudes towards other cultures by taking advantage of children's natural curiosity and openness. Both knowledge and positive attitudes are aspects of intercultural competence (Byram 1997).

The material consists of four English speaking countries and their cultures: the United Kingdom, the USA, India, and Australia. These countries were chosen because they are culturally diverse and offer many interesting learning topics. India represents countries in which English is spoken as a second or foreign language. On the basis of textbooks, it may not be possible to get an idea of the diversity of these cultures or of English as a lingua franca. Therefore, complementary material is needed. The present material is not tied to any unit or course, but can be used every time that extra material is needed. It is recommended that the material be used periodically. The exercises vary from brief, twenty-minute exercises to long-lasting contacts with people in the target culture.

As background information for the teaching material package, chapter 2 discusses the role of culture in modern language teaching and in the foreign language curriculum, defines the term "culture", considers the wide cultural scope of the English language, and offers some suggestions for teaching cultural knowledge. Chapter 3 begins with a brief introduction to computer assisted language teaching, clarifying how it has changed during the last two decades. After this, the Internet is introduced, from its development and structure to some possible uses of its services in language teaching. Moreover, its general advantages and disadvantages are considered, the relationship of the Internet services to some theories of learning is analyzed, and some studies in which the Internet has been used as a learning environment are discussed. Chapter 4 serves as a framework for the teaching material package. Chapter 5 contains a teacher's and a pupil's guide, which are written in Finnish. The reason for this is that the teacher's guide consists mainly of instructions of how to use the learning environment and is technical in vocabulary. The pupil's guide is in Finnish because the target group of the package is children. The teaching material package is on a floppy disk and on the Internet, URL: <http://www.jyu.fi/~sasakkin/cultureweb>.

## **2 THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING**

The following two chapters in the present study have two aims. The first aim is to give the reader some background knowledge of today's language teaching, starting from worldwide trends and then focusing on the situation in Europe and Finland. The second aim is to show how computers have been used in language teaching in the past, and how they can be used today and in the near future. Though modern language teaching benefits from the use of computer networks, which enable new kinds of contacts with other cultures, it is only recently that computer software has been developed to take into account the cultural aspect of language teaching.

The present chapter focuses on the first aim mentioned above. Section 2.1 discusses some reasons behind the current, worldwide emphasis on culture and intercultural competence in language teaching. Because "culture" is not a simple concept, section 2.2 discusses and compares its various interpretations. Section 2.3 introduces a common European Framework of Reference for Language Teaching and on this basis describes the goals of teaching culture in European countries. Section 2.4 focuses on Finland by discussing the foreign language curriculum of primary education. Section 2.5 exemplifies the wide scope of the English language and analyses some problems this may cause for the teaching of culture. In section 2.6, some suggestions for teaching language and culture are discussed.

### **2.1 Background**

During the last few decades, foreign language teaching seems to have changed all over the world as societies develop and people's needs change. It is particularly the role of culture in language teaching that has become more and more important. Kaikkonen (1998:12-14) points out that the emphasis of foreign language teaching has moved in stages from linguistic competence via communicative competence of the 1970s toward intercultural competence in the 1990s. Legutke and Thomas (1991:265) argue that intercultural competence

should not be seen as a separate entity but as a part of communicative competence (see figure 1):

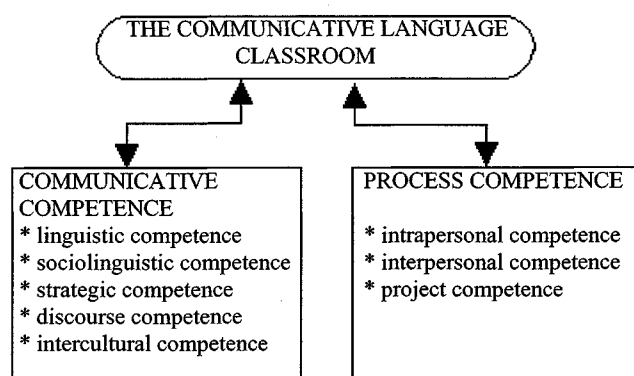


Figure 1. An outline of competences for the communicative classroom (Legutke and Thomas 1991:265).

The concept of communicative competence has expanded to include intercultural aspects, thus making language teaching a more holistic process. This shows in relevant terminology, too. For instance, Byram (1997:3) uses the term "intercultural communicative competence" when discussing the current emphasis of language teaching.

Kramsch (1995:83) sees that the current interest in culture in language teaching is due to many reasons. First, there is a general fear among educators that international peace and understanding cannot be promoted by simply acquiring linguistic systems. Second, some language teachers are not satisfied with teaching purely the communicative function of language. The third reason is mentioned by Kohonen (1998:26; see also Byram and Risager 1999:1-2), who emphasizes the role of political and social development in Europe as an impetus for the increase of interest in culture. European integration has increased contacts with other cultures and therefore, people have to tolerate and respect different cultures and learn to work together to build a common future. On the basis of the reasons listed above, it seems that it has been generally understood that effective communication requires more than linguistic knowledge. Communication may be ineffective because of cultural differences in non-verbal communication or negative attitudes towards each other, even though people speak the same language.

Though culture has not been emphasized until in the 1990s, the idea of

culture in the foreign language classroom has existed in the past. Kramersch (1993:23-24) argues that up to now, there have been two main directions in teaching culture in the foreign language classroom. The first direction has focused on factual information, discussing for instance food, literature classics, and institutional structures of the target culture. According to Kramersch (1993:23-24), it "has not enabled learners to understand foreign attitudes, values, and mindsets". The second direction has included interpreting phenomena in the target culture, but it has often focused on a generalized, average national culture. Kramersch (1993:23-24) claims that this direction has had two problems. First, it has not taken into account the diversity of the target culture. Second, there has not been an explicit comparison with the learners' own culture in teaching; it has been left up to learners themselves.

The specific goals of foreign language teaching in Europe and Finland will be discussed in more detail later, but at this point it is sufficient to say that the final, worldwide goal of language teaching is understanding the target culture and one's own culture and knowing how to get along with the people in the target country in communicative situations (Kaikkonen 1998:12-14; Lee 1997:411). In order to understand a foreign culture, one has to put it in relation with one's own culture (Kramersch 1993:205). This seems to have lacked in foreign language teaching in the past. As Byram (1997:11-12) points out, the aim of today's language teaching is not to acquire a new language and culture by abandoning those of one's own, but an ability to see "the relationships between [learners] and their own cultural beliefs, behaviours and meanings...and those of their interlocutors". Language is seen as a tool which gives access to another culture (Fisher 1996:73; Armstrong and Yetter-Vassot 1994:477).

In addition to understanding the target culture, there is another, more general goal in teaching culture. Byram and Esarte-Sarries (1991:7-8) argue that learners should be provided such skills which enable them to adapt to new situations. Teaching should go from "training for the predictable to preparation for the unpredictable". Byram and Esarte-Sarries further claim that learners will know how to adapt to new situations if they understand "the relationship between language and the values and meanings it embodies", "the implicit connotations and collocations of vocabulary", and "the inter-relationship between the self and

the society in which one lives". Therefore, it seems that teaching culture should have a general goal of developing learners' thinking and analytical skills.

Wright (1996:36-37) argues that even though culture is emphasized in language teaching, research from England and France indicate that present teaching has "little effect on pupils' knowledge of and attitudes towards other cultures". Wright sees that some reasons behind this poor result are an absence of methodology for the "delivery" of culture, the difficulty of assessing cultural learning, and the "survival approach" in teaching. The "survival approach" refers to teaching language for surviving in key situations when on holiday. This places the learner in the role of a tourist, which is not a good way to learn cultural knowledge. This question will be discussed in more detail in section 2.5.

This section has briefly discussed the reasons behind teaching culture along with foreign languages, and introduced the general goals of foreign language teaching at a worldwide level. Though there seems to be a consensus over the importance of culture in language teaching, the concept "culture" may be somewhat unclear. As Atkinson (1999:625) points out, "there has been little serious discussion and critique of the concept in TESOL over the last two decades". According to Byram and Risager (1999:83), this has left teachers in a complicated situation: they know that culture should be taught, but at the same time they feel unsure of what is "an appropriate concept of culture for their teaching context". It seems clear that without exploring the different meanings of culture, one cannot be sure of what to teach. Therefore, a detailed analysis of the concept is needed. Below, some definitions of culture are introduced and compared. The discussion is far from complete, but it serves as a brief introduction to the concept.

## **2.2 Definitions of culture**

Generally speaking, defining the concept "culture" is "notoriously difficult" (Byram 1988:24). Many attempts have led to "received views of culture", and it is only recently that the concept has been seriously analyzed (Atkinson 1999:625). To illustrate the difference between different kinds of definitions, this section

starts by discussing two widely used definitions of culture, which have, however, two valuable aspects to consider when defining culture. After this, a more contemporary and perhaps deeper examination of the concept is presented.

The first definition is perhaps the most popular definition of culture, and it has been used for instance by Lee (1997:411), who divides culture into **Culture with a big C** and **culture with a small c**. In this definition, the first aspect of culture, "Big C Culture" means "the study of the art, literature, music, history, and civilizations of people primarily through literary texts" whereas the second aspect, "little c culture", means "people's traditions, customs, beliefs, behavior, and values". The division into two kinds of cultures seems somewhat questionable. It may imply that within society, different cultural products have different values. The works of artists and writers belong to "big C Culture", but what "normal" people produce or achieve belong to "little c culture", unless their products are old enough to have historical value. Therefore, this division may emphasize the difference between different social groups of people. "Big C Culture" seems to represent something that is not accessible to everyone in society, but only to artists, writers, or the more wealthy part of people, who have money to visit museums and art exhibitions, and buy expensive cultural artifacts, such as paintings or sculptures. "Big C Culture" seems to be considered as "true culture" by society. As Seelye (1984:8) points out, "culture is viewed too often as an elitist collection of facts about art, literature, music, history, and geography". Seelye criticises this by saying that first of all, culture is more than a list of facts, and secondly, it also covers other areas of life in addition to art, literature, music and so on. To support Seelye it can be added that culture should not be "elitist", but cover all social groups.

The second definition of culture is provided by Kramsch (1995:84), who divides the concept according to academic disciplines: **the humanistic aspect of culture** focuses on the way in which "a social group represents itself and others through its material productions, be they works of art, literature, social institutions, or artifacts of everyday life...", whereas **the social aspect** refers to "the attitudes and beliefs, ways of thinking, behaving and remembering shared by members of that community". These aspects are comparable to "big C Culture" and "little c culture", respectively. However, in this definition, the first category

seems wider than in the first definition, because artifacts of everyday life are included in the definition. All material productions are considered to be of equal value and therefore, also people seem to be more equal in this definition. One does not get the impression that there is a specific high culture for the wealthy.

Before discussing the contemporary view of culture, it may be useful to summarize two central aspects which are both shared by the definitions discussed above and which seem to have a role in defining culture. The first one is **the relationship between people and culture**. The concrete or abstract artifacts of culture mentioned above are created by people themselves. The works of art and literature are created by artists, but as Kramsch (1995:84) points out, even people in everyday life take part in creating culture by forming laws and rules. These are underlying, invisible laws which affect our ways of thinking and behaving. Our own ways seem "as natural as breathing", whereas the ways of others seem "unnatural" to us. This can lead to stereotypes and prejudices. Therefore, it can be said that "culture is always linked to moral values, notions of good and bad, right and wrong, beautiful and ugly" (Kramsch 1995:84.) At the same time as people create culture, culture also "creates" people. As Valdes (1986:vii) puts it, "people are...products of their own cultures". The underlying laws, rules and regularities of society have an effect on us when we grow up in our culture. Unconsciously, we learn how we are supposed to behave, talk, and think, for example.

Another important aspect of culture is **the relationship between language and culture**. Culture often manifests itself through language. As Kaikkonen (1998:15-16) points out, our first language is in connection with the way we think. The expressions and syntactic structures we use have not emerged from nowhere, but are connected with the culture behind the language. Often we do not think or analyze the expressions or structures we use, but take them for granted. However, they unconsciously affect the ways we think or communicate. Kaikkonen (1997:48) also argues that communication has a crucial role in learning culture: "culture is learned in and through communication, in interaction with people". It seems that in the relationship between language and culture, language has a mediatory role, which leads us to a description of culture given by Kramsch (1995:85): "Culture in the final analysis is always linguistically mediated membership into a discourse community, that is both real and



imagined." Language gives access to culture, to the ways people in that culture think and behave. Because of the complexity of the relationship between language and culture, and the limited length of the present study, this topic is not discussed in more detail.<sup>1</sup>

As two widely used definitions of culture have now been discussed, it is time to focus on more recent examinations of culture. Many definitions of culture represent what Atkinson (1999:626) calls "a received view of culture". By this Atkinson means that cultures are seen as "geographically (and quite often nationally) distinct entities, as relatively unchanging and homogenous, and as all-encompassing systems of rules that substantially determine personal behavior". The definitions mentioned above seem to represent this view. However, according to Atkinson (1999:631), recently it has been argued that "there is no social group that is not constantly infiltrated by outside influences". This means that cultures are not unchanging, as in the received view of culture. It seems clear that in today's world in which people travel and are in contact with other cultures through computer networks, for instance, cultures influence each other. In addition to outside influences, cultures are influenced from within. Atkinson (1999:633) claims that in every culture, there are people who "modify, resist, or ignore cultural norms" and in this way break down the homogeneity of a culture. Furthermore, Atkinson (1999:640) argues that because all people perceive the world differently and thus have different kinds of schemas and experiences of the world, two people cannot "be said to share precisely the same cultures". Atkinson seems to support radical constructivism, which claims that an objective reality does not even exist (for details, see Kämäräinen and Haapasalo 1998:53); people construct their own realities or in this case their own cultures in their minds. However, Atkinson (1999:640) argues that cultures can be said to exist because social practises, tools and products and people's schemas are shared to some degree. All in all, though Atkinson does not propose a definition of culture, he seems to point out important aspects of the concept. It seems that these cannot be ignored when discussing culture.

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<sup>1</sup> For discussions of lexical networks and metaphors see Lantolf (1999), and the relationship between culture and writing see Kachru (1999).

To summarize, it seems that it is difficult to give a concise definition of culture, as it is such a complex concept. As Seelye (1984:13) puts it, culture is "a very broad concept embracing all aspects of human life". The definitions discussed above clearly have some important aspects to consider but none of them seem to stand on their own. It seems that somekind of synthesis is needed. The way culture is seen in the present study will be discussed later in section 4.1.

### **2.3 The aims of teaching culture**

As the term "culture" has now been discussed, it is time to focus on the specific aims of teaching culture in the foreign language classroom in Europe and Finland. As has been described earlier in section 2.1, the ultimate aim of language teaching is understanding the target culture and one's own culture and knowing how to get along with the people in the target country in communicative situations. This is a wide aim and it has to be divided into smaller aims. However, choosing the aims for teaching such a wide area may be problematic, and can often be done only at a general level.

In Finland, language teaching follows the Common European Framework of Reference for Language Teaching, which was accepted as the norm for language teaching in European countries in 1997 (Huttunen 1997:7-11). The idea of developing a General Framework of Reference came from the European Commission and its purpose is to increase the quality and quantity of communication between European countries. The aim of language teaching, according to the Framework of Reference, can be summarized as follows: from the beginning of language learning, pupils are taught skills which enable them to work with people from different cultures, and possibly to travel, work, and live in different cultural environments. This seems to imply that cultural knowledge has a significant role in foreign language teaching.

In the Framework of Reference, language learning and language use are seen to take place in a social context, and the goals of language teaching are divided according to this social context (Huttunen 1997:10). As was mentioned in section 2.2, even culture is formed in a social context, created by people

themselves. Therefore, culture in some form is present nearly everywhere in the Framework of Reference. Figure 2 presents the English translations of the components of the social context in which a language is learned:

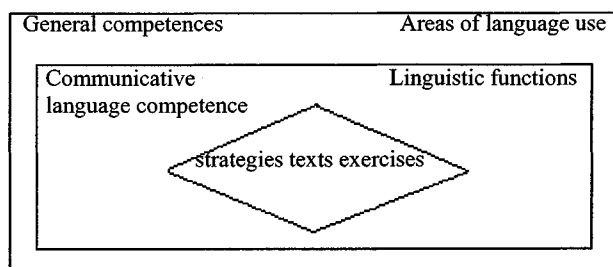


Figure 2. A holistic framework of language learning (Huttunen 1997:10).

All these components are divided into subcomponents (Huttunen 1997: 12-17). In the following, the cultural aspects of these components are briefly introduced.

The first component, general competences, and its subcomponents are the main focus of the present study and will be discussed in more detail later. The second component, areas of language use, refers to different areas in which language can be used, for instance, in public places or in private conversations. These require different vocabulary, style, and level of formality, which have to be learned by a speaker of a foreign language in order to be an effective and appropriate communicator. As different cultures have different views on the formality of a situation, they also use different level of formality in speaking. The third component, communicative language competence, refers to the way language is used in communication, and is divided into sociolinguistic, linguistic, and pragmatic subcomponents. These include for instance pronunciation, dialects, fixed formulae, and non-verbal communication. There are differences in non-verbal communication between cultures and also within a society, dialects signify which social group or sub-culture one belongs to. The fourth component, linguistic functions, refers to interaction between people and the production and reception of messages. For instance, cultural differences in silence belong to this category. The fifth component includes strategies, texts, and exercises and refers to the language learning process, in which the components mentioned above are practised using different learning strategies, written or spoken texts, and

exercises.

However, from a cultural point of view, perhaps the most important component is the first component, general competences, which is divided into four subcomponents. Figure 3 illustrates the subcomponents of general competences:

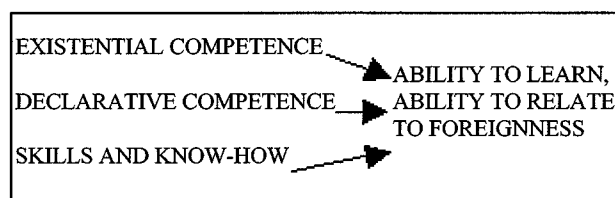


Figure 3. General competences (Huttunen 1997:10)

Existential competence consists of attitudes towards others and knowledge of oneself as a learner and language user (Huttunen 1997:10-11). Declarative knowledge comprises information of one's own country/culture and of the target countries/cultures, for instance, about their history, political system, food, shopping, and public services. In addition, understanding the similarities and differences between the learner's native culture and target culture is placed into this subcategory. In contrast, skills and know-how refer to different sociocultural factors of the target culture, for instance, how people behave in different situations. Finally, ability to learn and relate to foreignness deals with how to observe cultural characteristics, language use, and communication, and how to use this knowledge in real situations.

The Framework of Reference recommends that teaching culture should start from the beginning of language learning (Huttunen 1997:11). This presents some problems which will be discussed in section 2.4. Nevertheless, the Framework of Reference seems to include most aspects of culture which are seen important today. The diversity of the target culture is recognized, for instance, in the form of dialects. Moreover, a comparison with learners' own culture is recommended, and learners are encouraged to observe different cultural characteristics, to learn on their own, not only under the guidance of the teacher. Declarative knowledge of the target culture is also seen important. However, this should have a deeper meaning than simply learning facts about the target culture. As Byram (1989:84) points out, it is inadequate to describe the behaviors, artifacts, or institutions of

the target culture. Instead, their underlying, "culturally agreed meanings" and significance to the target culture should be accounted for.

The Framework of Reference gives detailed aims for teaching language and culture. In addition, many researchers have proposed aims for teaching culture. For instance, Byram (1997:50-53) suggests a model of intercultural competence with five factors. The factors are as follows:

- 1) **Attitudes:** Curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about of one's own.
- 2) **Knowledge:** Knowledge of social groups and their products and practises in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction.
- 3) **Skills of interpreting and relating:** Ability to interpret a document or an event from another culture, to explain it and relate to documents from one's own.
- 4) **Skills of discovery and interaction:** Ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practises and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction.
- 5) **Critical cultural awareness/political education:** Ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practises and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

Further, Seelye (1984:9) has listed the aims of cultural instruction. His list has seven main aims which are all mentioned also in Byram's model of five factors. However, Seelye's list does not express the aim of questioning learners' own culture and critically comparing it with the target culture. As this seems important in learning culture, Seelye's list was not chosen as the model for teaching culture in the present study. The goals of teaching culture as they are seen in the present study will be discussed in detail in section 4.2.

## 2.4 Culture in the foreign language curriculum

As mentioned earlier, the General Framework of Reference for Language Teaching suggests that teaching culture should start at the same time as language teaching begins. In Finland, most pupils start studying a foreign language at the third grade of the comprehensive school, at the age of nine. However, research in the field of developmental psychology has suggested that it is easier for children

to learn linguistic codes than develop concepts of other countries/cultures (Byram et al. 1994:16-24). This may imply two opposite matters. The first implication is that when teaching children, an emphasis should be placed exclusively on linguistic skills. Teaching culture should start at a full pace at an older age when children's level of cognitive development is high enough. Further, it would be easier to teach culture after studying the language for a few years as learners' linguistic skills will then enable using authentic teaching materials, which have been suggested to develop intercultural competence (Kaikkonen 1998:21). It seems that the belief in the power of authentic materials may put off cultural instruction even more than children's low level of cognitive development. Simpson (1997:40), for instance, claims that cultural input is often omitted at the lower and intermediate levels of language teaching, because learners' linguistic skills do not enable using authentic materials. Because authentic materials are used in real situations and are not created for teaching purposes (Tomlinson 1984:81), they are often linguistically more demanding than textbooks with artificial dialogues and texts. However, it seems questionable not to teach culture because of lacking linguistic skills or even because of low level of cognitive development. The issue here may be that teachers may find it difficult to come up with creative ways of teaching culture for young learners and it is thus put off.

The second implication seems to be that more emphasis should be placed on cultural knowledge right from the beginning of language learning, and let the language develop on its own at the same time. This would correspond to living in a foreign culture, where cultural input is present everywhere and it is acquired in a similar way as language. It seems that there is a difference between learning a culture and acquiring a culture. Byram et al. (1994) pointed out that learning concepts of other countries/cultures was more difficult than learning a linguistic code, but in contrast, Brown (1986:43) suggests that when living in a foreign culture, a young child may learn culture and language simultaneously and both of them more quickly than an adult. When living in a foreign culture, both culture and language are acquired instead of learned. Thus, acculturation seems more efficient than learning. For foreign language teaching this would mean creating such learning environments in which acculturation was possible, for instance, teaching and practicing cultural content in the target language. In this way, the

classroom could represent the target culture, and as children entered the classroom, they would feel as if they were entering in the target culture. Modern technology enables so close contacts with the target culture that it is today possible to enter a culture in virtual format.

Because culture has not been an integral part of language teaching until the 1990s, the specific aims of teaching culture to young learners are still somewhat unclear (Byram 1997:46). The comprehensive school in Finland has a general aim of educating pupils to learn about other cultures and tolerate them (POPS 1994:32-33). This aim can be taught nearly with any school subject. Culture is mentioned in the language curriculum of primary education, though the emphasis clearly seems to be on linguistic skills. The following list summarizes in English the goals set by The National Board of Education in Finland for pupils' English skills after the sixth grade of the comprehensive school (POPS 1994:69):

- pupils can manage in everyday situations with their oral skills,
- they understand easy, written language,
- they know the basic vocabulary for different communicative situations of their age,
- they can write short messages,
- they know some central ways of communication which are typical for the target culture,
- they know some basic facts of the countries, peoples and cultures of the target language area.

It seems that the present curriculum aims only at learning the target culture; there is no explicit comparison between the learners' own culture and the target culture. As mentioned earlier in section 2.1, the aim of foreign language teaching is not to acquire a new language and culture by abandoning those of one's own but an ability to understand both one's own cultural behaviors, beliefs and meanings and those of the target culture (Byram 1997:11-12; Kaikkonen 1998:12-14). The present curriculum may be based on the first assumption mentioned above, namely that the teaching of culture should start at a full pace at an older age as children's level of cognitive development is high enough. Until then, only factual knowledge is provided.

## 2.4 The cultural scope of the English language

Teaching language and culture would be easier if there were only one language and culture in each country in the world. However, this is not the case. As Simpson (1997:42) points out, in many cases, it may be difficult to define the target culture. To illustrate this, let us consider the situation in Finland. Even if Finnish were only spoken in Finland, teaching "pure" Finnish culture is impossible. In addition to "normal" Finns, there are many different minority groups in Finland, such as the Swedish speaking minority, gypsies, and Lapps. To get a realistic picture of the diversity of Finnish culture, these cannot be ignored.

When it comes to English, the situation seems to be even more complicated. According to Crystal (1988:1-7), the English language has over 300 million mother tongue speakers in the seven countries (the USA, the Great Britain, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa). In addition, it is the second language in many countries, and studied as a foreign language all over the world.

Because English is spoken in so many countries as the first language, and it is also a lingua franca, it is problematic to choose the target culture to teach about. As Byram (1997:20) points out, "in the case of lingua franca ... learners cannot acquire knowledge of all the national identities and cultures they may come into contact". Therefore, language teachers and people who plan text books make a conscious choice and teach only a few cultures or areas of culture, depending on their own notions of culture (Atkinson 1999:648). Cunningsworth (1984:19) points out that the English presented in coursebooks is usually "either standard, middle-class, educated, southern British English or standard, middle-class, educated, American English". This seems to imply that at the same time, the dominant culture being taught about represents their values, attitudes, and ways of thinking. As has been discussed in sections 2.2 and 2.3, cultures are diverse and recognizing the diversity of the target culture is seen important in today's language teaching. However, textbooks do not seem to represent this view.

Byram (1997:112-115) even suggests that studying the cultures of native



speakers is not necessary if it is known that learners end up using a language mostly or exclusively as a lingua franca. Byram suggests that the most important aspect in learning intercultural competence is not deciding which culture to focus on, but critically comparing one's own culture to any other culture. However, Byram points out that western – especially American and British – cultures are so dominant that a critical study of them and their relationship to the learners' own culture seems to be more beneficial than ignoring their presence. Moreover, Byram (1997:20) suggests that studying a culture of native speakers can serve as an example, but on the basis of this, learners should be taught skills which enable them to cope with other situations as well. Byram (1989:54-55) claims that the current teaching materials seem to lack interpretation and explanation at nearly all levels of language learning

Nevertheless, it seems that for a teacher of English, the situation is good, if Byram's (1997:112-115) suggestion of not studying the cultures of native speakers is considered. Because English is a lingua franca, it is spoken nearly everywhere in the world. Therefore, it would seem reasonable to teach English and have a critical look at India, for instance, because English is spoken there, though for historical reasons only. However, it would not seem so reasonable to teach, for example, Swedish and then have a critical look at India, because Swedish is not spoken there at all. It cannot be claimed that it would not be possible, of course, but it has many problems. First of all, there is hardly enough authentic material on India in Swedish, and second, contacts with native speakers cannot be in Swedish, but probably in English. Therefore, it seems that a teacher of English can teach both western cultures and nearly any other culture in the world. The status of a lingua franca does not seem to be a disadvantage for teaching culture, rather it is an advantage.

## **2.5 Some suggestions for teaching culture**

It has been shown that culture has an essential role in language teaching today. However, teaching methodology concerning the teaching of culture is not yet fully developed. Some general guidelines can be outlined on the basis of relevant

literature, but no single method can be named or described. Perhaps because culture is such a wide area, a concise method for its teaching cannot even be developed. Nevertheless, in this section, some views on the teaching of culture will be discussed.

As has been mentioned in section 2.2, people are products of their own cultures. Therefore, the first step in teaching cultural knowledge is making learners aware of themselves as cultural beings (Kaikkonen 1998:21; Valdes 1986:vii). As Valdes (1986:vii) points out, people have a tendency to consider their own behavior as "standard" or "right" and see the rest of the world as "strange". Byram (1989:116-117) suggests that learners have schemata or mental models of both what their own culture is like and what foreign cultures are like. Foreignness is in relation to schemata of learners' own ethnicity. Everything that does not belong to the schemata of their own culture is foreign. Therefore, learners' schemata of their own ethnic identity can be seen as a starting point in changing their schemata of foreigners. This seems to represent current learning theories. For instance, Winn (1999) argues that current learning theories, such as constructivism, emphasize the role of mental models, or schemata, in learning. Learning changes these mental models.

In order to bring about changes in schemata, individuals need to be brought into contact with new phenomena and to have new experiences (Byram 1989:20,50). Byram (1989:20,50) suggests that in order to develop pupils' tolerance of other cultures, the teacher has to deliberately expose pupils to a situation in which they feel their own culture as "strange" and "other". This "decentering" from one's own culture will teach pupils that their own culture is not "the norm", the only "natural" culture in the world. If pupils do not understand this, they may assume that all other cultures are unnatural and therefore, they are "to be disapproved and even destroyed" (Byram 1989:20,50; see also Byram 1992:11). Byram (1989:116-117) argues that one possibility to decenter from learners' own culture is to give them a foreigner's view of their culture. For instance, a French person may explain English learners how the French see the English. After this, to help learners reconsider their own views of foreigners, a foreigner's view of his/her own ethnicity may be given, for example, what the French think of themselves.

Seelye (1984:141) argues that seeing a foreign culture which is different from one's own culture is "a two-edged sword": the differences may provoke interest in the culture, but at the same time reinforce stereotypes and the "ethnocentricity of the learner". However, Seelye argues that cultural behavior patterns which may seem "exotic" at first could be used as "points of entry into the target culture". After the entry, learners "should be helped to discover that even seemingly bizarre behavior usually makes perfect sense once it is seen within the context of the rest of the culture".

Kramsch (1993:210,229) argues that the only way to start understanding both one's own culture and the target culture is through developing a third perspective. It would "enable learners to take both an insider's and an outsider's view on C1 and C2". To develop both an insider's and an outsider's view, learners should be trained to adopt different viewpoints on the same matter, starting as early as possible. Kramsch emphasizes that it is this third perspective that cross-cultural education should aim at. However, as Shaffer (1988:315-323) points out, Piagetian tradition suggests that very young children are egocentric; they are not able to consider matters from another perspective but their own. Though new evidence suggests that children are not nearly so egocentric as Piaget had thought, Shaffer argues that children may still often think egocentrically, particularly in "situations in which [children] must infer abstract or otherwise unobservable information such as companion's subtle motives and intentions". This may make developing a third perspective difficult with very young language learners. Nevertheless, at the third grade, when foreign language learning most often starts in Finland, children should have learned to consider also other people's points of view, as their thinking skills have developed.

Kaikkonen (1997:49) suggests that there are four stages in "interculturally orientated language learning", these being as follows:

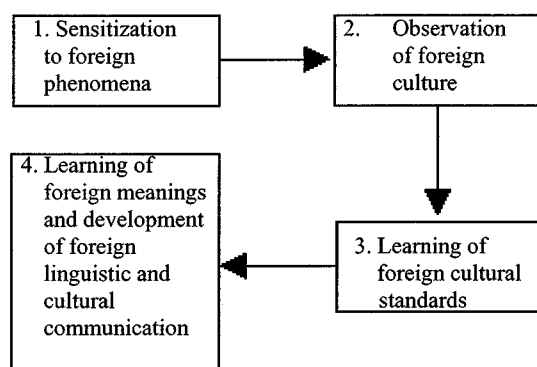


Figure 4. The four stages of intercultural language learning (a numbering mistake in the original corrected) (Kaikkonen 1997:49).

According to Kaikkonen (1997:49), the first stage is to sensitize learners to different phenomena, particularly in the foreign culture. At the second stage, learners should be instructed how to observe different phenomena in the foreign culture and compare them with those of learners' own culture. At the third stage, learners get information about the foreign culture and language and they go deeper into analysis and comparison of different phenomena. At the final stage, actual learning takes place and "eventually leads to a successful communication and interaction with the representatives of a foreign culture". Kaikkonen's model seems valuable in the respect that learners are explicitly taught to observe and compare different phenomena. This seems to facilitate learners to learn on their own and later in life adapt to different cultures, if necessary.

After the first stage, which seems to be shared by most researchers, making learners aware of themselves as cultural beings, learning can truly start. It seems clear that the best way to acquire intercultural competence is living in the target culture. This has many advantages, one being mentioned by Byram (1989:91) who claims that "the affective dimension is likely to be fuller and more complex" if learning takes place in the target society. It seems that living in the target culture or having other real contacts with it is also supported by experiential learning theory. Kolb (1984:34) argues that one characteristic of experiential learning theory is that "learning involves transactions between the person and the environment". This seems to imply that environment has an important role in the

learning process. Kolb claims that educational systems at all levels seem to ignore the "real-world" environment. Considering language teaching, it seems clear that living in the target culture is not possible in most language teaching situations because of a lack of financial resources or time. However, it is often possible to organize some kind of visits to another culture. Among others, Kaikkonen (1998:22) and Fischer (1996:75) point out the importance of authentic, face-to-face contacts with people in the target culture: if we cannot travel to the target culture, we can receive visitors, for instance, from our partner schools.

If the suggestion mentioned earlier (Byram 1997:112-115) of critically comparing one's own culture with any other culture is considered, it would seem that in order to develop intercultural competence, visits to any foreign culture may develop intercultural competence. It does not have to be the target culture that is visited, because all contacts with foreign people will result in a change in people's attitudes towards foreigners, if the quality of the contact is right. Fischer (1996:75) uses the metaphors 'tourist' and 'explorer' to differentiate the two roles people can have when in contact with different cultures. Byram (1997:1-2) shares the metaphor of tourist with Fischer, but calls the other role a 'sojourner'. Both Fischer (1996:75) and Byram (1997:1-2; see also Byram 1992:11) claim that as tourists, our learning of the target culture remains superficial. We do not question anything, but accept everything our tourist guide tells us. It is clear that this does not require active reflection from us. As explorers or sojourners, we get a deeper understanding of the culture as we try to question different phenomena around us and make sense of the target culture.

Fischer (1996:75) argues that the best way to avoid the role of a tourist is asking questions. Therefore, Fischer suggests that we should teach pupils "careful listening, developing sensitive questions first and then trying to make sense". This applies both to face-to-face contacts and contacts via information networks. Byram and Esarte-Sarries (1991:10-11) see that language learners should be like ethnographers for whom the native speaker is a source of knowledge. In this perspective, the teacher is a co-learner, and together with the learners, they "seek to question and elicit from the native an account of his culture which, together with other accounts, native and learner interpret jointly". This emphasises the social nature of the learning process.

Byram (1989:96-101) suggests that language learners at all levels should meet native speakers of similar age, both in textbooks and on visits or through other contacts. Therefore, young pupils should confront natives of their age who explain and describe their culture to them. However, Byram points out that this has several problems. Young natives may not be able to explain explicitly what certain cultural artifacts mean to them. Moreover, they may not be able to express themselves in such linguistic forms which would be comprehensible to young language learners. To summarize, learners are linguistically far behind their peers in the target culture, and they both lack the cultural comprehension of an adult.

As face-to-face contacts are often impossible to organize, modern computer networks and other electrical means provide a possibility to interact with people in the target cultures. (Kaikkonen 1998: 21-22; Kohonen 1998:33-34.) Blyth (1999:40) claims that "technology affects not only *how* students learn but *what* they learn". Because the Internet gives an immediate access to the target culture, it is "blurring the boundaries between language study and culture study". As the potential of computer networks in teaching culture is the main focus of the present study, this question will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3.

After discussing authentic contacts with native speakers or any other foreigners, it is time to consider a different possibility of teaching cultural knowledge. It is possible to teach cultural knowledge even if contacts with other cultures were not possible to organize or computer networks were not available. This seems to require more from teachers as they are the only living sources of knowledge of foreign cultures in the classroom. However, as Seelye (1984:4) points out, "in the area of culture the teacher does not have to be a full information center". The teacher does not have to know everything, but instead help learners develop skills which are necessary in learning on their own from different sources. The teacher is a supporter and counsellor, as present learning theories also suggest (POPS 1994:12).

One possibility is to use authentic teaching materials. As has been mentioned, materials can be considered authentic if they are used in real situations and are not created for teaching purposes (Tomlinson 1984:81). For instance Kaikkonen (1998:21) has come to the conclusion that in order to develop pupils' intercultural competence, teaching material should be authentic. It seems

that authentic materials are suitable particularly for teaching linguistic aspects of culture. Authentic teaching materials may represent the underlying culture better than artificial materials, because they have not been linguistically modified. The language that is used is natural and represents the kind of language that is used in normal situations.

Cunningsworth (1984:72) argues that authentic materials may be considered too demanding to be used as the only teaching materials for learners at the earlier stages of learning. However, Cunningsworth claims that it is "beneficial to the learner's confidence and motivation ... to cope with a limited amount of authentic language". It is not only for confidence and motivation that authentic materials should be used also at the earlier stages of learning. Kohonen (1998:33, see also POPS 1994:71) explains that during the last decade, language teaching has more and more been based on comprehension. This trend emphasizes the following principles of language teaching:

- 1) Different kinds of grammatical structures should be included in teaching materials from the beginning, because grammatical rules are interdependent.
- 2) A child internalizes the rules and structures little by little. Therefore, plenty of input is needed, and it does not have to be structured linguistically.
- 3) Intuitive linguistic competence develops before rules.
- 4) Receptive competence is the basis for production. Learners understand more difficult language than they can produce.
- 5) Language learning is both a conscious and an unconscious process.

These principles clearly favor the use of authentic materials from the earliest stages of language learning.

The question of the language of instruction when teaching culture in the foreign language classroom is not a straightforward one, however. The principles mentioned above seem to favor the use of the target language in teaching cultural knowledge. Surprisingly, this view is not generally supported. According to Byram (1989:101), the few researchers who have considered the question of teaching culture to young language learners suggest that learners' native language be used in the classroom. This would probably help pupils to understand cultural phenomena better, but it would exclude the aspect of "language being culture". Seelye (1984:7-8) argues that the target language should be used whenever

possible and reasonable. However, Seelye supports the use of learners' native language if the target language cannot be used for some reason. According to Seelye, it is better to use learners' native language in teaching cultural content than completely ignore culture.

Byram (1997:3) points out an important factor concerning the teaching of intercultural competence. It cannot and should not be the sole responsibility of the language teacher, but calls for cooperation from other subject areas such as geography and history. This seems to offer a good opportunity for an integration of school subjects.

This section has discussed some views of teaching culture. No concise methods have been proposed as they do not even exist. However, this can be an advantage, as pointed out by Byram and Risager (1999:83): "teachers are not bound to a long tradition and can in principle formulate their new task on a modern basis". The way cultural knowledge is taught in this material package will be discussed in section 4.4.



### **3 TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES WITH THE INTERNET**

In this chapter an attempt is made to combine the teaching of cultural knowledge with the use of computers in foreign language instruction. As was mentioned earlier in section 2.5, computer networks provide new ways of interacting with people in the target culture, and in this way they have opened up many new possibilities for language teaching. However, in order to understand the magnitude of the changes that have taken place in computer assisted language teaching, it is important to consider some characteristics of previous computer use. Therefore, this chapter begins with a brief historical review, in which an attempt is made to show that the development of computer technology and its use in foreign language teaching are closely intertwined with a change in our understanding of the nature of language and general theories of learning. After this, the Internet is introduced along with its services, advantages and disadvantages, and some theories of learning. Some earlier studies on the use of the Internet in teaching language and culture are also discussed.

#### **3.1 A brief history of computer assisted language teaching**

Computers have been used for educational purposes for many decades. Collins (1996:22; see also Moeller 1997:9) argues that there have been two waves in the use of computers in education. The first wave, which Collins calls "computers in education", was launched before the emergence of computer networks, that is, in the 1980s. The second wave, "the Internet in education", began in the mid-1990s, and we are currently experiencing it. In the following, these two waves are described and compared.

### 3.1.1 The first wave: computers in education

As mentioned above, the first wave of computer use began in the 1980s (Collins 1996:22). At the time, computer assisted language teaching followed the principles of behaviorism, which is based on the idea of transmitting knowledge from computer software to the learner. In behaviorism, knowledge is segmented and learning is based on a loop of stimulus-response-feedback (Taalas 1996:8). After seeing/hearing a stimulus, the learner responds accordingly and if the response is correct, the response is reinforced. After this, the learner moves on to a more difficult exercise. Taalas (1996:8) claims that behaviorism has had "an immense influence on the design of instructional technology and computer software". It was possible to program these kinds of learning environments even if technology was not yet very sophisticated.

Traditionally instructional computer software within the behaviorist paradigm has been based on drills (Järvinen 1994:23). Drills are programs which teach something mechanically without putting it into a larger context. This seems to support a narrow view of language, which does not take into account the cultural aspect of language or natural communicative situations. As Moore (1999:5) argues, there were no activities for teaching culture in computer software in the 1980s, for the material consisted of drills, vocabulary exercises, and games. Armstrong and Yetter-Vassot (1994:477) point out that the form-based nature of behavioristically orientated language software has been one major point of its criticism. Accordingly, many researchers believe that learning linguistic rules with these fill-in-the-blank exercises "has very little impact on the learner's ability to produce grammatically appropriate utterances". It can be added that these kinds of exercises do not teach how to behave in communicative situations or how to express oneself spontaneously. Also, the requirement of producing "grammatically appropriate utterances" seems questionable, for it can be argued that having courage to express oneself in a foreign language is more important than the grammaticality of an utterance.

However, behaviorally orientated computer software may be useful in some situations. Cooper (1993:13) claims there to be some evidence to suggest that well-structured, behaviorally oriented learning environments are suitable for

lower-ability learners, whereas less-structured learning environments benefit higher-ability learners. This view can be challenged by arguing that higher-ability learners will probably learn whichever the learning environment was, but lower-ability learners need programmes which offer them many kinds of learning possibilities by taking into account their different learning styles. It has been claimed that behaviorally orientated computer software is not able to do this. Though the difficulty of the exercises can be adjusted, "the learner has to follow the pre-designed sequence of the events in the program" (Taalas 1996:8). It would seem beneficial for lower-ability learners if the computer software was able to analyze a learner's needs and adjust teaching accordingly. This was the aim of the learning theory which followed behaviorism, cognitivism, which emphasized that learners were individuals and different (Järvinen 1994:24-25). However, according to Järvinen (1994:24-25), early attempts to make a cognitively oriented computer software did not succeed because of a lack of technological resources. Programming technology was not sophisticated enough. When technology developed, cognitivism gave way to the constructivist theory of learning, and therefore, cognitivism per se did not have a significant influence on designing computer assisted learning environments.

Though the "golden age" of behaviorism was in the past, some studies suggest that it is still connected with the educational use of computers. For instance, Taalas (1996:56) studied computer use among English teachers in vocational schools and commercial colleges in Finland. The results indicated that, in general, the level of computer use in language instruction was low, as almost 90 percent of the teachers in the study claimed that they did not use computers in teaching at all. When computers were used, the use was mainly based on the behaviorist theory of learning, ie. drill-based learning tasks. The teachers claimed that educational computing does not encourage communication or social situations in general. This seems to indicate that computer software has not yet been able to give up the behavioristic tradition. Teachers seem to acknowledge the poor quality of existing educational software and do not use computers because of that. As Armstrong and Yetter-Vassot (1994:478) suggest, there is "a need for more communicative task-based activities using the computers". Armstrong and Yetter-Vassot believe that computer software will develop if only

instructional designers and content experts begin to form partnerships.

### **3.1.2 The second wave: the Internet in education**

We are currently experiencing the second wave of computer use in foreign language teaching. This wave is based on the use of computer networks. As Lee (1997:410) points out, "the Internet has been increasingly considered as a pedagogical tool by which one can create innovative language experiences for L2 teachers and learners". There are some essential differences between the first wave and the second wave of computer use, and the differences will be introduced in the following. A closer examination of the special characteristics of the second wave is provided in section 3.4, after the Internet services have been introduced.

In the second wave of computer use, computer assisted language teaching follows the principles of constructivism. According to Cooper (1993:17), in constructivism "learning is problem solving based on personal discovery, and the learner is intrinsically motivated". It seems clear that the first difference between behaviorally orientated computer software and constructivist software lies in the size of the software. "Problem solving" or "personal discovery" cannot be achieved with "fill-in-the-blank" software of the behaviorist paradigm, but as Cooper (1993:17) points out, software has to be large and complex. Cooper adds that "providing access to remote resources is of vital importance". This clearly seems to support the use of computer networks in teaching.

The second difference between behaviorally orientated and constructivist software seems to be in learners' motivation. As was mentioned above, the learner should be intrinsically motivated in constructivism, whereas in behaviorism explicit reinforcement played an important role in motivating the learner. It can be argued that because constructivist computer use sees learning as problem solving, it provides learners more motivating learning experiences than the behaviorally orientated fill-in-the-blank exercises of the first wave. In the second wave, learners experience the joy of solving a problem, which can be argued to be more rewarding than getting reinforcement of some other kind after

succeeding.

There are two further differences between the first and the second wave of computer use. The differences lie in the role culture in computer assisted language teaching and in the role of the pupil as a self-guiding learner. In the second wave of computer use, they have both been acknowledged to be important, but a solution to the question of putting them into practice in developing computer software has not yet been found. As Lee (1997:410) points out, it is not completely clear "how to create a learning environment in which learners can gain not only linguistic but also cultural competence through self-guided exploration and personal experience". The role of the pupil as a self-guiding learner will be discussed in section 3.4, but the question of culture is examined in the following.

In the first wave of computer use, culture did not seem to have a role in computer assisted language teaching. The view of language emphasized the structure and form of a language instead of its use in communicative situations and understanding of a culture. At the same time as learning theories have changed towards constructivism, and technology developed to enable many kinds of new learning environments, the view of language has also widened to comprise cultural aspects (see Legutke and Thomas 1991 in section 2.1). However, the use of computer networks does not in itself enhance learning cultural competence or any other aspect of language, though it does promote self-guided exploration. Computer networks provide information, but as Winn (1999) argues, people have forgotten that "information is not the same as knowledge and that knowledge is not the same as wisdom". An example connected with the topic of this study illustrates the difference between these terms. According to Winn (1999), web pages are information, because they are "structured representations of data". Their developers have given a form to their ideas by selecting which information to give and in which format. For instance, a web page of the United Kingdom is a piece of information. As "knowledge" is decoded or constructed from information (Winn 1999), what pupils learn from working on this information can be called knowledge. Finally, if they some day travel to the United Kingdom or in any other way communicate with a person from there, their knowledge will, hopefully, transform into wisdom. According to Winn

(1999), "wisdom" is "the use of knowledge in ways that are compatible with a person's needs and with the accepted norms and behaviors of the society in which the person lives". They will be able to behave appropriately and take into account cultural differences between Finland and the United Kingdom. Research has shown that "young people acquire some *information* but very little *knowledge* of the foreign culture through language classes" (Byram et al. 1994:3; emphasis original). Therefore, as computer networks now have opened up new ways of gaining cultural knowledge, teaching methods should also be developed to ensure that information truly transforms into knowledge and wisdom.

There is yet one practical difference between the first and the second wave of computer use. The role of the computer and computer networks has become greater and greater in our society and their educational use has increased, too. This shows in all school subjects, including foreign languages. Foreign languages are not taught in a social vacuum, but as a part of an intentional socialization process (Kohonen 1998:25). Therefore, a teacher who uses computer networks in teaching gives pupils skills for the future society. The Ministry of Education (1999) has stated that the comprehensive school should provide every pupil with the basic skills of communication and obtaining information. Pupils should be able to get information on their own from different sources and interpret and analyze it critically. In addition, the comprehensive school should teach pupils the basic principles of using computers. As boys are usually more interested in computers than girls are, particularly girls are encouraged to use computers. Moreover, in order to be able to communicate internationally, special emphasis should be placed on language skills. These requirements clearly illustrate that the computer and computer networks are seen important for everyone in our society.

This section has briefly introduced and compared the two waves of educational computer use. It has been shown that some progress has been made in the field of computer assisted language teaching. From now on, only the second wave of computer use is discussed, starting from a brief look at the development of the Internet and then focusing on its services.

### 3.2 The structure and services of the Internet

The Internet is a worldwide computer network which has its roots in the needs of the military of the USA (Green 1997:254). It has developed rapidly in the 1990s, and today it connects tens of thousands of smaller computer networks into a web of webs, comprising millions of computers and their users from all over the world (Tarkoma and Kolari 1995:3). Moreover, the number of users and computers connected to the Internet is constantly rising.

The Internet is often referred to as "the Information Superhighway" in the United States (Winn 1999). This term clearly illustrates the potential which people believe the Internet to have. However, many people may not understand that the Internet in itself is only a transmission medium. Carrier (1997:279-280) calls it "the telephone system of the 21st century". The telephone connects people all over the world, the Internet connects computers. According to Winn (1999), it delivers information like "a carrier pigeon".

As the Internet connects computers into a wide computer network, it also gives its users a possibility to use a number of useful services (Carrier 1997:279-280.) According to Eastment (1996:59-62), the Internet has two areas of interest to offer language teaching. The first broad area is communication, which includes communicating with individuals and groups via e-mail, discussion lists, newsgroups, or real-time communications systems. The second broad area mentioned by Eastment is information retrieval. Accordingly, one quick and efficient way of retrieving information and teaching materials is the FTP (File Transfer Protocol), but nowadays this is not as popular as the World Wide Web. In the following, electronic mail or e-mail for short, the World Wide Web (from now on abbreviated as the WWW), newsgroups, and chat will be introduced one by one. File Transfer Protocol is not introduced here because of its limited value for language teaching.

### 3.2.1 E-mail

Electronic mail (e-mail) is the most widely used service on the Internet (Tarkoma and Kolari 1995:5-6). Nowadays e-mail does not only mean sending text; it is also possible to send pictures, software, and different documents produced with word processors. Eastment (1996:60) argues that e-mail has several advantages compared with the fax or conventional mail: e-mail messages are electrically stored and therefore easily manipulated with a wordprocessor, they are free (if the monthly service fee is not taken into account), and they are faster than conventional mail. Doherty (1998:63) adds one important aspect of e-mail: it is asynchronous (time-independent). E-mail messages can be written, sent, and read at any time. This makes e-mail different from most other methods of communication.

For foreign language teaching e-mail offers several possibilities. Lee (1997:412) points out that "foreign language educators often use e-mail to encourage students to communicate in the target language with native speakers and their peers". Carrier (1997:283) has divided the possible e-mail exchanges into the following categories:

*teacher-student*, for instance that students submit their homework through e-mail or that the teacher discusses homework with the pupils.

*student-student*, students have personal links through e-mail within their own school or in other countries ("keypals").

*class-class*, a group conducts a survey or a project work with another group.

*teacher-world*, the teacher uses mailing lists and newsgroups for discussion and exchanging information.

*student-world*, student uses mailing lists and newsgroups for the same purposes as the teacher in the above.

Eastment (1996:60) points out that from the point of view of language learning, exchange of e-mail with pupils (keypals) from another country is a valuable resource of cross-cultural communication. Carrier (1997:283) explains the idea behind keypals, which is very simple: teachers connect their students with students in other countries who either speak the target language or are learners of it. Then the students write to each other regularly. Carrier (1997:283-284) argues that many teachers have tried keypals and they have positive



experiences of it. Carrier points out that there are some problems as well: some teachers have complained about unanswered e-mail messages or changing e-mail addresses. Further, it is difficult to find potential partners to everyone and get students to write to each other on a regular basis. However, it can be argued that if teachers are interested in the project, they can assign a fixed time every week which allows students to respond to each other. This is also suggested by Carrier (1997:284) who argues that students should even be told what to write about in order for the project to be useful. According to Carrier, possible topics to write about are, for instance, the culture and traditions in the two countries, or writing a cook book.

### **3.2.2 The World Wide Web**

For most people, the abbreviation "WWW" means basically the same as "the Internet", though it is only one of the services on the Internet. The WWW is a system of linked documents that are created by using the HTML (HyperText Markup Language)-programming language (Hermunstad and Östlund 1998:20-27). These documents are viewed through a browser and they can include text, pictures, sounds, and videoclips. Lemay (1998:4) characterizes the WWW as "a global, interactive, dynamic, hardware-independent, shared graphic hypertext information system which is used through the Internet". It is not relevant to examine all these characteristics in this study and therefore only the concept "hypertext" is discussed. Hypertext connects the WWW with constructivism, and therefore some knowledge of hypertext is essential.

Lemay (1998:4) explains the idea of hypertext by comparing it to a book: a book is usually read from beginning to end, because it has a linear structure, whereas a hypertext is non-linear: it can be read in any order because the reader can easily move from one point in the text to another. The reader can also move to other related documents, and then return to the original document. This is made possible by links. Everyone that has used the WWW knows that nearly all documents on the WWW contain some links to other pages. However, not all documents on the WWW are "true" hypertexts, as Kämäräinen and Haapasalo

(1998:4) point out. The WWW only enables a hypertext structure. The relationship between hypertexts and constructivism will be discussed more closely in section 3.4.

The WWW can be used in foreign language teaching in two ways: to search for information or to create new information by publishing different documents. Searching for information is perhaps the more popular one of the two. The WWW contains information, for instance, in the form of electronic texts. Armstrong and Yetter-Vassot (1994:482) claim that electronic texts may encourage and guide students more than traditional texts in their exploration of literature in the target language. This claim is based on the nature of electronic texts: they can provide instant access to dictionaries, graphics, film clips or other helpful resources, and returning to the actual text is easy. Therefore, these extra resources may make reading the text in electronic format a richer learning experience than reading a printed text.

The WWW enables everyone with a little knowledge of computers to publish their work to a global audience. This brings out a few disadvantages (see section 3.3), but has advantages as well. Publishing their own texts on the WWW encourages students to write and it may even improve the quality of their writing (Johnstone 1998:46). Getting feedback from a global audience is certainly different from getting feedback only from the peers in the classroom. From a cultural point of view, creating and publishing different documents on pupils' own culture helps them to reflect on their own culture. Moreover, in this way pupils can give information about their culture to learners in other countries.

### **3.2.3 Newsgroups**

Newsgroups are "moderated lists of e-mail communications" (Carrier 1997:286). The name "newsgroup" can be misleading, because newsgroups do not contain news, but discussions of different topics. Therefore, the name "discussion group" would be more suitable. Carrier (1997:286) lists what a person can do on a newsgroup: one can start a new topic, ask a question, respond to messages, or respond to responses. He continues that a person can have access to newsgroups

via an e-mail program or a standard web browser.

Eastment (1996:61-62) gives an example of how to use newsgroups in teaching a language. First the teacher searches the newsgroups for a controversial topic, chooses and prints out a few postings. After this, students work in groups composing replies or reactions to these postings. The replies are then posted back to the original newsgroup and the responses monitored afterwards. Eastment sees that the benefits of this exercise are that it is simple to set up, it involves many language skills, and it is very interesting. It can be added that working in groups develops social and negotiation skills. It might also be more interesting for students if they could choose the topics by themselves, but this is not always possible due to lack of time or computer facilities. Moreover, many newsgroups contain material which is not suitable for students to have access to, as Carrier (1997:286) points out. For instance, newsgroups which are supposed to deal with TV-programmes may contain something totally different, such as postings of a sexual nature. It is therefore suggested that newsgroups should be carefully selected and monitored before their use.

### **3.2.4 Chat**

Chat is a service on the Internet which, on the basis of a lack of relevant literature, seems to be often ignored in foreign language teaching. This may be because many teachers may not have experience of chat, or have a negative attitude towards chat for some reason or another. However, as chat rooms provide a direct way of interacting with people, both native and non-native, their use in foreign language teaching should be considered.

Chatrooms have become popular places of communication and exchanges of ideas (Lee 1998:104). Chatrooms and Internet Relay Chat (IRC) are real time e-mail systems, either one-to-one or between many people (Carrier 1997:294). The difference between e-mail and chat is that e-mail is asynchronous (see section 3.2.1) whereas chat is synchronous. This means that the users of chatrooms receive immediate responses and feedback from other users (Lee 1998:104). This can be seen as one advantage of chatrooms, because users learn

to react quickly to others' opinions and new situations in conversations. Another advantage of chatrooms is that "real people use real language for real communicative purposes" (Lee 1998:104). This may be more motivating for learners than artificial dialogues in textbooks. The use of chatrooms in teaching has also been criticised and underestimated, for instance by Carrier (1997:294), who claims that though chatrooms may be attractive to younger students, they do not have "much relevance or benefit to ELT". Carrier does not explain his claim in any way. When visiting a chat room for the first time, it certainly seems that the discussion there is pointless and difficult to follow. As Windeatt et al. (2000:113) have noted, people usually write only short contributions to the discussion, use abbreviations, and make many typing mistakes. Further, the discussion in a chatroom becomes disjointed as more and more people take part in it simultaneously. On this basis, many people may feel that chatrooms are not of any value in teaching language or culture. However, this opinion is likely to change as people test chat on their own. Once one has chatted for some time, it becomes clear that chatrooms enable real-time communication which resembles normal conversation, which also can be disjointed and full of slang expressions or mistakes, as discussion in chatrooms.

### **3.3 General advantages and disadvantages of the Internet**

The Internet has many advantages which separate it from other sources of information and ways of communicating. Unfortunately, it also has many disadvantages. This section tries to describe both of them. The focus is on the WWW, but some other services are also discussed where relevant.

The first advantage but also a disadvantage of the Internet is the amount of information available. The WWW contains more information than anyone can ever learn, linked in many different ways (Lemay 1998:5). There is information on newsgroups as well. However, finding relevant information may present some problems. Mere browsing rarely results in any good findings. Buying a reference book which contains WWW "addresses" (URLs) does not help either, for as Green (1997:255) points out, printed reference books "may become dated before

they roll off the press". Therefore, Green argues that the best sources of finding information are search engines such as Altavista on the WWW itself. Also search engines have some problems: there are redundant, disconnected, unprofessional, or irrelevant sites on the WWW, but search engines such as Altavista do not "discriminate on the basis of usefulness—they merely look for the keywords you entered" (Green 1997:256). As Green (1997:256) points out, the amount of "garbage" on the WWW is tremendous. This means that when browsing through hundreds of irrelevant sites, the skill of finding useful information in garbage is emphasized.

The second advantage of the Internet is the dynamic nature of the WWW. According to Lemay (1998:8-10), the dynamic nature of the WWW means that web sites can be updated at any time by those who have created them. Lemay sees this as an advantage: because the information on WWW-sites can be modified easily, it is always up to date. The dynamic nature of the WWW also has some disadvantages. As Doherty (1998:63) has noted, searches conducted by a search engine can give different results every day. Therefore, finding the same web page than the last time may be difficult. Also the contents of web sites can change or they can move to another URL-address. Bookmarking a page or linking one's homepage to the target page does not always help in relocating the page. This is a problem which has no other solution but to learn to live with it.

The third advantage of the Internet is that most material on the WWW can be considered authentic. Authentic materials can be defined as "materials... which were originally used in real situations and not designed for use in language teaching" (Tomlinson 1984:81). It has often been claimed that authentic materials increase the learner's motivation in the foreign language classroom (see Peacock 1997:144-156). For instance Cunningsworth (1984:72) claims that coping with a small amount of authentic language at the earlier stages of learning has a beneficial effect on the learners' confidence and motivation and even to their "overall learning performance". Moeller (1997:11) argues that authentic materials on the WWW "contain important cultural content about aspects of the target culture society". Moeller points out that these content-rich texts can serve as input and as a basis for activities to facilitate language acquisition. Contacts via e-mail or newsgroups are also authentic.

Green (1997:259) points out yet another advantage of the Internet: it serves as an equalizer. Accordingly, "a person shunned by his local culture can become a hero in an Internet community". This means that a person who knows much about a specific topic can create a web page or participate in a discussion on newsgroups and share the information to all users of the Internet. This would not be possible without the Internet. However, also this has a disadvantage: as web pages can be created by anyone, they are not always from a reliable source. They can be misleading on purpose.

A minor disadvantage from a language teacher's point of view is that most pages on the Internet are only meant for browsing and reading, not printing out. Printing them out may violate copyrights (Kopioisto and the Ministry of Education 2000). Therefore, a teacher should not use the material in a printed form.

To conclude this section, table 1 summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of the Internet.

Table 1. The advantages and disadvantages of the Internet.

ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
□ plenty of information	□ plenty of garbage
□ dynamic	□ difficult to locate and
--> easy to modify	relocate information
--> up-to-date information	
□ authenticity	□ copyrights
--> motivation	--> non-printable
□ equalizer	□ reliability
--> everyone can be an expert	--> often unreliable

### 3.4 The relationship of the services to some theories of learning

As the services on the Internet have now been introduced, it is worth discussing each service in relation to constructivism or experiential learning. The two learning theories have been mentioned earlier in this study, but this section

attempts to connect them more closely with the services on the Internet.

The first theory of learning to be discussed is constructivism. It was claimed in section 3.1 that in order to support constructivism, software has to be large and complex. Learners should study it actively through self-guided exploration and personal experience. The service on the Internet that most clearly seems to be supported by constructivism is the WWW. This is due to many reasons. First, the World Wide Web is very large. The amount of information available is enormous. Therefore, a web-based teaching software is large and complex, which was one requirement of constructivism. Second, the WWW is dynamic and based on a hypertext structure. The hypertext structure enables users to choose the order in which they go through the material. This seems to support self-guided exploration. Third, as argued by Doherty (1998:63), navigating in the dynamic content of the WWW is an active process, not a passive one like browsing through a book. Learners feel they actively control their learning when they move from one page to another at their own pace by clicking the mouse button. However, mere navigating is not enough, as has been noted by Yang (1996:49) who argues that learners may "skim superficially over the information without engaging in critical or reflective reading". Therefore, though the WWW enables constructivist learning, it does not guarantee that this will happen.

The second theory of learning to be discussed is experiential learning. It was pointed out in section 2.5 that one characteristic of experiential learning theory is transacting with the environment. It was also argued by Kolb (1984:34) that the real-world environment has been ignored by educational systems to a large extent. Today the services on the Internet offer foreign language teaching a new way of interacting with the environment. The WWW offers authentic texts which are produced and read both by native speakers and language learners. They represent the environment of the target culture in digital format. Moreover, e-mail, chat, and newsgroups enable direct contacts with native and non-native speakers.

Another characteristic of experiential learning is the emphasis on the learning process instead of the outcomes (Kolb 1984:26). Accordingly, experiential learning is described "as a process whereby concepts are derived from and continuously modified by experience. No two thoughts are the same, since

experience always intervenes". Therefore, measuring what or how much a person has learnt is not important or often not even possible. Teaching foreign cultures with the services on the Internet emphasises the learning process, because every pupil achieves different outcomes at their own pace. It is particularly via authentic contacts that pupils get new experiences. It would be impossible to measure how much a pupil has learnt when surfing on the WWW or communicating with others via e-mail, chat, or newsgroups. In this respect, using the Internet differs from using other materials in the classroom, since it may be possible to measure how much a pupil has learnt from a certain text about a cultural issue. Therefore, experiential learning theory seems to support the use of the services on the Internet.

### **3.5 Earlier studies on teaching foreign languages and cultures with the Internet**

This section describes some recent studies in which technology and especially the Internet has been used in teaching foreign languages and cultures. Moore (1999:2-5) claims that to date, there has been very little research on technology and teaching culture. The development of software material for the teaching of culture has not been given much attention to either. However, some studies in which teaching culture has been considered have been conducted and a few of them will be reviewed below.

To begin with, the following table summarizes the main points of the studies.



Table 2. A summary of some studies on teaching language and culture with the Internet.

<b>RESEARCHER</b>	<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>LANGUAGE</b>	<b>CULTURE</b>	<b>USE OF THE INTERNET</b>
Lee (1997)	third and fourth year at a university	Spanish	Hispanic (students were allowed to choose the more specific target culture on their own)	WWW, e-mail, discussion group
Lee (1998)	fifth year at a university	Spanish	Hispanic (students were allowed to choose the more specific target culture on their own)	on-line newspapers, on-line chatrooms
Blyth (1999)	first year at a university	French	Francophone (not more clearly specified)	Internet grammar drills, WWW, e-mail
Hellebrandt (1999)	second year at a university	Spanish	Ecuadorian	WWW, e-mail
Hellebrandt (1999)	second year at a university	Spanish	Ecuadorian	WWW (browsing and designing), e-mail
Hellebrandt (1999)	second year at a university	Spanish	Ecuadorian	WWW, e-mail, (pressing a CD-ROM)

The concept "culture" was not clearly defined in any of the studies. It seemed that "culture" meant everything that had to do with the target country. The themes covered, for instance, holidays, music, sports, food, and social life (Lee 1997), news (Lee 1998), and environmental issues (Hellebrandt 1999). It is positive that not only "big C Culture" was studied.

Lee (1997:414-425) conducted a pilot study on using Internet tools to develop students' cultural knowledge and understanding at a small university in the USA. The sample group comprised 124 students at intermediate Spanish courses. The target culture was Hispanic culture, which comprised all Spanish speaking countries in the world. The students were allowed to choose freely which culture they wanted to learn about. The students were in contact with native speakers via e-mail and did a project in which they used the WWW. The

project was presented both orally and in a written format. According to Lee (1997:414-425), the results of the study were encouraging. The students agreed that the Internet was an effective tool in developing cultural knowledge. Their self-reports indicated that their attitudes towards native speakers had changed and improved. Though the students were not instructed to compare their own culture with the target culture, they did seem to do that. According to Lee (1997:421), they "had begun to perceive how important it was to be able to relate what they had learned about foreign cultures to their own culture". At the same time as cultural knowledge was gained, linguistic skills had also developed when writing e-mail messages.

Lee (1998:101-120) conducted another pilot study, focusing on the use of on-line newspapers in acquiring cultural knowledge, and on-line chatrooms in enhancing intercultural exchanges. The target language in the study was Spanish, the target culture thus being Hispanic. The students were required to read on-line newspapers and discuss the major events of the week with their peers in the chatroom. Moreover, they were required to write a five-page research project on a specific area of Hispanic culture of interest to them. The results indicated that on-line newspapers provided a useful means of obtaining up-to-date information of the target culture. On-line chatrooms were also seen as a positive way of interacting with peers and native speakers.

Blyth (1999:39-58) studied how modern technology could be implemented in a college level 1 French course. In the study, technology was used once a week to complement the other four weekly lessons. The case study included a hypermedia CD, Internet grammar drills, and searching for information on the Internet. The CD also included links which led to chosen, thematically ordered Internet sites. The computer materials were culturally based and included many kinds of speakers of French, for instance, speakers from francophone countries in Africa. Some of the activities in the study were based on an e-mail contact with native speakers. The goals of the computer activities were practising vocabulary and grammar presented during class sessions, developing reading and writing skills through authentic texts on the Internet, exploring francophone cultures, and developing critical thinking skills.

According to Blyth (1999:39-58), the results indicated that students

preferred computer lessons to ordinary lessons and also believed computer materials to be pedagogically beneficial. However, they did not consider the cultural aspect beneficial. According to Blyth, this was because the students believed the goal of the course to be to learn grammar and vocabulary but not cultural information. This explains why the students preferred drill-exercises instead of the CD, for example. Therefore, Blyth concludes that how students comprehend language learning influences their attitudes to cultural activities.

Hellebrandt (1999:59-70) describes three "collaborative class projects" between college level 2 Spanish students and people in Ecuador. In the first project, students conducted a small research project and reported the results both orally and in a written form. The WWW was used as a provider of additional authentic materials, but it did not have a significant role among other sources. E-mail had a more important role in the project, for it was used for communication between the students and a social foundation called Pro Pueblo in Ecuador. According to Hellebrandt (1999:62), learner feedback to the e-mail project was "overwhelmingly positive". Students appreciated realistic language and the effectiveness of e-mail communication, among other things.

Another project described by Hellebrandt (1999:63-65) was similar to the project described above, but in this project, the results were reported orally and published in the form of web-pages on the Internet. The results indicated that the overall response to the course was positive, but some students claimed that learning web design was too time consuming and difficult to arrange because of their heavy work schedule off-campus. Hellebrandt (1999:65) suggests that the teacher should consider carefully whether it is necessary to design web pages as a required element of the course.

The third project described by Hellebrandt (1999:65-68) consisted of similar themes as the projects mentioned above, but in addition to designing a web page, students pressed a CD-ROM. The reactions to the project were mixed: some students appreciated it very much whereas others claimed that they would have liked to learn more grammar.

To summarize, it seems that using the Internet in teaching foreign languages and cultures is supported by the studies discussed above. It is noteworthy, however, that all the studies were conducted at university level. The

situation may be different with younger learners. Moreover, it seems that the studies discussed above did not completely follow the principles of teaching cultural competence which were discussed in section 2.5. For instance, students examined only the target culture without explicitly comparing it with their own culture. The results might have been even more positive if this had been considered. It seems clear that somekind of reference point – in this case students' own culture – helps in putting different matters into perspective. Furthermore, it may be easier to remember different matters of the foreign culture if they have an opposite or an equivalent in students' own culture.

## **4 FRAMEWORK FOR THE TEACHING MATERIAL PACKAGE**

In this teaching material package an attempt is made to exemplify how the Internet and its various services can be used in teaching cultural knowledge and understanding in primary education in Finland. Because the Internet material requires some knowledge of English, the material package is primarily aimed at pupils who have studied English for more than two years (grades 5-6 of the comprehensive school). This kind of material package is needed because the topic has been studied only with older students, as was pointed out in section 3.5. Though the students in the earlier studies were linguistically at a beginner level, they were adults. When teaching children, materials have to be not only linguistically suitable, but also fit their level of cognitive development. Therefore, a teacher faces a challenge when choosing teaching material for children, for it is not easy to find such material on the Internet. In this teaching material package, an attempt has been made to meet the challenge.

This chapter serves as a framework for the teaching material package. Some implications from the theoretical background are considered and applied into the present study in sections 4.1 - 4.4. Because the teaching material package is in a new kind of format, a web page on the Internet, some principles behind its design are introduced in section 4.5. Section 4.6 exemplifies the material package in printed format.

### **4.1 The view of culture**

To begin with, it is important to discuss the way culture is seen in the present teaching material package. The conclusion in section 2.2 was that it is very difficult to give a concise definition of culture, and the definitions discussed did not seem to stand on their own; a synthesis was needed. In this material package, culture is seen partly as Kramsch (1995) suggested, consisting of a humanistic and of a social aspect. However, it would seem more accurate to call these a concrete and an abstract aspect. Culture surely refers to concrete productions, to everything that people have created, but also to abstract matters, such as attitudes,

beliefs, and ways of thinking and behaving. In this material package, all material productions and social groups of people are seen equally important and valuable. Culture does not mean only "high culture", because seeing culture in this light does not necessarily help learners to achieve the general goals of cultural instruction, such as knowing how to get along with the people in the target culture in communicative situations.

Also Atkinson (1999) brought up an important point: every individual has a different kind of culture. Cultures are not homogenous. Therefore, generalizations cannot be made on the basis of a few observations. However, as suggested by Atkinson, a culture is also shared to some extent. Therefore, on the basis of Atkinson's suggestions, it seems that cultures exist on two levels: on an individual level and on a general level. This view is represented in the working methods of the material package, which will be discussed later.

In this material package, an explicit analysis of the relationship of language to culture is mostly excluded, because it may require such thinking skills that young learners do not yet have. However, because the link between language and culture is inseparable, as discussed earlier, the linguistic aspect of culture is implicitly present in the package, too.

## **4.2 General goals**

The present teaching material package has two main goals: teaching cultural knowledge using the services on the Internet and developing a positive attitude towards other cultures. The purpose is to take advantage of children's natural curiosity and provide them with an interesting and motivating possibility to increase their knowledge of other cultures. The goal is not to teach different facts about the target culture and make pupils learn them by heart, but instead try to make pupils understand that life and people are different in different countries around the world. The researcher believes that positive attitudes will develop at the same time as knowledge of other cultures increases.

Choosing knowledge and attitudes as the main goals of the material package is supported by Byram's (1997) model of intercultural competence

discussed in section 2.3. It names knowledge and attitudes as the first two factors of intercultural competence. The choice is also supported by the General Framework of Reference for Language Teaching, which mentions knowledge and an ability to relate to foreignness as goals of language education.

At the same time as the main goals are taught, some other educational goals may be achieved, though they are not emphasized or explicitly taught in the package. As pupils work with written material, their reading skills may develop. Also, when communicating with their peers both in the classroom and in other countries, their speaking and writing skills are practised respectively. Listening skills may also develop when listening to the Internet material. Moreover, pupils see how to use the different services on the Internet in an efficient way to find information and to communicate with other people.

#### **4.3 Content areas**

The present teaching material package focuses on four English speaking countries: the USA, the UK, Australia, and India. These countries were chosen because they are culturally diverse and offer many interesting learning topics. India differs from the other three countries in that English is spoken there only for historical reasons. It represents countries in which English is spoken as a second or foreign language. This choice was supported by Byram's (1997) suggestion of critically comparing one's own culture with any other culture in the world in order to enhance intercultural competence (see section 2.4). In addition, the researcher believes that on the basis of textbooks, it is not possible to get a realistic picture of English as a lingua franca. Therefore, teaching should be complemented with countries and cultures that represent other ways of life than Western ones.

It may be difficult to choose the content areas for teaching cultural knowledge because of the complexity of the concept culture. Byram et al. (1994:51-52) suggest nine areas of study:

- 1) social identity and social groups
- 2) social interaction
- 3) belief and behaviour

- 4) socio-political institutions
- 5) socialisation and the life-cycle
- 6) national history
- 7) national geography
- 8) national culture heritage
- 9) stereotypes and national identity

The list above seems to cover all major aspects of culture. However, it was not completely followed in the present material package for two reasons. First, if teaching is divided according to the areas above and only one area is taught at a time, pupils may not understand the relationships among the different areas. Therefore, it would perhaps be useful to combine some areas. Second, a web-based teaching material package may become too complex if it covers four countries, each of which having nine sub-areas. When focusing on a single country, it might be possible to have nine sub-areas.

In the present teaching material package, content areas were formed on the basis of the above list and on the previous discussion of the concept culture. They are the following:

- 1) Geography: consists of geography and political issues, but also history where relevant
- 2) People: knowledge of social groups, stereotypes, and beliefs and behavior
- 3) Traditions: cultural heritage and everyday life
- 4) Personal contacts

It is, however, problematic to divide different Internet materials in the content areas mentioned above, because a single web page may contain information on all the areas. Therefore, the categorizing of the different web pages that have been found has been carried out on the basis of the researcher's personal preferences. Some other person might have placed certain pages to a different category. A closer examination of the content areas of the Internet materials is provided in appendix 1.

The idea of the material package is for pupils to become acquainted with the shared part of a culture through the first three content areas and through the fourth area gain knowledge of an individual's personal culture. The first three content areas represent the cultural diversity of the country in question. Thus, they do not to focus only on average culture, but take, for instance, ethnic minority groups into account.



#### 4.4 Working methods

On the basis of the discussion in section 2.5, there did not seem to be very clear teaching methodologies for the teaching of culture. Therefore, every teacher may teach it in a different manner. In the present teaching material package, teaching is divided into three stages which form a continuum:

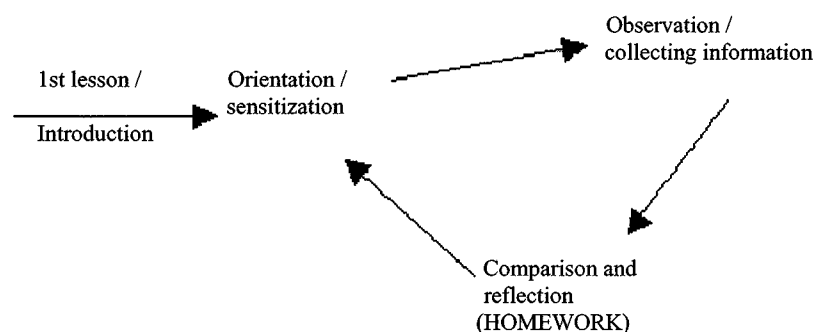


Figure 5. The stages of teaching culture in the present material package.

The stages are formed partly on the basis of Kaikkonen's four-stage model of interculturally orientated language learning discussed in section 2.5, and partly on the basis of general suggestions for the teaching of culture. The difference between this three-stage model and Kaikkonen's four-stage model is that in this model, pupils are not explicitly taught how to observe different phenomena in the foreign culture and compare them with their own culture. Teaching analytical skills is surely important, as mentioned in section 2.1, but in this study the researcher believes that it may be too advanced a goal for primary education. Kaikkonen's model was created for the upper secondary school. Thus, the main idea in the present material package is not to develop pupils' observation or comparative skills, but their knowledge of other cultures. Because observation and comparison are used as methods in the package, the two middle stages of Kaikkonen's model have been combined to a single stage. Learning theories behind the stages and exercises are constructivism and experiential learning, which have already been mentioned earlier and will also be discussed to some extent later in this section.

The material package is not divided into exact lessons which have to be followed in a certain order. Only general guidelines are given for the structure of lessons. This allows the teacher to use the material in a creative way and according to pupils' needs. Exact guidelines are given for the first lesson, however, as it consists of an **introduction** and orientation to cultural issues. The Internet is not used in this lesson. As pointed out earlier in section 2.5, many researchers have suggested that making learners aware of themselves as cultural beings is the first step in teaching culture (Valdes 1986:vii, Byram 1989:116-117, Kaikkonen 1998:21). An orientation stage is supported also by the experiential theory of learning, which according to Kolb (1984:28) implies that "all learning is *relearning*". Everyone has some ideas of the topic at hand when they enter the learning situation. Therefore, it would seem reasonable to start from the ideas, beliefs and theories that learners have before the actual learning situation. According to Kolb (1984:28), this facilitates the learning process. In the present teaching material package, orientation is done by discussing the meaning of the concept "culture" and some aspects of learners' own culture. What are also brought up and discussed are learners' ideas or perhaps stereotypical beliefs of the culture that will be studied in the following lessons. Further, as the learning environment is new to the pupils, they are instructed in its use. As homework, pupils will orientate towards getting an e-mail keypal from abroad. This will be explained in more detail in the teacher's guide.

In the following lessons, **the first stage** consists of a discussion of pupils' homework. The idea is to compare and reflect on what pupils have learned the previous time. As every pupil may have different ideas, it is beneficial for all to go through some of the ideas together. This offers everyone new insights on the topic. At the same time, the discussion serves as an orientation stage of the lesson.

**The second stage** consists of observing and collecting information by using all the different services on the Internet which were introduced earlier. The second stage varies from one lesson to another, because different services can be used. However, it is possible to illustrate the structure of the second stage by the following figure:

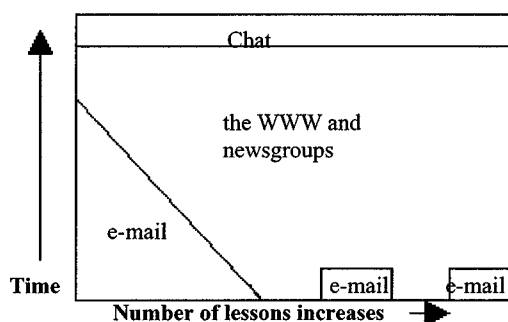


Figure 6. The structure of the second stage in the material package.

The figure shows that chat is used at the end of each lesson. During the first lessons, e-mail has a major role and the WWW and newsgroups are used only to a small extent. As the number of lessons increases, the emphasis will shift from e-mail to the WWW and newsgroups. However, e-mail is used occasionally. In the following, the use of the services is explained in detail.

When using e-mail, the idea is for learners to be in contact with children of similar age and act as ethnographers for whom the person is a source of knowledge. Learners get to know the person's culture by asking questions and at the same time explaining their own culture to the person. This kind of working method has been suggested, for instance, by Byram (1989:96-101), Byram and Esarte-Sarries (1991:10-11), and Fischer (1996:75). In this material package, e-mail is first used at the beginning of the second stage of every lesson in order to establish a friendship between every pupil and a child from abroad. As friendships have been established, pupils are advised to write to their new friends regularly. This is done at regular intervals during lessons, but writing outside lessons is also recommended, if technically possible to organize.

The use of the WWW offers plenty of authentic material on different cultural issues. This is beneficial not only for the teaching of culture, but also on learners' linguistic skills. When using the WWW, pupils are not allowed to "surf" without a purpose, but to visit only such pages that have been chosen to be included in the material package. In this way it can be made sure that the pages do not contain unsuitable material. The material package contains links to target culture, and also to similar pages on Finnish culture, if such pages have

been found. It is relatively difficult to find linguistically suitable pages on Finnish culture in English. As pupils visit the pages, they work on different kinds of exercises that have been formed on the basis of the pages. The exercises vary from reading comprehension to games or pair discussion (see appendix 1 for a list of content areas and exercise types). They do not differ from exercises that are found in textbooks, because using a new medium of learning (the Internet) and doing new kinds of exercises may be too confusing to young pupils. Some comparison between the target culture and Finnish culture is carried out at this stage to help pupils get some ideas for their homework in which an active comparison is made. Most exercises take about 20-25 minutes, which means that there may not be time to do more than one exercise in every lesson. There are instructions in English for every exercise on the learning environment. Writing the exercises in English is supported by the principle of offering pupils plenty of input in the target language. However, it is recommended that the instructions be also given in Finnish by the teacher, so that everyone understands what to do from the very beginning of an exercise (see Seelye 1984 in section 2.5). Naturally the teacher also instructs pupils individually if they have any problems later when doing an exercise.

When using newsgroups, pupils are first advised to find an interesting newsgroup from the selection of culturally oriented newsgroups in the package. First, they follow the discussion in the newsgroup by reading the postings, and then they try to formulate a posting of their own to be sent in the newsgroup. After their own posting has been sent, they wait for the next time to see if someone has commented on their posting. If a comment has been made, pupils can continue commenting.

Chat may be the most appealing service on the Internet and thus it may become the only service pupils want to use during the lessons. Therefore, it is recommended that the teacher leave some time for chatting at the end of each lesson, but does not allow pupils to chat at any other time during the lesson. If some pupils do not want to chat, they may go on with other exercises instead.

**The third stage** is pupils' homework. Pupils are advised to write something about what they have learned during the lesson. The teacher naturally suggests some questions that pupils may reflect on or they may come up with a topic of

their own. At this stage, an explicit comparison between Finland and the target culture is carried out. Pupils use an e-mail discussion list, a newsgroup, or a chatroom in their homework so that everyone can read everyone else's homework and comment on them. The material package includes a chatroom, a newsgroup, and an e-mail discussion list, which are all for private use. This means that only members, or in this case the pupils and the teacher, are able to take part in the discussion. Outsiders cannot make any comments on the discussion. If pupils do not have a computer at home or do not have another place for using a computer, the teacher is advised to organize a possibility for such pupils to use a computer at the school. It is recommended that homework be written in English, but if this is impossible due to a difficult theme, pupils may also write in Finnish. The teacher should emphasize that participating in the discussion is more important than the language of writing.

The working methods vary in the material package. When using e-mail, it is recommended that everyone get a "keypal" and in this way be in contact with a foreign culture. According to Byram and Risager (1999:131-132), so far e-mail has been used on a class basis, but in the future it is possible to use it on a private basis, too. At least in Finland computer facilities enable everyone to get a keypal. This is, along with homework, the only exercise that is carried out individually. All the other exercises are either pair or group work. This is due to many reasons, one being that the school may not have enough computers for everyone. Moreover, speaking exercises require pupils to have a partner, and pair work develops cooperation, which is one of the educational goals of the comprehensive school (POPS 1994:40). In addition, current learning theories, such as constructivism, emphasize the social nature of the learning process (POPS 1994:10).

The material is not tied to any unit or course, but can be used every time that extra material is needed, or perhaps periodically for a week or two. When used every now and then, following the three-stage model may be more difficult than in using it periodically, therefore, the latter alternative is recommended.

## 4.5 The web-based learning environment

The present teaching material package is in a new kind of format, a web-page on the Internet. As the use of the Internet in teaching will probably become more common in the future, designing these kinds of learning environments may become an essential part of every teacher's normal routine. The Ministry of Education (1999) has stated that teachers of all subjects should be able to use computers effectively in teaching. This includes not only using computers and software as they are, but also *modifying* and *developing new teaching material*. It seems that one of the new requirements of teachers is that they can prepare teaching material for the WWW. To be effective, learning environments have to be carefully planned and organised. In the following, some principles that have been followed in designing the present learning environment on the web are explained. The section does not describe how to use the learning environment of the material package, as this is explained in the guide for the teacher.

### 4.5.1 Some general principles behind the design

In the past, modifying and especially developing new teaching material for computer based learning environments was difficult, because it required some knowledge of programming, which most language teachers presumably did not have. Today, developing material for the WWW is easier and does not require learning complicated programming languages. There are programs available (for example Microsoft FrontPage Express, Netscape Composer) which enable even teachers who do not know any HTML-language whatsoever to design web sites easily and effectively. These programs are based on "what you see is what you get"-principle, which means that its users only design the page and the editor program does the more difficult phase, coding the page in HTML-language. Therefore, developing new teaching material for the WWW is not an impossible task.

Though many schools probably have some kind of editor program for designing web pages, the present teaching package, CultureWeb, is designed by

hand, that is, without any special programs. The only programs needed in designing CultureWeb were Notepad in Microsoft Windows 95 and a painting program called Paint Shop Pro 4, which can be downloaded for free on the Internet. Naturally, a browser was needed to test the page and an FTP-program to transfer the pages to the server. The idea behind not using an editor program is to show that no expensive programs are needed in order to produce simple, but effective learning environments. Another reason behind this choice was that editor programs often produce such HTML-code which is difficult to modify by hand, because it looks complicated. The code on a page made by hand is often more clearly structured and therefore easier to modify when needed. However, if one wants to create more advanced multimedia learning environments, some kind of program is definitely needed.

#### **4.5.2 Pedagogical and technical principles**

Because making WWW-pages is easy, there are many kinds of pages on the WWW. Some are made by ordinary people, some by professionals. As El-Tigi and Branch (1997:23) point out, there exist few guidelines for instructional design for the WWW and therefore it is natural that the quality of these web sites vary "from excellent to extremely poor". However, for effective teaching and learning purposes, it is imperative that the web sites be pedagogically correctly made and the possible links carefully chosen. A bad web site does not make learning effective, but surely can confuse the learner. For instance, Harbeck and Sherman (1999:39) imply that the learning outcomes of young children may be affected by poor web site design rather than "any intrinsic characteristic of computers, children's developmental age, or children's use of computers". To help web site designers, Harbeck and Sherman (1999:42-44) have listed seven principles for designing developmentally appropriate web sites for young children. The principles are meant for people who design web sites for children aged four to seven, but Harbeck and Sherman suggest that with some modifications the principles are worth following when designing web sites for older children, too. The principles are as follows (Harbeck and Sherman 1999:42-

44):

- 1) Children's web sites should have simple page design, provide simple navigation, and use large, obvious icons.
- 2) When surfing the web, children should be guided by an adult.
- 3) The content and the design of the site should change as the child matures.
- 4) Web activities should be relevant to children. The topics should be designed around specific themes which are interesting to children, relate to their communities, and are broad enough to be broken into subtopics.
- 5) A variety of content areas should be covered and all dimensions of development (physical, cognitive, social, and emotional) should be taken into account.
- 6) Web sites should provide active and enjoyable activities.
- 7) Web sites should be exploratory and include multiple branching options (depending on the age of the child). (Harbeck and Sherman 1999:42-44.)

It is clear that the principles mentioned above should be followed when designing any web site and therefore they have been followed when designing the web site for this teaching package, too.

El-Tigi and Branch (1997:23) have noticed that Web sites dedicated to instruction often lack interaction, learner control, and feedback. In CultureWeb, the purpose has been that interaction occurs on many levels: between pupils, pupil and teacher, pupil and computer, and pupil and the world. The learners have control over their own actions when studying at their own pace and in an order they have chosen themselves. They get feedback from the teacher and the people they interact with in the target culture.

Other, more technical principles behind the design have also been considered. According to Lemay (1998:14,200-201), it is important to remember that there are many web browsers in use in the world and they may have different features. This means that these features must be taken into account when designing web pages. If a web page is designed for one browser only, it may look slightly different on other browsers. In addition, it is possible, though nowadays unlikely, that someone uses a non-graphic browser, such as Lynx, when browsing the net. Therefore, a web page should contain an alternative to pictures. This can be done in many ways, but they are not introduced here (See Lemay 1998).

When designing CultureWeb, the different features of browsers have been considered. CultureWeb has been tested using Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 & 5.0 and Netscape Communicator 4.04. Because CultureWeb is based on frames,



it is not possible to use it with old browsers which are incapable of supporting frames. The main page of CultureWeb contains an alternative to pictures for text-based browsers. The other pages do not contain alternatives to pictures as they are frame-based and therefore cannot be viewed with non-graphic browsers.

CultureWeb is basically a frameset with links to other authentic web sites and exercises which are based on these sites. Though many web experts (eg. Nielsen 1996) suggest not using frames on any web page, for instance, on the basis of not being able to print the content of a framed page, CultureWeb is frame-based. This can be seen justified, because as El-Tigi and Branch (1997:25) point out, frames enable viewing multiple pages on the same display at the same time. This enables putting the exercises and the materials on the same page and not on a separate sheet of paper, for instance.

One technical problem is nearly impossible to avoid: the properties of the users' display can vary. No matter how good the page looks on the web designer's display, it can look terrible on other displays depending on their properties. The colors may look different, or the page may not fit on the display. This has been a problem when designing CultureWeb as well. Therefore, to solve this problem, it is suggested that CultureWeb be viewed with a resolution of at least 1024\*768. If this is not the case, the page does not look the way it is supposed to look.

At the moment of writing this study, CultureWeb is on the Internet, but it cannot be guaranteed that it will stay there in the future. As the researcher graduates, her e-mail account and homepage will be closed. Therefore, CultureWeb will not stay in the same Internet URL ([www.jyu.fi/~sasakkin/cultureweb](http://www.jyu.fi/~sasakkin/cultureweb)), but change into a new one which is yet unknown. To preserve the material in some form, it has been saved on a floppy disk. Because of international copyrights, the disk does not contain any other pages than what have been created specifically for the purposes of the material package. Saving also Internet materials on the disk would have enabled its use in the future when some links and pages have changed or disappeared. In the current form, the links have to be checked before the material is used.

#### 4.6 Illustrations of the material

Because the material package is in web-page format, one needs a computer and an Internet connection in order to get a complete idea of the materials the package consists of. However, as there is not always a computer available, this section exemplifies the material in printed format. In the following, each country of the material package is accompanied by a different service on the Internet. The countries and services were matched at random; there is no specific reason why, for instance, the UK is represented by newsgroups. The examples in this section are not sample lessons; rather they are parts of different lessons. Full lessons are exemplified in the guide for the teacher.

**The UK – newsgroups.** When working with newsgroups, pupils are allowed to choose a newsgroup on the basis of their own interests. However, all the newsgroups are connected with the target country of the lesson. Figure 7 exemplifies the discussion in newsgroups. It is taken from a newsgroup <uk.local.isle-of-wight> and discusses bullying in school:

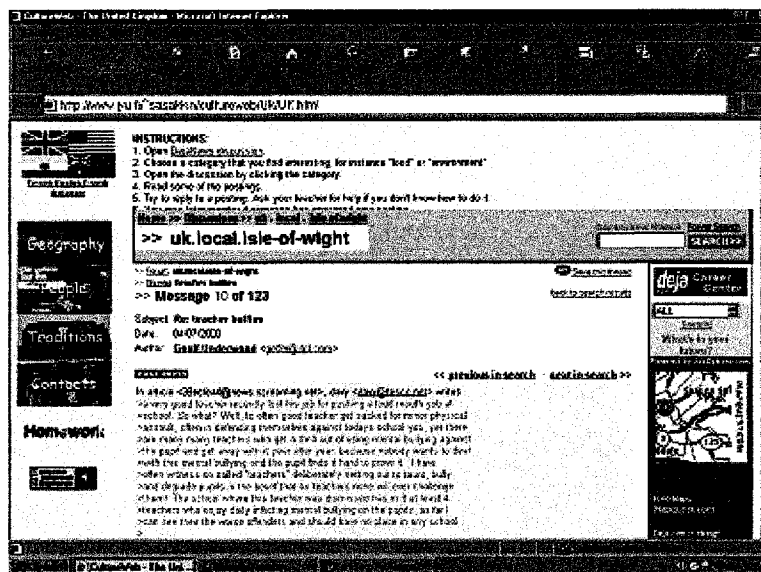


Figure 7. An example of a newsgroup (the UK / personal contacts, exercise 2).

**The USA – chat.** There are many chatrooms for different age groups on the Internet. One of the four chatrooms chosen for the purposes on this material package is presented in figure 8:

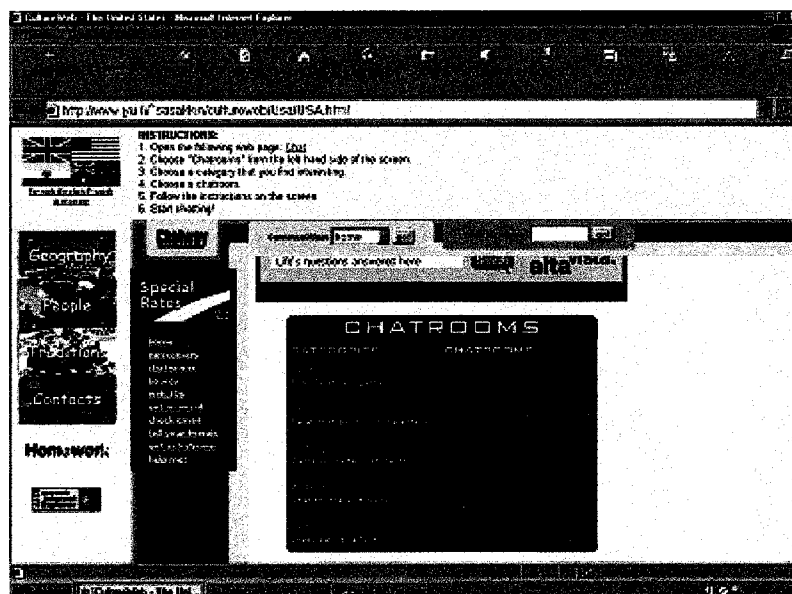


Figure 8. An example of a chatroom (the USA / personal contacts, exercise 3).

For the chatroom a separate plug-in is needed on the computer before chatting. Installation is easy and takes place automatically if the user clicks on OK when asked about installation. After this, pupils can start chatting.

**India – e-mail.** When writing e-mail, the material package is needed for finding a suitable keypal or posting an advertisement on a keypal service on the Internet. There are many sites that have keypal advertisements on the Internet, figure 9 shows one of them:

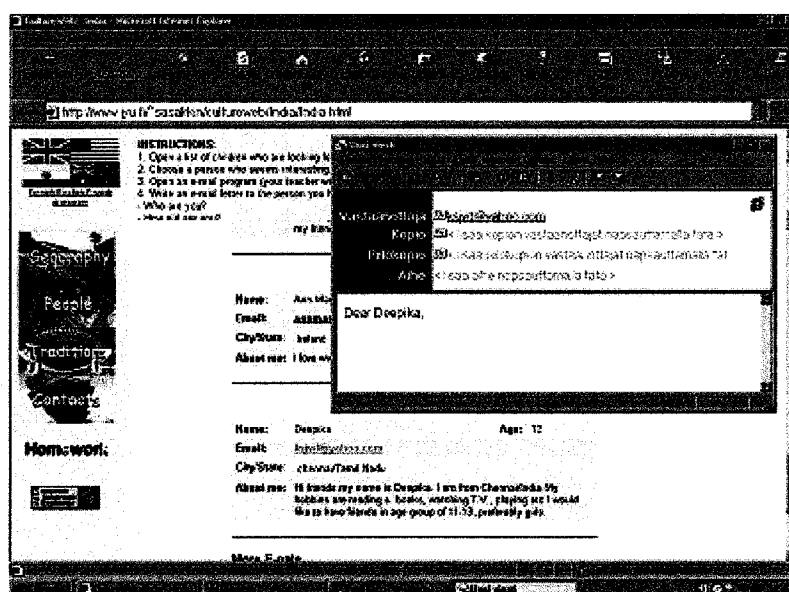


Figure 9. An example of writing an e-mail (India / personal contacts, exercise 1).

The keypal service is on Pitara for Kids-web site, which has an emphasis on India. Thus, there are many keypal advertisements from Indian boys and girls on the page. Also other nationalities are represented. When pupils have browsed through the advertisements and found a suitable keypal, they can open an e-mail program by clicking on the person's e-mail address on the page. After this, they can start writing to the person. If they get a reply, they can write back to the person without CultureWeb, using an e-mail program.

**Australia – the WWW.** The www-material in the package varies from texts and games to audio- and video-clips. One of the most suitable examples of web sites which take full advantage of the potential of the Internet is "Stories of the Dreaming", a web site in which Aborigines tell the viewer many kinds of stories of their culture. The viewer may choose a story on the basis of brief descriptions and the format in which it is presented: a text version, an audio version, a low-quality video, or a high-quality video. The choice depends on the speed of the Internet connection. A fast connection enables high-quality video, which is the most recommended alternative. As viewers watch the story, they can check unfamiliar words or expressions in a glossary. Figure 10 shows what the page looks like when

listening to the audio version of a story:

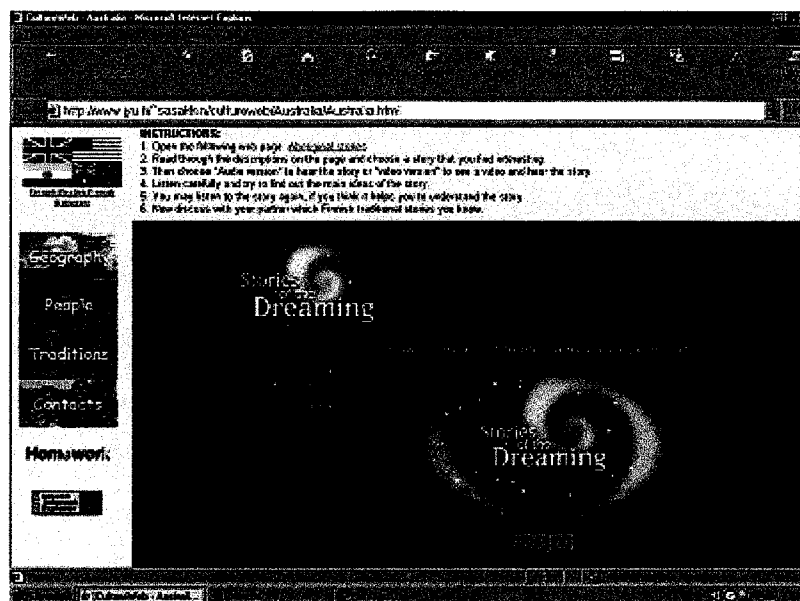


Figure 10. An example of www-material (Australia / traditions, exercise 1).

This web site is rather challenging for young language learners with limited language skills. However, the site provides an interesting way of learning about a theme that has probably not been discussed in class before. Even young learners can at least get a glimpse of Aborigine culture in the form of stories and videos.

**5. THE TEACHING MATERIAL PACKAGE:**

# Culture Web

[www.jyu.fi/~sasakkin/cultureweb](http://www.jyu.fi/~sasakkin/cultureweb)

## 5.1 A teacher's guide - opettajan opas

**TEACHING CULTURE WITH THE INTERNET: A web-based teaching material package for grades 5-6 of the comprehensive school** on englannin kielen opettajille suunnattu opetusmateriaalipaketti, jonka avulla opetetaan kulttuuritietoutta peruskoulun viides- ja kuudesluokkalaisille. Materiaali ei ole sidottu tiettyyn kurssiin, vaan sitä voi käyttää aina kun kulttuurimateriaalille on tarvetta. Materiaalia suositellaan kuitenkin käytettäväksi useamman peräkkäisen tunnin jaksoissa. Opettajan kannalta paketti tarjoaa joustavan ja monipuolisen käsittelytavan, sillä materiaalia ei ole jaettu oppitunneittain. Oppitunneille on annettu vain yleiset raamit, joiden puitteissa materiaalia voi soveltaa omien mieltymystensä mukaisesti.

Oppimateriaalin peruslähtökohta on tutustuminen neljän englanninkielisen maan (Iso-Britannia, Yhdysvallat, Intia ja Australia) kulttuureihin Internetin välityksellä. Tavoitteena on oppilaiden kulttuuritiedon lisääminen ja positiivisen asenteen muodostaminen muita kulttuureja kohtaan. Nykykäsityksen mukaan kulttuuritietouden lisääminen on olennainen osa kielenopetusta. Materiaalipaketin rakenne ja harjoitukset on sovellettu yleisesti esitettyjen suositusten ja Kaikkosen (1997) esittämän nelivaiheisen mallin perusteella (Kaikkonen, Pauli 1997. *Learning a culture and a foreign language at school – aspects of intercultural learning, Language Learning Journal* 15, 47–51). Ajatuksena on aloittaa oppilaiden omista lähtökohdista, kerätä tietoa muista kulttuureista ja verrata kulttuureja suomalaiseen kulttuuriin. Välineinä käytetään Internetin kaikkia soveltuvia palveluja, eli sähköpostia, www:tä, uutisryhmiä ja reaaliaikaisia keskusteluryhmiä (chatteja). Opetusmateriaalipaketti on Internetosoitteessa [www.jyu.fi/~sasakkin/cultureweb](http://www.jyu.fi/~sasakkin/cultureweb) sekä oheisella levykkeellä.

### Materiaalipaketin käytön eri vaiheet

Opetusmateriaalipaketin käyttö jakautuu kolmeen vaiheeseen:

**1) Orientoituminen ja herkistyminen.** Kun materiaalipakettia käytetään ensimmäisen kerran, tämä vaihe on johdantotunti (ohjeet myöhempänä). Muilla tunneilla ensimmäinen vaihe koostuu oppilaiden kotitehtävänä olleen pohdintatehtävän läpikäymisestä, jonka avulla paitsi kerrataan edellisellä tunnilla ollutta asiaa, myös orientoidutaan käsillä olevaan tuntiin.

**2) Havainnointi ja tiedonkerääminen.** Tässä vaiheessa havainnoidaan ja kerätään tietoa eri kulttuureista tekemällä erilaisia tehtäviä, jotka liittyvät Internetin materiaaleihin. Tehtävät tehdään suurimmaksi osaksi pareittain joko suullisesti tai kirjallisesti. Paketissa on tarkat ohjeet, joita voi tietenkin myös soveltaa ryhmän tarpeiden ja taitojen mukaan. Tarkoituksena on, että materiaalipaketin käytön alkuvaiheessa toisessa vaiheessa painottuu sähköpostin käyttö, koska kirjeystävän saaminen on olennainen osa kulttuuritietouden oppimista. Myöhemmillä tunneilla [www:n](http://www.n) ja uutisryhmien käytön on tarkoitus kasvaa, mutta myös sähköpostia

käytetään aika ajoin. Toisen vaiheen lopussa käytetään myös reaaliaikaista keskusteluryhmää.

**3) Vertailu ja pohdinta (kotitehtävä).** Kolmannessa vaiheessa vertaillaan kohdekulttuuria oppilaiden omaan kulttuuriin pohdintatehtävien avulla. Tämän vaiheen oppilaat tekevät itsenäisesti kotitehtäväänsä. Pohjustuksena kotitehtävälle myös toisen vaiheen tehtävät sisältävät jonkin verran vertailua suomalaiseen kulttuuriin, jotta oppilaat herkistyisivät kulttuurien välisille eroille ja samankaltaisuuksille jo tehtäviä tehdessään. Täten kotitehtävän tekeminen on helpompaa. Tehtävä tehdään verkon välityksellä yhteisössä, joka on perustettu materiaalityypin varten, ja jossa on mahdollista käyttää sekä reaaliaikaista keskusteluryhmää että uutisryhmätyyppistä ryhmää. Käytännön syistä uutisryhmäkeskustelu on näistä kahdesta useammin käytetty vaihtoehto. Opettaja laittaa uutisryhmään aiheen, jota oppilaiden tulee pohtia ja sen perusteella kirjoittaa oma mielipiteensä. Mikäli oppilaalla on jotain muuta aiheeseen liittyvää, jonka hän haluaa ottaa yleisen keskustelun aiheeksi, sekin on mahdollista. Seuraavalla tunnilla edellisen tunnin kolmas vaihe, eli oppilaiden kotitehtävä, toimii orientoitumis- ja herkistymisvaiheena. Täten eri vaiheista muodostuu jatkumo.

### Internetin eri palvelujen käyttö materiaalityypin pakettissa

**Sähköposti.** Sähköpostin välityksellä oppilaan on tarkoitus olla yhteydessä samanikäiseen lapseen kohdekulttuurissa. Oppilas pyrkii kyselemällä saamaan tietoa kohdekulttuurista ja samalla esittelee myös omaa kulttuuriaan vastapuolelle. Aluksi yhteydenpito tapahtuu oppituntien aikana, mutta myöhemmin on suotavaa, että oppilas kirjoittaisi uudelle ystävälleen myös oppituntien ulkopuolella, mikäli hänellä on siihen mahdollisuus.

**www.** www tarjoaa paljon autenttista materiaalia erilaisista kulttuuriin liittyvistä aiheista. www:tä käytettäessä oppilaat eivät saa "surffata" missä vain, vaan he vierailevat vain sellaisilla sivuilla, jotka on valittu materiaalityypin pakettiin. Paketti sisältää linkkejä sekä erilaisille sivuille kohdekulttuurissa että suomalaista kulttuuria esitteleville sivuille. Kun oppilaat vierailevat näillä sivuilla, he tekevät niihin liittyviä tehtäviä. Tehtävät vaihtelevat luetunymmärtämisestä peleihin ja parikeskusteluihin. Suurin osa tehtävistä vie noin 20–25 minuuttia, mikä tarkoittaa, että yhden tunnin aikana ei välttämättä ehdi tehdä kuin yhden tehtävän. Tehtäviin on ohjeet englanniksi, mutta jotta kaikki ymmärtäisivät mitä tulee tehdä, opettajan kannattaa kertoa ohjeet myös suomeksi ennen tehtävän aloittamista.

**Uutisryhmät.** Uutisryhmiä käytettäessä oppilaiden tulee ensin etsiä kiinnostava uutisryhmä pakettiin valituista kulttuuri-aiheisista ryhmistä. Ensin oppilaat seuraavat keskustelua ryhmässä ja koettavat sitten kirjoittaa oman viestin uutisryhmään. Tämän jälkeen he odottavat seuraavaan kertaan nähdäkseen, onko joku vastannut heidän viestiinsä. Mikäli näin on käynyt, oppilaat voivat kommentoida vastausta ja jäädä taas odottamaan, mitä tapahtuu.

**Chat.** Reaaliaikainen keskustelu, chat, voi olla oppilaiden mielestä kaikkein mielenkiintoisin Internetin palvelu. Siitä voi siksi tulla ainoa palvelu, jota oppilaat haluaisivat käyttää. Materiaalityypin pakettissa on ajateltu, että opettaja voisi jättää



jokaisen tunnin loppuun jonkin verran aikaa chatille. Mikäli joku oppilas ei halua osallistua siihen, hän voi jatkaa muiden harjoitusten tekemistä sen sijaan.

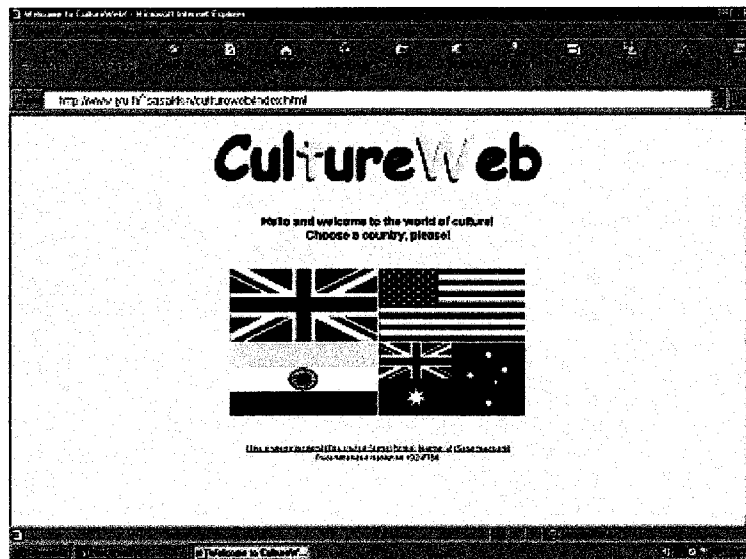
### **Laitteistovaatimukset**

Jotta kieltä ja kulttuuria voisi opettaa tehokkaasti Internetin avulla, käytettävissä olevien tietokoneiden ja tietoliikenneyhteyksien tulisi olla nopeita. Lisäksi koneissa tulisi olla sopivat ohjelmistot. Koneita tulisi myös olla riittävästi, eli jokaista konetta kohti pitäisi olla enintään kaksi oppilasta. Näiden vaatimusten täytyessä oppiminen Internetin välityksellä on antoisampaa ja tehokkaampaa.

Tätä oppimisympäristöä käytettäessä tietokoneen näytön tulisi olla kooltaan vähintään 15", mutta 17" olisi vielä tätäkin suositeltavampi, jotta sivut mahtuisivat hyvin ruudulle. Näytön resoluution tulisi olla suuri, vähintään 1024\*768. Internetyhteyden tulisi olla kiinteä, jotta sivut latautuisivat nopeasti. Mitä uudempi Internet selain koneissa on, sitä paremmin ne tukevat erilaisia oppimista helpottavia erikoistehosteita (ääniä, animaatioita), joita sivuilla on. Siksi selain tulisi olla esimerkiksi Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.0. Tämän lisäksi olisi suositeltavaa, että koneissa olisi sellainen sähköpostiohjelma, joka aukeaa suoraan sähköpostiosoitetta näpäytettäessä. Tällainen on esimerkiksi Outlook Express. Lisäksi koneissa tarvitaan RealPlayer-ohjelma, jonka saa ilmaiseksi Internetistä. Tätä ohjelmaa tarvitaan joillakin sivuilla olevien videopätkien katselemiseen tai radiokanavien kuuntelemiseen. Joitakin sivuja varten tarvitaan mahdollisesti myös muita ohjelmia, jotka saa haettua Internetistä ilmaiseksi. Nämä ohjelmat täytyy tietenkin asentaa jokaiselle käytettävälle koneelle erikseen.

### **Oppimisympäristön käyttöohjeet**

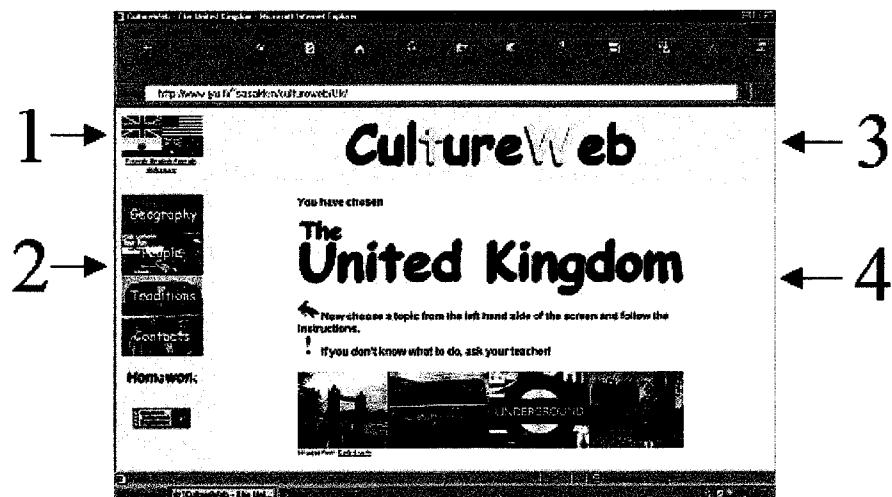
CultureWeb sisältää kulttuuritietouteen liittyvää materiaalia neljästä englanninkielisestä maasta: Isosta-Britanniasta, Yhdysvalloista, Intiasta ja Australiasta. Oppimisympäristön etusivu näyttää seuraavalta:



Kuva 1. CultureWebin etusivu.

Tältä sivulta oppilaat valitsevat maan, jonka kulttuurista he haluavat oppia lisää. Opettajan kannalta on helpompaa, mikäli oppilaat valitsevat itse tai opettaja neuvoo kaikkia valitsemaan saman maan. On kuitenkin myös mahdollista, että oppilaat jakautuvat pienempiin ryhmiin ja valitsevat eri maat, koska tehtävät on suunniteltu siten, että ne voi tehdä suhteellisen itsenäisesti. Maan valitseminen tapahtuu näpäyttämällä hiiren vasenta painiketta kyseisen maan lipun päällä tai valitsemalla maan nimi ruudun alareunassa olevista teksteistä.

Kun oppilaat ovat valinneet haluamansa maan, näytölle avautuu maahan liittyvien tehtävien pääsivu. Sivun vaihtelee maan mukaan, mutta periaatteessa kaikki sivut näyttävät kuvan 2 mukaisilta:



Kuva 2. Eri maihin liittyvä pääsivu.

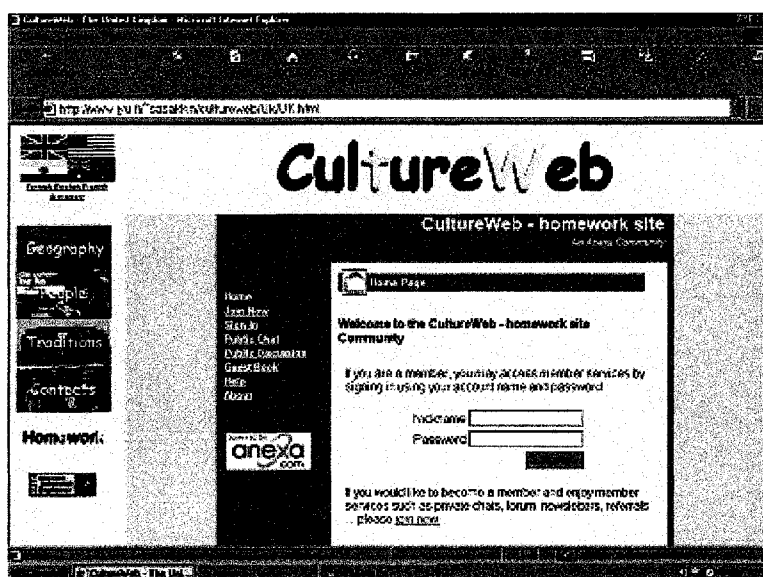
Sivu jakautuu neljään kehykseen. Pienin kehys, joka on esitetty yllä olevassa

kuvassa numerolla 1, sisältää pienennetyn kuvan CultureWebin etusivusta. Tätä näpäyttämällä pääsee aina takaisin etusivulle, jonka jälkeen voi valita uuden maan käsiteltäväksi. Pienennetyn kuvan alla on myös linkki suomi-englanti-suomi - sanakirjaan, jota oppilaat voivat käyttää, mikäli he kohtaavat sanan, jota he eivät ymmärrä. Sanakirja avautuu käsiteltävän sivun päälle, jonka jälkeen sen voi pienentää ja antaa olla koko ajan valmiustilassa ruudun alareunassa. Vasemmanpuoleinen kehys, numero 2, sisältää painikkeet materiaalin aihealueisiin "Geography", "People", "Traditions" ja "Personal contacts". Kehyksestä pääsee myös kotitehtävisivulla painamalla kohtaa "Homework". Oppilaat valitsevat kiinnostavan aihealueen vasemmanpuoleisesta kehyksestä, jonka jälkeen aiheeseen liittyvät tehtävävaihtoehdot avautuvat ylimpään kehykseen (numero 3). Tämän jälkeen oppilaat valitsevat kiinnostavan tehtävän. Tehtävässä olevaa linkkiä näpäyttämällä materiaali avautuu suurimpaan kehykseen numero 4 (katso myöhempana olevat esimerkit).

Kaikkiin sivuihin liittyviä tarkkoja teknisiä käyttöohjeita ei ole järkevää esitellä tässä oppaassa. Opettajan kannattaa tutustua eri sivuihin, varsinkin chat-, uutisryhmä- ja kirjeenvaihtosivuihin ennen niiden käyttämistä, koska jotkut näistä sivuista vaativat esimerkiksi rekisteröitymistä ennen kuin niitä voi käyttää.

### **Kotitehtävisivun käyttöohjeet**

CultureWebiin liittyvät kotitehtävät tehdään Internetin välityksellä. Tätä tarkoitusta varten on perustettu oma yhteisö, jossa on sekä reaaliaikaista että uutisryhmätyyppistä keskustelua. Kotitehtävyhteisöön pääsee CultureWebin maakohtaisilta sivuilta näpäyttämällä painiketta "Homework". Jotta oppilaat voivat tehdä kotitehtävänsä, heidän täytyy ensin kirjoittautua palvelun käyttäjäksi. Tätä varten he tarvitsevat nimen ja salasanan sekä joitakin muita tietoja (ensimmäisellä kerralla). Oppilaiden ensimmäinen käyttäjäksi kirjoittautuminen tulee tehdä opettajan johdolla samaan aikaan, kun koko oppimisympäristön käyttöä opetellaan, jotta kaikki varmasti pääsevät mukaan keskusteluun. Ensimmäinen käyttäjäksi kirjoittautuminen tapahtuu näpäyttämällä kuvan 3 esittämältä sivulta kohtaa "Join now". Myöhemmillä kerroilla kuvassa oleviin laatikoihin vain kirjoitetaan oma nimi ja salasana, jonka jälkeen näpäytetään "Sign in". Muistamisen helpottamiseksi oppilaiden salasanana voi toimia heidän oma etunimensä, joka täten kirjoitetaan molempiin kuvassa oleviin laatikoihin. Jotta kotitehtävyhteisön käyttöön voisi tutustua ennen kuin oppilaat alkavat käyttää sitä, on luotu testihenkilö. Kirjoittautumalla käyttäjäksi nimellä *juhana* ja laittamalla salasanaksi *juhana* pääsee testaamaan ympäristöä.



Kuva 3. Kotitehtävä sivun käyttäjäksi kirjoittautuminen.

Kun palveluun on kirjottauduttu sisään, vasemmasta reunasta valitaan joko Member chat tai Member discussion, sen mukaan onko yhteisössä samanaikaisesti paikalla muita, joiden kanssa voisi keskustella reaaliajassa. Yleisin valintavaihtoehto on kuitenkin Member discussion. Opettaja laittaa kyseiseen paikkaan aiheen, josta sitten keskustellaan kirjoittamalla viestejä keskusteluryhmään. Jos oppilailla on joku heitä kiinnostava asia, josta he haluavat keskustella, sekin on mahdollista ottaa yleisen keskustelun aiheeksi.

Päämääränä on, että kaikkien oppilaiden tulee kirjoittaa jokaisen CultureWeb-tunnin jälkeen omia mielipiteitään keskusteluun. Mikäli oppilailla ei ole mahdollisuutta käyttää verkkoon kytkettyä tietokonetta kotona, opettajan tulee järjestää oppilaalle tilaisuus tehdä kotitehtävä koulussa, joko välitunnilla tai koulun jälkeen.

## Levyke

Materiaalipaketti on tallennettu levykkeelle, jotta sen käyttöä voitaisiin jatkaa myös, jos materiaali poistuu Internetistä. Levyke sisältää CultureWebin perusmateriaalit eli kuvat ja aloitussivut, joilta pääsee muualla oleville sivuille. Myös harjoitukset ovat levykkeellä. Tekijänoikeuksien vuoksi levykkeelle ei ole voitu tallentaa mitään verkossa olevia sivuja, joihin linkit osoittavat. Tämä olisi mahdollistanut CultureWebin käyttämisen myös silloin kun linkkien osoittamat sivut ovat muuttuneet tai poistuneet käytöstä. Nykyisellään linkkien toiminta täytyy tarkistaa aina ennen materiaalin käyttämistä, sillä suurin osa linkeistä muuttuu varmasti tulevaisuudessa.

Levykkeellä on ReadMe-tiedosto, jossa kerrotaan materiaalin perustiedot.

Itse CultureWeb avataan näpäyttämällä tiedostoa *index.html*, jonka jälkeen selain tulisi avautua automaattisesti.

### **Ensimmäinen oppitunti**

Ennen kuin CultureWebiä ryhdytään käyttämään, on suositeltavaa pitää johdantotunti kulttuuriaiheesta ja myös tutustua oppimisympäristön käyttöön. Johdantotunnilla tulisi käydä läpi seuraavia asioita:

#### **1. JOHDANTO KULTTUURIIN**

- a) Yleinen keskustelu aiheesta kulttuuri: Mitä kulttuuri oppilaiden mielestä on? Miten he ymmärtävät kulttuurin käsitteen? Kuuluuko esimerkiksi tavallinen elämä kulttuuriin? Entäpä taide ja tiede? Urheilu? Aiheen käsittely voi olla joko täysin opettajajohtoista tai sitten oppilaat voivat ensin pohtia pienissä ryhmissä aihetta ja vasta sen jälkeen mielipiteet kootaan opettajan johdolla taululle tai kalvolle miellekarttaan (mindmap).
- b) Mitä suomalainen kulttuuri on? Mikä on oppilaiden mielestä sellaista, jota he esittelisivät ulkomaalaisille ystävilleen? (Esim. sauna, erilaiset ruoat, pesäpallo, musiikki.) Tässä kohdassa voidaan jatkaa samalla menetelmällä kuin ensimmäisessä kohdassa.
- c) Oppilaiden käsityksiä niistä kulttuureista, joita tullaan käsittelemään seuraavilla tunneilla. Millaisia stereotyyppisiä käsityksiä oppilailla on? Onko kenelläkään henkilökohtaisia kokemuksia kyseisistä kulttuureista? Kirjekavereita? Sukulaisia kyseisissä maissa? Jälleen samantyyppinen käsittely kuin aiemmin.

#### **2. OPPIMISYMPÄRISTÖÖN TUTUSTUMINEN**

Käydään opettajan johdolla läpi oppimisympäristöä. Olisi suotavaa, että luokassa olisi tietokone, jonka näytön saa heijastettua kaikkien näkyville. Muussa tapauksessa voi käyttää kalvokopioita oppaan kuvista ja esitellä ympäristöä piirtoheittimen avulla. Opettaja näyttää rauhallisessa tahdissa pääperiaatteet ympäristön käytöstä ja kenties joitakin esimerkkejä aihealueista. Oppilaiden tulisi seurata tarkasti, jotta he itse osaisivat käyttää ympäristöä seuraavalla kerralla.

#### **3. JOHDANTO KIRJEKAVERIN SAAMISEEN**

Koska kirjekaverin saaminen ulkomailta on olennainen osa kulttuuritietouden oppimista, kirjeenvaihto aloitetaan heti CultureWebin ensimmäisestä käyttökerrasta alkaen. Johdantotunnin kotitehtäväksi oppilaat saavat pienen suunnittelutehtävän. Heidän tulisi suunnitella, mitä he kertoisivat itsestään tulevalle ulkomaalaiselle kirjekaverilleen ja mitä he haluaisivat kysyä uudelta ystävältään ensimmäisessä kirjeessä. Oppilaat voivat kirjoittaa kotona kirjeen rungon jo valmiiksi vihkoihinsa englanniksi, jotta seuraava tunti etenisi sujuvammin. Kirje voi sisältää esimerkiksi kuvauksen oppilaan perheestä, harrastuksista, kotieläimistä ja asuinpaikkakunnasta. Samoja asioita voi myös kysyä tulevalta kirjekaverilta.

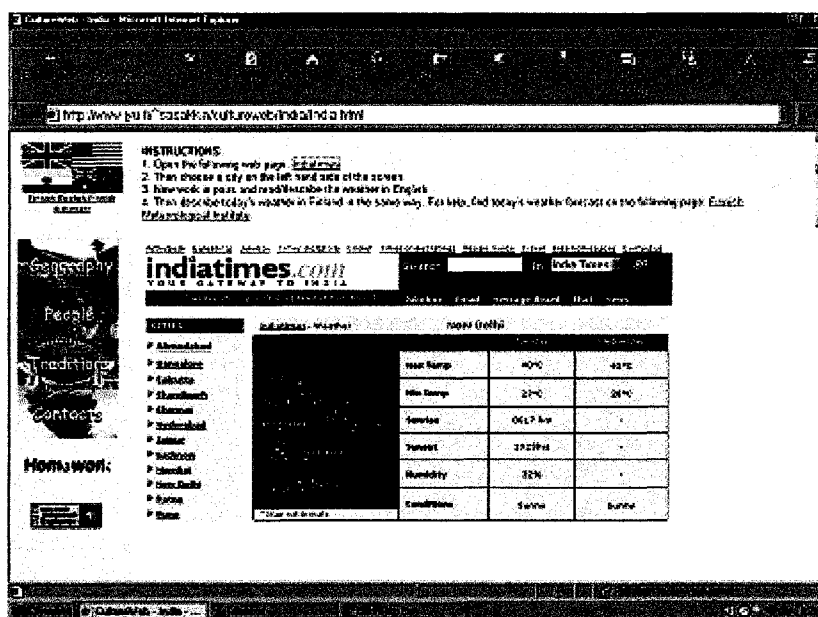
## Esimerkitunteja

Pelkkä teoreettinen kuvaus materiaalipaketin sisällöstä ja käytöstä ei havainnollista pakettia tarpeeksi. Niinpä materiaalipaketin eri vaiheet ja oppituntien rakenteet selkiintyvätkin parhaiten esimerkkien avulla. Seuraavassa annetaan kaksi esimerkkitunnin runkoa, joiden perusteella muidenkin tuntien rakennetta voi suunnitella. Esimerkkituntien jälkeen seuraa luettelo eri maihin liittyvien materiaalien aiheista ja tehtävätyypeistä. Luettelon on tarkoitus helpottaa eri aiheiden ja tehtävien hahmottamista ja löytämistä.

### Esimerkitunti 1 – Intian sääolosuhteet

**1) Orientoituminen ja herkistyminen.** Käydään yhdessä läpi joitain ajatuksia edellisen kerran kotitehtävään liittyen. Tämän jälkeen opettaja kertoo tunnin aiheen ja neuvoa suomeksi mitä oppilaiden tulee tehdä. Ennen tehtävän aloittamista voidaan kerrata nopeasti sääsanastoa ja kirjoittaa tärkeimmät sanat taululle/kalvolle.

**2) Havainnointi ja tiedonkerääminen.** Oppilaat työskentelevät koneilla tehden aiheeseen liittyvää tehtävää (ks. kuva 4).



Kuva 4. Tehtävä osiosta India / geography, exercise 3.

Tehtävässä on tarkoituksena toimia pareittain ja kuvailla englanniksi Intian sääolosuhteita eri kaupungeissa. Tämän jälkeen oppilaat siirtyvät Suomen ilmatieteen laitoksen englanninkieliselle kotisivulle ja kuvailevat Suomen sääoloja samaan tapaan. Kun tämä tehtävä on tehty, oppilaat voivat siirtyä chat-sivulle, jossa he toivottavasti pääsevät keskustelemaan myös intialaisten lasten kanssa.

Aiheeseen liittyen he voisivat keskustella säästä ja esimerkiksi siitä, missä maassa heidän mielestään olisi kaikista sopivin ilmasto asumiselle ja miksi.

**3) Vertailu ja pohdinta (kotitehtävä).** Kotitehtävänä oppilaat voisivat listata Intian ja Suomen sääoloissa havaitsemiaan eroja ja pohtia syitä siihen, miksi erot ovat niin suuret (esimerkiksi maantieteellinen sijainti, meren läheisyys). Oppilaat voivat myös miettiä mitä vaikutuksia ilmastolla on pukeutumiseen, ruokaan ja asumiseen. Opettaja laittaa siis keskusteluryhmään esimerkiksi seuraavanlaisia kysymyksiä, joista kukin oppilas vastaa niihin, joihin osaa:

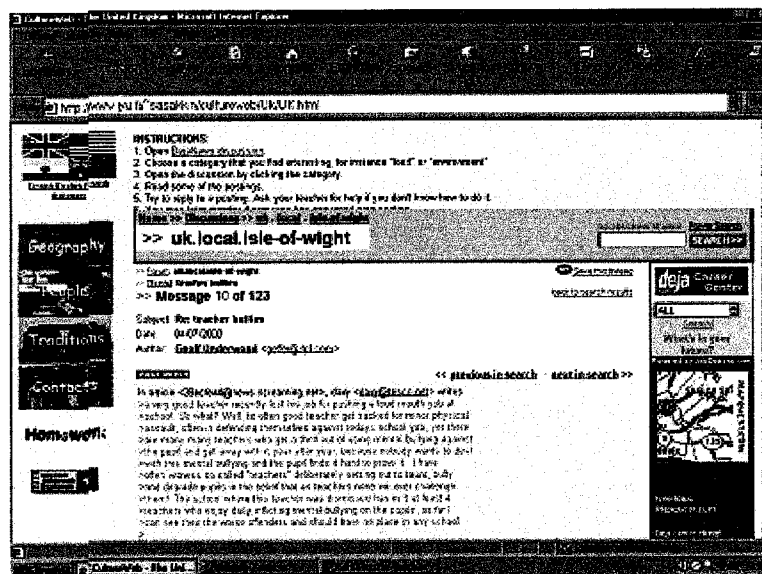
- Indian and Finnish weather conditions. What differences and similarities are there? Why are the climates so different from each other?
- How does weather affect our way of clothing, the food we eat, or the houses we live in?

Koska kysymykset ovat vaativia, vastaukset voi kirjoittaa myös suomeksi, mikäli englanninkielinen vastaaminen on ylivoimaisen vaikeaa. On parempi ottaa kantaa suomeksi kuin jättää kokonaan kirjoittamatta, mitä voisi korostaa oppilaille alusta alkaen.

## **Esimerkkitunti 2 – Ajankohtaiset aiheet Iso-Britanniassa**

**1) Orientoituminen ja herkistytminen.** Käydään läpi edellisen kerran kotitehtävää ja keskustellaan kenties pikaisesti Suomen ajankohtaisista puheenaiheista, joita on ollut viime aikoina uutisissa. Myös paikallisia tapahtumia voidaan sivuta. Tämän jälkeen opettaja kertoo tunnin aiheen ja neuvoo suomeksi, mitä oppilaiden tulee tehdä.

**2) Havainnointi ja tiedonkerääminen.** Oppilaat työskentelevät koneilla tehden aiheeseen liittyvää tehtävää (ks kuva 5).



Kuva 5. Uutisryhmäkeskustelu, the UK / personal contacts, exercise 2.

Tarkoituksena on, että oppilaat etsisivät pareittain Isoon-Britanniaan liittyvistä uutisryhmistä kiinnostavan ja lukevat sieltä joitakin viestejä. Tämän jälkeen heidän tulisi kirjoittaa oma kommentti uutisryhmään. Kommentin ei tarvitse olla pitkä, kunhan se vain liittyy aiheeseen. Kuvassa 5 keskustelu liittyy koulukiusaamiseen, jonka voisi kuvitella olevan aina ajankohtainen, oppilaita kiinnostava ja mielipiteitä herättävä aihe. Uutisryhmätyöskentelyn jälkeen oppilaat siirtyvät Isoon-Britanniaan liittyvään chatiin, jossa he voivat keskustella reaaliajassa muiden lasten kanssa. Keskustelu voi jatkua samasta aiheesta kuin uutisryhmätyöskentely eli tässä tapauksessa koulukiusaamisesta.

**3) Vertailu ja pohdinta (kotitehtävä).** Kotitehtävänä oppilaat voisivat pohtia sitä, millaiset keskustelunaiheet näyttivät olevat uutisryhmässä eniten keskustelua herättäviä. Myös suomalaisten yleisiä keskustelunaiheita voisi miettiä. Lisäksi käsitellyn aiheen käsittelyä voisi jatkaa, vaikka siten, että tässä tapauksessa pohdittaisiin arvelevatko oppilaat Suomessa olevan enemmän/vähemmän koulukiusaamista kuin Iso-Britanniasassa. Esimerkkikysymyksiä:

- What kind of topics were mentioned in the newsgroup?
- What do we Finns talk about?



## **Eri maihin liittyvien materiaalien aiheet ja tehtävätyypit**

(Reading silently, Writing, Speaking or reading aloud, Listening, Game)

### **The United Kingdom**

#### **Geography**

- Exercise 1 - The World Fact Finder (S)
- Exercise 2 - The Tower of London (R, S)
- Exercise 3 - Explore Parliament (R, W, S)
- Exercise 4 - 10 Downing Street (R, S)
- Exercise 5 - The London Tube (S)
- Exercise 6 - Explore Wales (R, S)
- Exercise 7 - CIA Factbook UK (R)

#### **People**

- Exercise 1 - The Royal Family (S)
- Exercise 2 - The Tudors (S)
- Exercise 3 - Hannah's House (R, S)
- Exercise 4 - Two British boys (S)
- Exercise 5 - David Beckham (R, S)
- Exercise 6 - Kate Winslet (R, W, S)

#### **Traditions**

- Exercise 1 - British icons and symbols (S)
- Exercise 2 - Do's and don'ts (S)
- Exercise 3 - Notting Hill Carnival (R, W, S)
- Exercise 4 - British food (W, S)
- Exercise 5 - Football (R, S)
- Exercise 6 - British customs (R, S)

#### **Personal contacts**

- Exercise 1 - Keypals (W)
- Exercise 2 - DejaNews Discussion (R, W)
- Exercise 3 - Chatting (W)

### **The USA**

#### **Geography**

- Exercise 1 - The World Fact Finder (S)
- Exercise 2 - How did the USA grow? (S)
- Exercise 3 - Music from the 50 states (S, L)
- Exercise 4 - Find the states-game (G)
- Exercise 5 - History for kids (R, W, S)
- Exercise 6 - History for kids 2 (R, W, S)
- Exercise 7 - A radio station (KCRW) (L)
- Exercise 8 - White House for kids (R, W, S)

#### **People**

- Exercise 1 - Native Americans (R, W, S)
- Exercise 2 - Native American shelters (R, S)
- Exercise 3 - 200 years ago in Delaware...(R, W, S)
- Exercise 4 - African American history (R, S)
- Exercise 5 - Middle school schedule (W)
- Exercise 6 - An American school (W, S)
- Exercise 7 - A typical day of a typical American teenager (W, S)

#### **Traditions**

- Exercise 1 - Music from the South (L)
- Exercise 2 - Sioux Indian traditions (R, W)
- Exercise 3 - Totem poles (W, S)
- Exercise 4 - American holidays (R, S)
- Exercise 5 - Easter in the USA (R, S)
- Exercise 6 - Food in American schools (R)
- Exercise 7 - Some American customs (S)

#### **Personal contacts**

- Exercise 1 - Keypals (W)
- Exercise 2 - DejaNews Discussion (R, W)
- Exercise 3 - Chatting (W)

## India

### Geography

- Exercise 1 - The World Fact Finder (S)
- Exercise 2 - News on the radio (L, S)
- Exercise 3 - Today's weather (S)
- Exercise 4 - Sights and sounds (L, S)
- Exercise 5 - Stories (R, S)
- Exercise 6 - National flag and animals (R, S)
- Exercise 7 - National TV (L)
- Exercise 8 - Live panorama images (S)

### People

- Exercise 1 - Indian babynames (S)
- Exercise 2 - Indian national heroes (W, S)
- Exercise 3 - Mother Teresa (R, W, S)
- Exercise 4 - Famous Indian persons (R, S)
- Exercise 5 - Using Khoj search engine to search for Indian people (R, S)

### Traditions

- Exercise 1 - Christmas in India (R, S)
- Exercise 2 - Objects from India (R, S)
- Exercise 3 - Indian food (S)
- Exercise 4 - Beliefs, customs, etc. (R)
- Exercise 5 - Festivals (R, W, S)
- Exercise 6 - Indian wedding ceremony (R, W, S)

### Personal contacts

- Exercise 1 - Keypals (W)
- Exercise 2 - DejaNews Discussion (R, W)
- Exercise 3 - Chatting (W)

## Australia

### Geography

- Exercise 1 - The World Fact Finder (S)
- Exercise 2 - Australian animals-game (G, S)
- Exercise 3 - Australian money (R, W)
- Exercise 4 - What time is it in Australia? (S)
- Exercise 5 - Radio stations (L)
- Exercise 6 - An introduction to Australia (S)
- Exercise 7 - Koalas and kangaroos (R, W, S)

### People

- Exercise 1 - Aboriginal schoolchildren (S)
- Exercise 2 - Australian explorers (R, W, S)
- Exercise 3 - I'm Lucas, I'm three! (S)
- Exercise 4 - I'm Jenni (S)
- Exercise 5 - Australian heroes (R, W, S)

### Traditions

- Exercise 1 - Aboriginal stories (L, S)
- Exercise 2 - Didgeridoo (R, S)
- Exercise 3 - Christmas in Australia (R, S)
- Exercise 4 - The national Anthem of Australia (S)
- Exercise 5 - Everything about Aboriginals (R, S)

### Personal contacts

- Exercise 1 - Keypals (W)
- Exercise 2 - DejaNews Discussion (R, W)
- Exercise 3 - Chatting (W)

## 5.2 A pupil's guide - oppilaan opas

Hei! Oletko kiinnostunut vieraista maista ja ihmisistä? Haluaisitko kirjekaverin ulkomailta? Entä kiinnostavatko tietokoneet sinua? Jos vastasit myöntävästi yhteen tai useampaan kysymykseen, tämä oppiaineisto, CultureWeb, on juuri sinua varten!

CultureWebin avulla tulet tutustumaan neljään englanninkieliseen maahan: Isoon-Britanniaan, Yhdysvaltoihin, Intiaan ja Australiaan. Opit kenties myös jotain uutta Suomesta verratessasi suomalaista kulttuuria muihin kulttuureihin. Mikäli kulttuuri ei ole sinulle tuttu termi, älä huoli! Tulet varmasti oppimaan, mitä se tarkoittaa.

Tehdessäsi tehtäviä opit käyttämään monenlaisia Internetin palveluja. Opettajasi neuvoo sinua, mikäli sinulla on ongelmia jonkun palvelun käytössä. Saat työskennellä parisi kanssa ja ryhmissä, mutta myös yksin kirjoittaessasi kirjetä ulkomaalaiselle kirjekaverillesi.

Toivon Sinulle antoisaa ja mielenkiintoista matkaa kulttuurien maailmaan!



### 5.3 Internet sources used in the material package

Links to pages on Finnish culture in italics.

#### The United Kingdom

**The World Fact Finder:** <www.pitara.com/earth/world/index.asp>  
**The Tower of London:** <www.toweroflondontour.com/kids/>, <www.tower-of-london.com/twrframe1.html>, <virtual.finland.fi/finfo/english/castles.html>  
**Explore Parliament:** <www.explore.parliament.uk/>  
**10 Downing Street:** <www.number-10.gov.uk/10outof10/>  
**The London Tube:** <pavel.physics.sunysb.edu/RR/transit\_maps/London.Tube.gif>  
**Explore Wales:** <www.tourism.wales.gov.uk/>  
**CIA Factbook UK:** <www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/uk.html#top>  
**The Royal Family:** <www.royal.gov.uk/>  
**The Tudors:** <schoolsite.edex.net.uk/49/Tudors.html>  
**Hannah's House:** <www.geocities.com/EnchantedForest/Pond/2077/index.html>  
**Two British boys:** <www.smallguys.freemove.co.uk/>  
**David Beckham:** <mufc.simplenet.com/mufc/beckhamw.htm>  
**Kate Winslet:** <www.geocities.com/Area51/Keep/5651/>, <www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Makeup/4143/>  
**British icons and symbols:** <www.geocities.com/traditions\_uk/british.html>, <www.hut.fi/~icankar/sauna/howto.html>  
**Do's and don'ts:** <englishculture.about.com/culture/englishculture/library/weekly/aa082599.htm>, <virtual.finland.fi/finfo/english/guide.html>  
**Notting Hill Carnival:** <nottinghillcarnival.net.uk/>  
**British food:** <www.lingolex.com/cc/foods.htm>, <www.ontheline.org.uk/explore/journey/uk/food.htm>  
**Football:** <www.virtualengland.f9.co.uk/sport/national\_football\_club\_links.htm>  
**British customs:** <web.ukonline.co.uk/conker/conkers-and-ghosts/>, <virtual.finland.fi/finfo/english/paaseng.html>, <www.algonet.se/~bernadot/christmas/21.html>  
**Keypals:** <www.cybercs.com/coolness/>  
**DejaNews Discussion:** <www.deja.com/bg.xp?level=uk.\*>  
**Chatting:** <www.cybercs.com/coolness/>

#### The USA

**The World Fact Finder:** <www.pitara.com/earth/world/index.asp>  
**How did the USA grow?:** <www.siec.k12.in.us/~west/proj/lincoln/index.html>  
**Music from the 50 states:** <www.50states.com/>  
**Find the states-game:** <www.funschool.com/cgi-bin/ga?ges\_usquiz,36>  
**History for kids:** <www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/kids/>  
**History for kids 2:** <www.museum.state.il.us/exhibits/athome/index.html>  
**A radio station (KCRW):** <www.kcrw.org/cgi-bin/db/kcrw.pl?tmplt\_type=Home\_new>  
**White House for kids:** <www.whitehouse.gov/WH/kids/html/kidshome.html>, <www.president.fi/netcomm/>  
**Native Americans:** <www.germantown.k12.il.us/html/intro.html>, <virtual.finland.fi/finfo/english/saameng.html>  
**Native American shelters:** <www.anthro.mankato.msus.edu/prehistory/settlements/index.shtml>  
**200 years ago in Delaware...:** <americanhistory.si.edu/hohr/springer>  
**African American history:** <blackhistory.eb.com/>  
**Middle school schedule:** <www.angelfire.com/ny/southsidemiddle/Schedule.html>  
**An American school:** <www.jp.kids-commons.net/vc96/vc-40/Tolman/school/index.html>, <www.cygnetnet.jkl.fi/koulut/cygnaa/english/brindex.htm>  
**A typical day of a typical American teenager:** <www.jp.kids-commons.net/vc96/vc-40/Tolman/projectp.htm>

**Music from the South:** <memory.loc.gov/ammem/lohtml/lohome.html>  
**Sioux Indian traditions:** <www.littlesiouxs.org/>  
**Totem poles:** <tqjunior.advanced.org/5160/>  
**American holidays:** <www.heathersholidaze.com/index.html>  
**Easter in the USA:** <www.jp.kids-commons.net/vc96/vc-16/easter.html>,  
 <virtual.finland.fi/finfo/english/paaseng.html>  
**Food in American schools:** <www.djspot.com/>  
**Some American customs:** <www.uq.net.au/~zzdonsi/custom.html>,  
 <netti.nic.fi/~bcassidy/index.html>  
**Keypals:** <www.ks-connection.org/penpal/penpal.html>  
**DejaNews Discussion:** <www.deja.com/bg.xp?level=us.\*>  
**Chatting:** <www.chatway.com/cgi-bin/fmfw.cgi?id=preteen>

## India

**The World Fact Finder:** <www.pitara.com/earth/world/index.asp>  
**News on the radio:** <air.kode.net/news1.html>  
**Today's weather:** <www.indiatimes.com/weather/delhi.htm>, <www.fmi.fi/ENG/weather.html>  
**Sights and sounds:** <in.orientation.com/eg/home.html>, <virtual.finland.fi/scripts/seasons.asp>  
**Stories:** <freeindia.org/ack/>  
**National flag and animals:** <freeindia.org/national\_insignia>,  
 <virtual.finland.fi/finfo/english/natsyeng.html>  
**National TV:** <www.ddindia.net/>  
**Live panorama images:** <www.thecpmail.com/virtualvision/Live\_Picture/index.htm>  
**Indian babynames:** <www.pitara.com/parents/babynames/index.asp>  
**Indian national heroes:** <www.indiancultureonline.com/Indian\_hero/i\_indian\_hero.htm>  
**Mother Teresa:** <createcom.com/mother/index.html>  
**Famous Indian persons:** <www.indiatimes.com/people/index.html>  
**Khoj search engine:** <www.khoj.com>  
**Christmas in India:** <www.the-north-pole.com/around/india.html>,  
 <virtual.finland.fi/finfo/english/xmas.html>  
**Objects from India:** <atschool.eduweb.co.uk/sirrobbitch.suffolk/objectsfromind/Default.htm>  
**Indian food:** <www.cornwall.net/baba/menu.htm>, <www.kanchans-rasoi.co.uk/r\_menu.html>  
**Beliefs, customs, etc.:** <www.indiancultureonline.com/Mystica/index.htm>  
**Festivals:** <www.indiancultureonline.com/Festival/index.htm>  
**Indian wedding ceremony:** <theweddingceremony.bizland.com/>,  
 <virtual.finland.fi/finfo/english/wedding.html>  
**Keypals:** <www.pitara.com/epals/index.asp>  
**DejaNews Discussion:** <www.deja.com/usenet>  
**Chatting:** <www.pitara.com/chat/nickname.asp>

## Australia

**The World Fact Finder:** <www.pitara.com/earth/world/index.asp>  
**Australian animals-game:** <www.fraynetwork.com.au/story/>  
**Australian money:** <www.qtcu.asn.au/junior.savers/money/index.html>  
**What time is it in Australia?:** <www.worldtimezone.com/time-australia.htm>  
**Radio stations:** <www.abc.net.au/ra/hear/hear\_us\_internet.htm>,  
 <www.abc.net.au/newsradio/listen.htm>,  
 <dialspace.dial.pipex.com/town/place/abn39/austral.htm>  
**An introduction to Australia:** <www.geocities.com/Heartland/Stream/2787/australia.html>,  
 <www.mytravelguide.com/countries/finland/>  
**Koalas and kangaroos:** <www.savethekoala.com/koala.html>,  
 <www.effect.net.au/newtoy/pamthepinkie.htm>  
**Aboriginal schoolchildren:** <www.users.bigpond.com/rawa/students%20-%20main.html>,  
 <info1.info.tampere.fi/a/tammela/enindex.html>  
**Australian explorers:** <www.davidreilly.com/australian\_explorers/>  
**I'm Lucas, I'm three!:** <www.geocities.com/Heartland/Stream/2787/lucas.html>  
**I'm Jenni:** <www.geocities.com/Wellesley/Garden/5087/Hello.html>

**Australian heroes:** <[www.abc.net.au/btn/austs.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/btn/austs.htm)>  
**Aboriginal stories:** <[www.dreamtime.net.au/storylist.htm](http://www.dreamtime.net.au/storylist.htm)>  
**Didgeridoo:** <[aboriginalart.com.au/](http://aboriginalart.com.au/)>  
**Christmas in Australia:** <[www.angelfire.com/al2/Australia/Xmas.html](http://www.angelfire.com/al2/Australia/Xmas.html)>,  
<[huhsd.k12.ca.us/huhsd/huhse/projects/pm5/aussie.htm](http://huhsd.k12.ca.us/huhsd/huhse/projects/pm5/aussie.htm)>,  
<[www.virtualaustralia.com.au/christmas/](http://www.virtualaustralia.com.au/christmas/)>, <[www.nettiradio.fi/test/santa/eng/eng.html](http://www.nettiradio.fi/test/santa/eng/eng.html)>  
**The national Anthem of Australia:** <[www.angelfire.com/or2/nozey01/downunder.html](http://www.angelfire.com/or2/nozey01/downunder.html)>  
**Everything about Aborigines:** <[www.schools.ash.org.au/lakemba/abed.html](http://www.schools.ash.org.au/lakemba/abed.html)>  
**Keypals:** <[www.virtualaustralia.com.au/auspals/auspal10-15/001.htm](http://www.virtualaustralia.com.au/auspals/auspal10-15/001.htm)>,  
<[www.virtualaustralia.com.au/auspals/auspal5-9/001.htm](http://www.virtualaustralia.com.au/auspals/auspal5-9/001.htm)>  
**DejaNews Discussion:** <[www.deja.com/bg.xp?level=aus.\\*](http://www.deja.com/bg.xp?level=aus.*)>  
**Chatting:** <[hbz.phillynews.com/cgi-bin/hbzchatc.cgi?Start.x=1&ChatPath=friends/chat](http://hbz.phillynews.com/cgi-bin/hbzchatc.cgi?Start.x=1&ChatPath=friends/chat)>

## 6 CONCLUSION

The present teaching material package first discussed the role of culture in foreign language teaching. The complexity of the concept "culture" was introduced, and the cultural goals of foreign language teaching were described. Also, some suggestions for the teaching of culture were outlined. Many researchers have concluded that authentic contacts and authentic teaching materials should be used in foreign language instruction in order to enhance learners' intercultural competence. Moreover, an active comparison of the learners' culture to the target culture should be carried out.

After this, the material package clarified how computer assisted language teaching has changed during the past few decades. It was shown that learning theories behind computer software have changed from behaviorism to constructivism, and the role of culture has become greater in computer assisted language instruction. Particularly, the development of the Internet has opened up many possibilities for language teaching. It enables new kinds of contacts with people around the world and offers a means of exploring the products of different cultures in digital format.

After this, the framework of the present teaching material package was described along with some principles behind the design of the learning environment. In the teaching material package an attempt was made to exemplify how the different services on the Internet could be used in teaching cultural knowledge in primary education. The topic of the material package is of present interest as the Internet is still a relatively new medium and its educational use has not yet been thoroughly studied. In the future, the trend will likely be that more and more teaching material is published on the web. Thus, the greatest achievement of the material package is its innovative format. Because the teaching material package is on the web, teachers all over Finland and perhaps all over the world are able to use it in one way or the other. Moreover, pupils are also able to study the material on their own in their spare time. Providing a new way of doing homework may also motivate pupils more than the more traditional ways.

One limitation of the present teaching material package is that though there

are four major content areas (geography, people, traditions, and personal contacts) shared by all four countries of the package, individual web pages on geography, for instance, consist of different kinds of cultural topics. The only topic that is shared by all four countries is Christmas. Therefore, a comparison between the different countries and cultures is not always possible. Moreover, the pages may at some points be too difficult for young learners. Finding suitable pages turned out to be even more difficult than what was expected. Furthermore, creating meaningful exercises on the basis of the WWW material was difficult, which clearly shows in the similarity of the exercises. Yet another limitation is that including four countries in the material package was after all too ambitious a goal. Focusing on a single country and its cultures would have been more reasonable and enabled a deeper analysis of its cultures. However, including four countries can be justified on the basis that in this way the amount of material on the different countries was mapped out. There clearly seemed to be more material on some countries than on others. For instance, Finland is poorly represented on the web. A practical limitation of the material package is that an ordinary 45-minute lesson may be too short a period to use the material. There may not be enough time to go through pupils' homework and then study new material thoroughly. A double-lesson would be a good solution to this problem. Yet another practical limitation is that some pages that had been found for the purposes of the material package have already disappeared because they were not saved on a disk or a CD-ROM because of copyrights. This clearly shows that a teacher always has to have a back-up plan for the lesson or at least all links and pages should be checked at regular intervals.

A future task would be teaching cultural knowledge with the Internet so that pupils would produce pages of their own on the WWW. Pupils could, for instance, produce pages that explain Finnish culture, particularly everyday life, in English. This kind of teaching method is supported by two reasons. First, pupils would learn to understand their own culture better if they produced web pages which described it to foreigners in English. Second, on the basis of the researcher's own experience, there certainly seems to be a lack of material on Finland in English on the web, particularly for young language learners with limited language and cognitive skills. One concise web site on Finnish culture that has



been used in this material package, <virtual.finland.fi>, is clearly aimed at adults. It seems that Finnish people are not as eager to present their country to foreigners as many other nationalities, such as Australians, are.

The present teaching material package could also be used with older language learners. Teenagers may find some pages too childish, but most pages would be perfectly suitable for them. There is always the possibility of expanding the selection of web pages and altering the exercises to fit also the needs of older learners'.

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## Appendix 1. The topics and exercise types in the material package

(Reading silently, Writing, Speaking or reading aloud, Listening, Game)

### The United Kingdom

#### Geography

- Exercise 1 - The World Fact Finder (S)
- Exercise 2 - The Tower of London (R, S)
- Exercise 3 - Explore Parliament (R, W, S)
- Exercise 4 - 10 Downing Street (R, S)
- Exercise 5 - The London Tube (S)
- Exercise 6 - Explore Wales (R, S)
- Exercise 7 - CIA Factbook UK (R)

#### People

- Exercise 1 - The Royal Family (S)
- Exercise 2 - The Tudors (S)
- Exercise 3 - Hannah's House (R, S)
- Exercise 4 - Two British boys (S)
- Exercise 5 - David Beckham (R, S)
- Exercise 6 - Kate Winslet (R, W, S)

#### Traditions

- Exercise 1 - British icons and symbols (S)
- Exercise 2 - Do's and don'ts (S)
- Exercise 3 - Notting Hill Carnival (R, W, S)
- Exercise 4 - British food (W, S)
- Exercise 5 - Football (R, S)
- Exercise 6 - British customs (R, S)

#### Personal contacts

- Exercise 1 - Keypals (W)
- Exercise 2 - DejaNews Discussion (R, W)
- Exercise 3 - Chatting (W)

### The USA

#### Geography

- Exercise 1 - The World Fact Finder (S)
- Exercise 2 - How did the USA grow? (S)
- Exercise 3 - Music from the 50 states (S, L)
- Exercise 4 - Find the states-game (G)
- Exercise 5 - History for kids (R, W, S)
- Exercise 6 - History for kids 2 (R, W, S)
- Exercise 7 - A radio station (KCRW) (L)
- Exercise 8 - White House for kids (R, W, S)

#### People

- Exercise 1 - Native Americans (R, W, S)
- Exercise 2 - Native American shelters (R, S)
- Exercise 3 - 200 years ago in Delaware...(R, W, S)
- Exercise 4 - African American history (R, S)
- Exercise 5 - Middle school schedule (W)
- Exercise 6 - An American school (W, S)
- Exercise 7 - A typical day of a typical American teenager (W, S)

#### Traditions

- Exercise 1 - Music from the South (L)
- Exercise 2 - Sioux Indian traditions (R, W)
- Exercise 3 - Totem poles (W, S)
- Exercise 4 - American holidays (R, S)
- Exercise 5 - Easter in the USA (R, S)
- Exercise 6 - Food in American schools (R)
- Exercise 7 - Some American customs (S)

#### Personal contacts

- Exercise 1 - Keypals (W)
- Exercise 2 - DejaNews Discussion (R, W)
- Exercise 3 - Chatting (W)

## India

### Geography

- Exercise 1 - The World Fact Finder (S)
- Exercise 2 - News on the radio (L, S)
- Exercise 3 - Today's weather (S)
- Exercise 4 - Sights and sounds (L, S)
- Exercise 5 - Stories (R, S)
- Exercise 6 - National flag and animals (R, S)
- Exercise 7 - National TV (L)
- Exercise 8 - Live panorama images (S)

### People

- Exercise 1 - Indian babynames (S)
- Exercise 2 - Indian national heroes (W, S)
- Exercise 3 - Mother Teresa (R, W, S)
- Exercise 4 - Famous Indian persons (R, S)
- Exercise 5 - Using Khoj search engine to search for Indian people (R, S)

### Traditions

- Exercise 1 - Christmas in India (R, S)
- Exercise 2 - Objects from India (R, S)
- Exercise 3 - Indian food (S)
- Exercise 4 - Beliefs, customs, etc. (R)
- Exercise 5 - Festivals (R, W, S)
- Exercise 6 - Indian wedding ceremony (R, W, S)

### Personal contacts

- Exercise 1 - Keypals (W)
- Exercise 2 - DeJaNews Discussion (R, W)
- Exercise 3 - Chatting (W)

## Australia

### Geography

- Exercise 1 - The World Fact Finder (S)
- Exercise 2 - Australian animals-game (G, S)
- Exercise 3 - Australian money (R, W)
- Exercise 4 - What time is it in Australia? (S)
- Exercise 5 - Radio stations (L)
- Exercise 6 - An introduction to Australia (S)
- Exercise 7 - Koalas and kangaroos (R, W, S)

### People

- Exercise 1 - Aboriginal schoolchildren (S)
- Exercise 2 - Australian explorers (R, W, S)
- Exercise 3 - I'm Lucas, I'm three! (S)
- Exercise 4 - I'm Jenni (S)
- Exercise 5 - Australian heroes (R, W, S)

### Traditions

- Exercise 1 - Aboriginal stories (L, S)
- Exercise 2 - Didgeridoo (R, S)
- Exercise 3 - Christmas in Australia (R, S)
- Exercise 4 - The national Anthem of Australia (S)
- Exercise 5 - Everything about Aboriginals (R, S)

### Personal contacts

- Exercise 1 - Keypals (W)
- Exercise 2 - DeJaNews Discussion (R, W)
- Exercise 3 - Chatting (W)