RITUALS, MYTH AND ART FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASS.

Cultural meanings in foreign language teaching: interpretive anthropological and sociocultural perspectives.

A Material Package
For Upper Secondary School

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Kielipedagogiikan muuttuessa oppimiskeskeisemmäksi on vuorovaikutuksen merkitys vieraitten kielten ja niihin olennaisesti liittyvien 'vieraitten kulttuureiden' opetuksessa korostunut. 'Kulttuurin' opetuksessa on kuitenkin yleensä keskitytty tarjoamaan taustatietoa 'kohdekulttuurimaista', kun taas vuorovaikutus on metodologisessa mielessä usein ymmärretty melko kapea-alaisesti puheen tuottamisena tai ryhmätöinä. Tähän tutkielmaan liittyvä materiaalipaketti perustuu laajempaan semioottiseen viitekehykseen, jossa korostuu vuorovaikutuksen luonne merkitysten luomisena, jolloin se on ennen kaikkea monimuotoista symbolista toimintaa.

Pro gradu -tutkielmassa tarkastellaan, kuinka kulttuurisia merkityksiä on käsitelty osana kielenopetusta erilaisten teoreettis-metodologisten suuntausten yhteydessä. Niiden joukossa tulkinnallinen antropologinen suuntaus (Geertz) ja sosiokulttuurinen teoria (Vygotsky) tarjoavat monipuolisia mahdollisuuksia rikastuttaa kulttuurin käsitettä vieraitten kielten opetuksessa. Kyseisten teorioitten valossa vuorovaikutus on sekä konkreettista että symbolista toimintaa, joka rohkaisisi käyttämään myös monia muita ilmaisukanavia - puhutun ja kirjoitetun kielen lisäksi - merkitysten luomiseen kielenopetuksessa. Tämä avaa ovia erilaisten esteettisten kokemusten kuten taiteen, myyttisen symboliikan ja konkreettisten 'rituaalien' huomioimiseen rikastuttavina kielten opetuksen välineinä. Tulkinnallinen antropologia ja sosiokulttuurinen teoria korostavat toiminnan konkreettisuuden keskeisyyttä merkitysten luomisessa. Tällöin myös kehon kielellä ja merkitysten kehollisella taustalla on oleellinen osa.

Oppimateriaalipaketti on tarkoitettu lisämateriaaliksi lukion englannin kielen kursseille. Useimmat aktiviteeteista olisivat sovellettavissa myös muille ikäryhmille ja muihin oppimisympäristöihin. Joihinkin aktiviteetteihin tarvitaan vain yksi tai kaksi oppituntia; joistakin muista voisi rakentaa kokonaisen kurssin. Kaikki kielitaidon osa-alueet saavat harjoitusta, ja oppimista tuetaan taiteellisen ilmaisun ja konkreettisen toiminnan kautta. Koska merkitysten luominen on prosessi, johon oleellisesti kuuluu oman ja muiden oppimisen ja merkitysten huomaaminen, materiaalipaketin sisällöissä on keskeistä sopivien ilmaisukanavien löytäminen ja oppimisen tulosten ja tuotteiden jakaminen. Siksi esitystaitojen harjoittelu erilaisia ilmaisukeinoja käyttäen kuuluu luonnollisena osana materiaalipaketin aktiviteetteihin.

Asiasanat – Keywords language education, culture in language education, art and foreign language learning, teaching materials, englannin kieli, vieraan kielen oppiminen, kulttuurikasvatus, oppimateriaali
Säilytyspaikka – Depository Kielten laitos
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1. INTRODUCTION

The role of social interaction in the foreign language classroom has been in the heart of the methodological discussion for decades. It has been the central issue - notwithstanding theoretical differences in regards to the nature of language and language learning - of the communicative language teaching (CLT), the on-going boom of task-based teaching (TBT) and of the socio-constructivist, collaborative, cooperative, experiential and dialogic viewpoints. Still, the very compelling idea crucial to many of them – that through social interaction the genesis of language would be the same as that of the 'mind' and of 'culture', and that learning as cultural activity is most fundamentally *meaning-making* – has not quite found its way to the teaching materials. The 'social', having been taken for granted, seems to have been used as a synonym of the 'cultural', or even supplanting or obscuring it. The emphasis on communicative competences (frequently understood as classroom talk) has quite often disregarded the broader capacity – and need - of the human being to use symbols: to conceive and transmit symbolic meanings. On the other hand, with such long-lasted insistence on the vital role of language socialization, not much attention has been paid to the more subjective or 'individual' qualities of second or foreign language acquisition on the symbolic level. Psycholinguistic advances in the study of learner motivation (e.g. Dörnyei 2005 and 2009) are the exception to the rule in a field that has otherwise been dominated by socio-constructivist theory. It is, then, bearing the semiotic sociocultural (Vygotsky 1962, 1978) and anthropologically interpretive (Geertz 1973) frameworks and definitions of 'culture' in mind that I will proceed to elaborate a material package that seeks to illustrate, and turn more conscious, the connection between language, mind and culture understood as meaning-making activities.

If I needed to offer a common denominator for the ideological and philosophical influences of my work, I would dare to call them 'humanistic' in the sense that I consider language teaching to be a 'humanizing' enterprise. As Vivian Cook remarks in relation to the recent L2 user perspective, "it reminds us that the purpose of language teaching is to change the student positively – it transforms people into something they would not otherwise be" (Cook 2002a, 341). The change in is not only manifested in the increasing ability of the L2 user to rely on different linguistic resources in a variety of contexts that privileges him or her over monolingual speakers in terms of cognitive abilities and helpful attitudes: furthermore, language teaching is seen as a profound influence on the

students, justifying it educationally and restoring it to the humanistic 'civilizing' tradition" (ibid.). In *The Multilingual Subject* (2009a, 188), Claire Kramsch reminds us how speaking or writing another language involves an alternative signifying practice that orients the whole body-in-the-mind (and not only a 'disembodied mind' as 'mind' is commonly conceptualized in Western scientific and lay thinking) to alternative ways of perceiving, thinking, remembering the past, and imagining the future. If the objectives of English Language Teaching (ELT), in particular, have been predominantly practical or utilitarian, conceiving foreign language teaching in this symbolic and thus deeply cultural - and concretely embodied - dimension would add value to the experience in surprising, more subtle and unsuspected manners.

Through my work, I will prefer to use the term foreign language teaching or learning (FLT or FLL) instead of second language (L2) teaching, L2 education or L2 acquisition. Traditionally, it is understood that English as a foreign language is taught in L1 educational settings, while L2 instruction would take place in a target language, or a "native-speaking", environment, even though these distinctions are turning somewhat outdated in an increasingly complex multilingual world. I have prepared the material visualizing learning contexts in Finland and in Mexico, where I have worked as an English language teacher. I may use English language teaching (ELT) synonymously with foreign language teaching (FLT). Evidently, sometimes I have the English language teaching context in mind, though both the theoretical framework and the general ideas presented in the material package could be applied to the teaching and learning of any other languages.

In preparing the material package, I have relied on existing materials – adapting them - and on practical suggestions made by other teachers. Other parts spring from my own experiences and observations as English language teacher in Mexico. Kumaravadivelu (2001, 18) has questioned the sharply articulated separation between theory and practice. Traditionally, the first field belongs to the applied linguist, who conceives the tools deriving from a number of related disciplines that provide a foundation for the second field, territory of the practicing teacher. I, too, consider that sometimes practice and theory meet in unpredicted or alternative ways, perhaps after years of trial and error, or owing to sudden and fortunate discoveries.

As my starting point is to consider language learning most fundamentally to be a meaning-making activity and, within the semiotic frameworks, thus directly related to the concept of culture, I will start by exploring in Chapter 2 the most central methodological foci of the ELT field in relation to their most common or representative concepts of 'culture', and particularly 'cultural meanings', during the last decades. I will use a framework offered by Kumaravadivelu (2001, 2006), which I find practical and illustrative. He organizes methods into language-centered, learner-centered and learning-centered ones, even though, as he says, there is evident overlapping (2006, 90). As he leaves the so-called humanistic approaches out of the categories, I will discuss them under a separate heading. Anyhow, as humanistic influences have been central to my work both as a teacher as in the construction of this theoretical framework, these proposals deserve that – separate – attention. As the role and the weight of methods in ELT has been a matter of a certain amount of controversy, I will also discuss Kumaravadivelu's concept of the post-method era – with its cultural implications - together with some of the reactions it has aroused. I find the methodological tides – this cyclical give and take between different positions – particularly fascinating, and will dedicate effort to bring forth some connecting bridges between several proposals presented in the last decades in spite of the apparent theoretical divisions.

In Chapter 3 I will turn to the theoretical frameworks that have been most central in the conception of the material package, and will review some of the key concepts of the interpretive anthropological theory, on one hand, and of the sociocultural theory, on the other. Both of them view culture as 'symbolic activity'. In their light it will be clearer why rituals, myth (together with narratives and oral traditions) and art are cherished in the material. That in turn, in Chapter 4, will open us towards a more aesthetic vision of foreign language learning as meaning-making activity, in which not only the concrete social interaction and the social construction of meaning is highlighted, but in which, as will be discussed in Chapter 5, cultural meaning-making is profoundly rooted in each learner's perceptive 'body-mind'. Chapter 6 lays the cornerstones of the material package before the Conclusion in Chapter 7.

The activities included in the material package are meant to be used as a resource, even though they could be used to build entire courses. There is nothing revolutionary about them in methodological terms, but still, they are intended to serve as a reminder of some

paths through which culture, as meaning-making and shared but at the same time subjective symbolic activity, can be approached or experienced in the ELT classroom. The activities are targeted at upper secondary school, but many of them could be adapted for other age groups as well. As the package is Dogme (Meddings and Thornbury 2008) spirited, it is mostly ’conversation-driven’, and focused on spoken language even though the four language skills form part of the flow in the dynamics. In most activities presentation skills will be practiced as well. Nevertheless, I find separating the four skills quite artificial, and it is more natural, and usually much more refreshing, to offer sequences of classroom work in which listening, speaking, reading and writing all alternate. And sometimes instead of talk what is needed is silence: it can be like fertile soil for the symbolic to grow.

2. THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE THROUGH THE METHOLOGICAL TIDES OF ELT

2.1. The Methodological Tides

Applied linguists and course book writers often use the image of a pendulum to describe the constant movement of theoretical and methodological foci from one end of the continuum to the other (e.g. Kumavadivelu 2001, 29; Swan 2009, 120). Johnson, in his *Introduction to Foreign Language Learning and Teaching* (2008, 44) attributes these tides within the fields of applied linguistics and foreign language learning and teaching largely to the dichotomy between empiricism (in different contexts called positivism, behaviourism or skinnerism) and mentalism (or rationalism or idealism) which in linguistics is most predominantly represented by views based on Chomsky (*Syntactic Structures* 1957; *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* 1965). At one end of the pendulum, the starting point is the observable, concrete and measurable world of the senses. At the other end, the focus is on the human mind, which is considered not to be directly observable. According to the mentalistic point of view, our consciousness and thoughts determine human behavior as well as the way we do science. (Johnson 2006, 49.) In the field of social sciences, educational studies - and the teaching of foreign languages – there are many other "opposing", or perhaps, complementary, poles of common dichotomies, such as 'individual – social', 'native – non-native', 'self – other', 'L1 – L2' as Kramsch (2000, 233) mentions. Such seem to be, as well, whether the 'form' or the 'content' is considered to be primary, or whether a foreign language is 'learned' in a structured way, or could be 'acquired' in the same manner as the mother tongue. In a good part of my pro gradu – thesis I will be in search of my personal way as a language teacher to cope with these dichotomies, and perhaps, trying to build a framework that would allow finding a healthy balance between them.

Kumaravadivelu (2001, 25-27; 2006, 90-92) has organized the theoretical and methodological emphasis into three main categories of teaching methods which form a sequence according to what is under the spotlights on the language teaching scene: the *language* taught, the *learner*, or the *learning* process. He remarks (2006, 90) that there is considerable overlapping in their theoretical and practical orientations. I find his

categorization illustrative of the central foci of foreign language teaching during the last decades and will describe each of these three categories briefly.

Before reviewing the three categories, we should know what Kumaravadivelu means by "method", a concept that tends to be taken for granted and is thus often left undefined. For Kumaravadivelu a method should satisfy at least two major criteria. First of all, it should be informed by a set of theoretical principles derived from related disciplines and offer a set of classroom procedures. Also, it should address the factors governing learning and teaching in a coherent fashion. Secondly, it should sustain various aspects of language learning and teaching particularly in terms of curricular content (grammar and vocabulary), language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and different proficiency levels (beginning, intermediate and advanced). (Kumaravadivelu 2006, 94.) As the purpose of the present review is to identify how the concept of 'culture' has been handled through these three major methodological waves, it is worthwhile to note how Kumaravadivelu's definition is restricted to language teaching merely in its linguistic dimension: in structural and semantic terms, and as the teaching of the classic four language skills assessed against a prescribed model of proficiency. Perhaps 'culture' is assumed to form part of the content material (*what* is listened to, spoken, read or written) or of the mode or context or learning.

2.1.1. Language Centered Methods

Language Centered Methods are founded on the assumption that if we concentrate on linguistic forms, we will ultimately gain a mastery of the target language (Kumaravadivelu 2001, 25). Lantolf and Thorne (2006, 5) remind that separating linguistic form from meaning, modelled on physical sciences, has a long history: Saussure divided language in *langua* and *parole*, Chomsky in competence and performance, and Bloomfield expelled the study of meaning to the field of psychology and sealed the study of language off from contact with culture. In this theoretical and philosophical climate, that has privileged form over meaning, language teaching has basically consisted of offering opportunities to practice pre-selected, pre-sequenced linguistic structures through form-focused exercises in class. Learners have been expected to draw from their formal repertoires when they wish to communicate in the target

language in the outside world. (Kumaravadivelu 2006, 90.) Language development is seen as an intentional rather than an incidental process in which lineal progress is made while new structural building blocks are inserted in the language construct. The grammar-translation method with its explicit use of grammar and metalanguage is, perhaps, the most representative example of language-centered methods. In it the linguistic structures of a language are sequentially presented and explained and constant comparison with and translation to and from L1 are used (Kumaravadivelu 2001, 26). In the context or the present work in is important to note that strong structuralist undertones in FLT consider form a priority and 'meaning' to be referential, part of the signs themselves (Lantolf and Thorne 2006, 4).

Saussurian structuralism in the field of linguistics, on one hand, and behaviorism in psychology, on another, led to the boom of the audiolingual method (Cook and Wei 2009, 6; Johnson 2008, 4). It represented a reaction to the long-lasted Grammar – Translation tradition, and marked a significant movement from the previous methods focused on written language towards an emphasis on the aural-oral aspects: it is the first method to give primacy to speech (Johnson 2008; 164; Kumaravadivelu 2006, 99). Language input was primarily presented – apart from explicit structures – in dialogues for drilling, emphasizing "language as communication" for the first time (Kumaravadivelu 2006, 109). It also marked a movement from a language teaching that was now judged as too mentalistic and philosophical toward positivism and empiricism, proudly presented as a theory and application which were truly 'scientific' and founded on the analysis of observable and recollectable 'sense' data (Johnson 2008, 47; Kumaravadivelu 2006, 100). And, indeed, it was the first language teaching method based on a sound body of theories of language, language learning and language teaching derived from the linguistic and psychological knowledge available at the time (Johnson 2008, 164; Kumaravadivelu 2006, 109).

Evidently, it was found that the communicative ends of learning were not met through structural means of teaching in spite of the expected communicative 'return' after a grammatical 'investment' (Widdowson 1990, 146). Experience and empirical studies showed that the method produced learners that were better with 'language usage' than in actual 'language use' (Widdowson 1978 in Kumaravadivelu 2006, 110).

Language centered methods dominated language teaching well into the early 70's (Kumaradivelu 2006, 115) and it is important to acknowledge that many of the principles and classroom procedures typical of them are still reflected and found useful in FLT even today. Among the positive aspects worth preserving, Kumaravadivelu mentions a few (2006, 112). For example, he recognizes the value of learning individual lexical items as part of foreign language development. Furthermore, he notes how from the psycholinguistic point of view (Bialystok 1988) it does help the learner to build a system by focusing on forms and structures at 'certain stages'. The repetition-reinforcement procedure typical of the audiolingual method has been found adequate particularly in the early stages of language learning, and among others Meddings and Thornbury (2009, 20) and Kramsch (2009, 202,209) recommend drilling as enjoyable language play in class that helps stand items out and turns them more memorable. Also Widdowson (1990, 11) concedes that some aspects of language learning have to do with habit formation, which is one of the audiolingual method's cornerstones.

2.1.2. Culture and Language Centered Methods

The language centered methods were crafted on the model of the 'classical' language teaching of Latin and Greek in the 19th century. Michael Byram, in *Cultural Studies in Foreign Language Education* (1989), one of the first comprehensive surveys about the culture-pedagogical field, notes how the consequent and classically oriented Grammar-Translation method has been criticized for not doing what it actually never set out to do: instead of producing speakers modelled on and assessed against the ideal of native speakers, the method concentrated, more attainably in Byram's (1989, 10) opinion, on producing 'native readers and writers'.

One of the characteristics of the classical language teaching model is that language and literature are associated, which, in many University language departments, has long been the dominant tradition (Byram 1989, 41). Byram (ibid. 58) notes how the term 'area studies' was gradually introduced in higher education to denote courses that were *not* devoted to literature. Kumaravadivelu (2001, 280) stresses that before World War II, the cultural orientation that informed L2 learning and teaching usually conceived "Culture with a capital C" referring to societal and creative endeavours such as theatre, dance,

music, literature, and art. It was only after the war, when the ends of language education became more communicative and pragmatic, that the anthropologically influenced concept of "culture with a small c" (Geertz 1973) stepped in, understood as patterns of behaviour, values, and beliefs that guide the everyday life of cultural communities. According to Kramsch (1993, 24), the teaching of culture as information about the 'target culture' has favoured facts and left the learners unaware of the meanings, and blind to their own social and cultural identities.

Karen Risager, in a more recent and very extensive account on the relationship between foreign language studies and the concept of culture, *Language and Culture Pedagogy: From a National to a Transnational Paradigm* (2007), argues that the national paradigm which has been so prominent in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) becomes clear when we look at how culture has been conceived in the previous periods of FLT which, after all, has a long methodological existence since at least 500 BC (Kelly 1969 in Risager 2007, 5). She claims that cultural teaching used to be much more 'universal' and 'encyclopaedic' - and less nationalistic - in nature (ibid. 3-5). By 'universal' and 'encyclopaedic' Risager refers to culture teaching before it was focused mainly on providing the necessary 'background information' for European philological study of language and literature. In this vein, 'realia' is a central concept, with a history that goes back at least to the second half of the 17th century. Its main objective has been to prepare for the reading of texts in academic environments, but also cater for the needs of travel and polite conversations to be held with natives of the countries visited. Even nowadays there is a 'realia' trend in culture pedagogy, which focuses on the background information as a requirement for understanding texts. Risager notes that apart from the more-or-less scattered information offered by realia, the reading of literature in itself could give an impression of wider culture-historical trends and aspects of everyday life in a foreign country. (Risager 2007, 24 - 27.) Brumfit (1985) and Kramsch (1993, 2009a) have been keen defenders of the uses of literature in FLT. Brumfit (1985, 114) views the uses of literature mostly as creating contexts for an otherwise communicative language class. For Kramsch (1993, 175), literature is inseparable from culture, and she emphasizes the importance of literature as a gateway to a world of attitudes and values, collective imaginings and historical frames of reference that belong to a speech community. She reminds, though, that when we integrate culture and literature to the teaching of

languages, neither literature should be handled as a mere mirror of given social and cultural contexts, nor 'culture' reduced to only narrative voices (ibid. 175 -176).

In beginner textbooks from the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's, there was a transition in the use of realia to a more systematic teaching of culture. Risager refers to the Belgian-French use of 'fields of interest' such as, for example, the 'country-life' (harvesting in the fields, the house and workmen, domestic animals, etc.) that consisted of presenting visual material of particular environments and their vocabulary. Gradually these rather pragmatic matters dealt by informative realia were left aside due to a growing concern with the national-typical: the 'national character' or mentality, the national historical constants and life patterns. (Risager 2007, 26 - 27.) This move echoes a larger complex of ideas, namely the German philosophical and political discussion about the relation between language, nation, people and culture (ibid. 36). On the other hand, the dominant ideas about the relationship between language and culture were strongly influenced by the structurally oriented cultural and linguistic anthropology practiced in Amerindian studies in the USA in the first half of the 20th century (e.g. Boas 1911, Sapir 1920's, Whorf 1930's). They emphasized that language, thought and culture could not be analysed in isolation, and stressed the view of cultures as shared systems of beliefs and assumptions among the members of a language community. (Hinkel 1999, 3.) The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis - that language systems, discourse and lexis reflect thought and ways of looking at the world and its realities - has been influential in culture and language pedagogy both in the USA and in Europe (Hinkel 1999, 3; Risager 2007, 43).

Though a concern for culture pedagogy had emerged in 1880's, it did not become an autonomous field until 1960's (Risager 2007, 24). From 1960's onwards, globalization intensified, communication within the Western world increased partly as a result of tourism and migration, and partly because of transnational communication via TV and other media. Particularly in the U.S. there was an increasing demand for the immigrating labour force to be mobile and flexible – and able to communicate and have a working knowledge about the new world. The audio-lingual method which, in part, was designed to meet these ends, was now seen in need to be reinforced by a more visible and effective culture teaching. (Ibid, 33.) Risager (2007, 34) claims that 'culture pedagogy' proper started with the publication of *Linguistics across Cultures* by Lado (1957) which underlines the nature of cultures as "structured systems of patterned behavior", and

promotes comparing 'units' from one culture and another as regards to their 'form', 'meaning' and 'distribution'. His concept of 'units' seems to denote a strong semantic and systemic conception of culture bringing, again, echoes from the dominant structural model both in anthropology and linguistics. Nelson Brooks, who, like Lado, is among the earliest American cultural anthropological culture pedagogists, published in 1960 *Language and Language Learning* in which Risager (2007, 34) states she has found the first explicit assertion of the inseparability of language and culture, even though the claim had long been implicit due to, for example, Whorf's (since 1930's; in 1956 *Language, Thought and Reality*) writings. There is an increasing consensus about language constituting the most typical, the most representative and the most central element in any culture. In the 80's the assumption became to be known as the 'marriage metaphor' reflecting the tension between the conviction that the two are inseparable in one way or another, and the great difficulties encountered in 'integrating language and culture'. (Risager 2007, 99.) The conflict has been constantly acknowledged in language and culture teaching until today.

In the context of the present paper, it is central to try to distinguish the suppositions across the varying methodological positions in regard to what cultural meanings consist of. In language-centered FLT we can see two predominant tendencies: the earlier culture pedagogy since 1880, and the more recent one since c.1960. They build on two previous traditions. The first one is the purely informative 'realia' tradition that emphasizes the concreteness and the context-specificity of meanings (the referential meaning). The idea that meanings emerge from concrete interactions is central to the sociocultural theory, to which I shall return in Chapter 3.2. In the second tradition, in the much larger context of the German philosophical and political discussion, meaning is assumed to have nationalistic and idealistic 'deeper roots'. The two traditions are interwoven in the philosophical conflict between positivism and idealism, which, as mentioned above, Johnson (2006, 49) calls empiricism and mentalism in the context of applied linguistics. Risager (2007, 36) emphasizes the importance of these assumptions for European FLT largely based on the hypothesis of the inseparability between language, nation, people and culture, be it from a positivist orientation concerning facts at one extreme to an idealistic and stereotyping interest in national-psychological traits at the other (ibid.). This discussion fell silent in the post-war period, although it returned in the 1970's (ibid. 36)

when the interest of FLT research and methodology was turning toward the language learner.

2.1.3. Learner Centered Methods

The results of the language centered methods were seen to be disappointing: learners *knew about* the foreign language, but were quite unable to *communicate* in it (Johnson 2008, 174; Kumaravadivelu 2006, 115). To look for answers, attention was drawn towards the learner whose needs, wants and characteristics were placed under the spotlights (Kumaravadivelu 2006, 91). Language competence was no more to be observed and assessed only in terms of the hypothetical "ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogenous speech-community" (Chomsky 1965 in Johnson 2008, 56). As the theory of language competence should also contemplate issues of actual language use, pragmatics gained strength as the study of what people meant by language when using it in the normal contexts of social life (Johnson 2008, 60; Widdowson 1996, 130). Chomsky's (1957; 1965) theories about language acquisition (Language Acquisition Device and Generative Grammar) together with Hymes' (1970) publication of *On Communicative Competence* - how language was actually used as a means of communication among humans (Johnson 2008, 57 - 58) - and Halliday's (1975 *Learning How to Mean*) work on the functional properties of language led to communicative language teaching (CLT) (Cook and Wei 2009, 6; Johnson 2008, 174; Kumaravadivelu 2006, 115). The notion of learner-centeredness found a natural ally in the communicative syllabus design which was "less interested in learners acquiring the totality of the language than in assisting them gain the communicative and linguistic skills they need to carry out real-world tasks" (Nunan 1988 in Meddings and Thornbury 2009, 17).

Learner centered methods, such as the widely spread notional-functional syllabi, have been principally concerned with language use and learner needs. The new emphasis was further strengthened due to influences from psychology where the move towards cognitivism turned the attention to what happened between the stimulus and the response, behaviourism's cornerstones: the learner´s cognition participated at that point, making the learner an active member in the process (Johnson 2008, 51-52; Kumaravadivelu 2006,

115). Instead of forming habits, learning is now seen as forming insights; a focus that Johnson (2008, 49) considered “mentalistic”.

Communicative methods seek to provide opportunities for learners to practice preselected, sequenced grammatical structures as well as communicative functions (such as apologizing, requesting, etc.) through meaning-focused activities. Only *meaningful* learning is expected to lead to internalization of language systems. (Kumaravadivelu 2006, 118.) Johnson (2008, 172) calls this a shift from *how* to *what*. The assumption is that a preoccupation with both form and function will lead to target language mastery to meet communicative needs in ‘real-life’ situations outside the class. In this approach, as in the case of language-centered methods, language development is considered largely intentional rather than incidental. Learner-centered methods aim at making learners grammatically accurate and communicatively fluent. (Kumaravadivelu 2001, 26; 2006, 91.) The proponents of the method share with language centered teaching the faith in accumulated entities (ibid.) and in the potential of communicative tasks to provide the conditions for learning to occur (Meddings and Thornbury 2009, 17). The major difference is that in language centered methods the accumulated entities are linguistic structures, and in the learner centered methods structures are matched with notions and functions. In both methods linguistic forms are explained systematically to the learner. (Johnson 2008, 124; Kumaravadivelu 2001, 26.)

The communicative and notional-functional syllabi of the 70’s and 80’s were described as the “communicative revolution” by many authors. Johnson calls it a “sociolinguistic revolution” (Johnson 2008, 175). Kumaravadivelu (2006, 131) considers such terms to be an overstatement. As he points out, the similarities between the language centered and learner centered methodologies are more important than their differences and, interestingly, he (2006, 130) concludes that there is no fundamental difference between the two pedagogies as both of them adhere to the familiar linear and additive view of language learning and to the presentation-practice-production vision of language teaching (ibid.). Furthermore, Kumaravadivelu (ibid.) - as many others (e.g. Halliday 1997 in Sullivan 2000, 129; Pennycook 1997, 39) - remarks that research on actual classroom procedures in allegedly communicative classrooms had proved that communicative classrooms are not that communicative after all. There has been a gap between theory and practice, the well-conceived agendas and the actual class-room practices.

One of the major contributions of the learner centered pedagogies has been the change in the roles of the teacher and the learner. The ideal is for the teacher to be "one among a number of communicators in the classroom" (Brumfit 1984, 60). More realistically, though, he or she would be the facilitator of the 'meaningful' communicative processes in the classroom by providing open-ended tasks, information-gap activities and contextualized practice of the four language skills (Kumaravadivelu 2006, 119), which now - at least in theory - received equal attention in syllabus and material design. Importantly, and with significant cultural implications, the teacher should provide 'authentic input' at discoursal (and not only systemic or sentence) level (Widdowson 1978, 79-80). Moreover, Chomskyan and cognitive feeder theories changed the attitude towards learner errors. CLT would tolerate errors as a natural and inevitable part of language development (Brumfit 1984, 57; Kumaravadivelu 2006, 119). Memorization of vocabulary lists and repetitive drills were now shunned as mindless, which also required the learner to take a much more active role in the learning process.

The learner centered ideology, the strong influences from the field of psychology and the many societal changes contributed to the rise of the Humanistic approaches. As the material package included in the present work is also 'humanistically' influenced, some of the basic concerns of the approach will be reviewed in a separate chapter (2.2.) later on.

2.1.4. Culture and Learner Centered Methods

With the learner centered methods, and as a result of the CLT, the 'content' of teaching gained more weight. Questions like 'relevance', 'meaningfulness' and 'authenticity' of the content material were highlighted by language educators. As a reaction to the long-lasted conceptual separation of language ('form') and culture ('meaning'), language educators turned to anthropology (Boas, Malinowsky, Sapir, Geertz) to conceive a 'languaculture' in which form and meaning, or language and culture, would depend on each other dialectically (Lantolf and Thorne 2006, 5). Furthermore, the leading cultural anthropological and social psychological frameworks in vogue favoured the attention

being paid towards the individual language learner as well as an increasing interest in *inter*cultural matters.

As mentioned before, in the USA the development of culture pedagogy was strongly influenced by anthropology and closely connected to the idea of cultural relativism as a basis for a multicultural society in a larger social context characterized by racial, ethnic and political conflicts (Risager 2007, 36). The USA's national culture, traditionally conceived as an apparently harmonious 'melting pot', was now recognized to be full of socio-cultural inequities and struggles. In the 1960's a large number of movements (civil rights, hippy, student, feminist, Black Power, ethnic revival, and reactions against the Vietnam War) began to manifest themselves. This development contributed to the intercultural communication to be placed on the agenda. (Risager 2007, 33.) It is a broad social-psychologically oriented discipline that many cultural educationalists refer to and borrow methods from for the developing of cultural awareness (ibid. 36). Cultural consciousness, as Kumaravadivelu (2001) calls it, is central, for example, to 'Post-Method Pedagogy' to which I shall return in 2.4. Also, the different civic, ethnic and social movements had an impact that contributed to the emergence of the Humanistic FLT as part of the learner centered approaches particularly in the U.S.

Within culture pedagogy these developments have widely differing points of departure: in the USA the cultural-anthropological and behaviouristic schools, meanwhile in Europe, and particularly in France, a more historical and holistic way of thinking, the old concept of '*civilisation*' (Fr.) rooted in the encyclopaedic tradition of the Enlightenment. With the introduction of the American anthropological concept into French culture pedagogy in the 1970's, two different notions developed: a new collective concept of culture to the side of the old 'humanizing' tradition, which referred to the process of cultivation of the individual. (Risager 2007, 69.) I shall briefly look at the questions of 'relevance' and 'authenticity' in language and culture pedagogy together with the strengthening of the intercultural concern, leaving the approach more centered on the individual for the separate chapter dedicated to the Humanistic FLT.

As CLT recognized that linguistic communication develops best with a meaningful content, it evidently raised the question about what that content could be (Risager 2007, 10). Cultural and societal information about the 'target' cultures continued being thought

suitable for the purpose, but this time with a novel claim for the 'authenticity' of the cultural 'texts'. The development of language and culture pedagogy in the 1970's coincided with 'the expanded text concept' (ibid. 39.). This meant that, in addition to the traditional literature teaching, 'texts' in a broader sense were included in FLT: non-fiction texts of several kinds, newspapers and magazines, texts used in everyday life such as menus, signs, brochures and tickets. As a greater knowledge of the outside world was needed to understand these texts, the work on non-fiction went hand in hand with an increased orientation to culture and society. Culture had first and foremost to do with the thematic content of the teaching, exemplified with extracts from short stories, newspaper reports, statistics, images, etc. (Risager 2007, 39.) Kramsch (1993, 24) deems that the interpretive cultural anthropological direction added new 'meaning' to culture teaching, which had been previously understood as cultural facts, even though 'culture' was still generalized to mean target - country national cultures.

Byram (1989, 42) underlines the importance of Hymes (1972) in introducing a more sociolinguistic interest in language and in culture and in the culture-specific pragmatic uses of language. But as we have seen above, the functional-notional methodology had been committed to a view of language as communication undertood as speaking, thus overlooking the wider pragmatic framework originally offered by Hymes' concept. In the learner-centered framework and in CLT in general, intertwining the ideas of relevance and learner needs became self-evident. Relevance has been typically understood as 'relevant for the needs of the learner' (Byram 1989, 11). Byram (ibid.) remarks how 'relevance' as well as 'usefulness' are often evaluated with very common sense arguments. The generalized principle of usefulness of CLT has habitually been understood as the "utilitarian argument of the promise of some future profits for the language learner" (ibid. 13). The purpose of the present paper, in part, is to go beyond the strongly utilitarian view of foreign language teaching and learning which so often, and so all-pervasively, is taken for granted. As for example Byram (ibid.) and Kramsch (1993, 1; 2009, 3,14,17,22) stress, interpersonal communication through speech might be the prime but not the sole function of language nor the only purpose of foreign language teaching.

Another central underpinning of CLT was that the language input offered to learners should be 'authentic' and learning contexts 'realistic' both for linguistic and cultural reasons. Authenticity, in the context of CLT usually means "providing with experience of

language produced by native speakers", as defined by Byram (1989, 139). It is a search for the "natives' self-presentation" (ibid. 98). Thus examples of English in L2 user exchanges or as an international language would not yet be considered an option. At initial stages the authentic material is carefully selected to make it accessible (ibid.). There also seems to be an assumption that teachers are, or should be, experts (if not natives) of the 'target culture'. It seems illustrative of the dominating language teaching ideology of the time, that for example Byram (1989, 139), though elsewhere critical about the unattainable native-speaker goal common in FLT, remarks how the culture-expert foreign language teacher would help learners "as a point of comparison with their own unarticulated cultural competence". That should make them aware of the nature of cultural behaviour in general as well as help them act acceptably in the specific foreign culture in question. In the present perspective, these sound like unattainable 'cultural' objectives both from the teachers' as from the learners' point of view. In my opinion, teachers might quite as well not share, of be 'experts' of, the 'native culture' and the learners do not need to dominate the 'rules' of the supposedly standard 'native behaviour'. The 'national paradigm', the association of culture to nations and countries, is still strong in the days of CLT and it also shows in Byram's (1989) book ("insights into the system of meanings which underlie a sense of national community", p. 98). In this line, influential language and culture pedagogists Fichou (1979) representing the French tradition of '*civilisation*' and the American anthropologically oriented Seelye (1974) both exemplify the same content-oriented culture pedagogy in which texts are related to the cultural and societal themes of the target countries. Seelye also addresses cultural 'context' (and not merely 'content' as knowledge about a culture) relating it to linguistic practice (how adequate linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour can be developed). On the other hand, Fichou is one of the first to contemplate cultural and societal relations, including linguistic varieties, of the target countries. (Risager 2007, 70.) Risager summarizes that the cultural educationalists mentioned above are characteristically interested in the target languages and the 'target language countries' and she claims there is an unspoken national paradigm of a political nature underlying the culture-pedagogical discourse of the 1970's (ibid.). Byram (1989, 3) and Kumaravadivelu (2001, 281) have called this 'the hidden curriculum' or the 'hidden agenda' that indirectly seeks to create empathy toward and appreciation for the target culture. Kelly (1966, in Kumaravadivelu 2001, 281), in his review of twenty-five centuries of language teaching, has pointed out

that the cultural orientation of language teaching has always been one of its unstated aims.

Since 1980's and 1990's, the more intercultural line of CLT manifested an increasing interest in teaching cultural differences in language use and in the use of the target language as a lingua franca (Risager 2007, 10). The emphasis on pragmatics and intercultural communication started a shift from the 'culture-specific' (the predominant view until then) towards the 'culture-general'. There was a growing interest in the psychological aspects of intercultural competence: the individual's ability to adapt and develop an awareness of cultural differences. Consequently, the nationalistically flavoured focus on the knowledge of the target language countries was toned down to a certain extent. (Risager 2007, 75.) Byram turns to American culture anthropology for a model of Cultural Studies pedagogy and chooses Geertz' (1973) conception of 'symbols and meanings' as the most appropriate one, considering it a welcome move from the behaviorist and quite static and monolithic view of culture as mere adaptation to existence in a particular society (Byram 1989, 43) towards more open systems where symbols and meanings circulate and change.

Byram conceived a model for Cultural Studies as part of FLT (consisting in skills-oriented language learning and knowledge-oriented cultural experience, both conducted in FL, and in language awareness and cultural awareness studies, with a comparative focus and conducted in L1) in which cultural awareness teaching shares with language awareness teaching a dual purpose of supporting language learning and extending general understanding of the nature of culture. Culturally, introducing L1 as a language of instruction was a major innovation in the days of CLT when the use of the target language only was required. Moreover, Byram is concerned with non-linguistic dimensions of culture and raises the question of the change from monocultural to intercultural competence. (Byram 1989, 139-142.) As his idea is heavily informed by ethnographic methods (Geertz 1973), he says that cultural awareness should involve the learner both as an 'ethnographer' as an 'informant' (Byram 1989, 142) to gain a comparative perspective and move away from ethnocentricity towards a recognition of other possible centres of ethnic identity (ibid. 137). It is important to note how Byram's model for language and culture teaching has become increasingly detached from the national language-and-culture paradigm - still dominating during the learner-centered era

- and how he has moved toward an interest in the intercultural competence (Byram 1997: *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*), which is more typical in recent culture-pedagogical discussion. Very much the same objectives have been expressed, as well, as critical cultural awareness in Kumaravadivelu's (2001) macrostrategies (2.3.)

Similarly, Kramsch (1993, 205) underlines that interculturality requires putting the foreign culture in relation with one's own, being simultaneously 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. Using a concept by de Certeu (1984 in Kramsch 1993, 237), she calls it the 'third place': a place of border crossing, disturbance, comparisons and broadening (ibid. 210). The third place can be viewed as an opportunity to construct new ways of viewing the world. More recently, the L2 User (Cook 2002) and the Multilingual Subject (Kramsch 2009a) perspectives, in many ways 'learner-centered', have offered enriching insights to how learners and teachers alike can cherish and enrich their 'identities', or their 'selves', as L2 users and multilingual subjecs.

Alongside the interpretive aspect, the visual aspect of cultural teaching was strengthened in the 1980's. This was due to the development of video technology, which made it possible to record materials from television and use them in teaching, bringing along a much more realistic and detailed mediation of situational contexts for language communication. It also provided opportunities to work with concrete, visible aspects of language, culture, society and environment: non-verbal communication (gestures, proxemics, etc.), clothing, interiors, street environments, landscapes, flora and fauna, etc. It was a development that benefited both the more surface-focused observation of culture and the meaning-oriented 'deeper' work on signs and semiotics. (Risager 2007, 73.) Easier access to materials would facilitate experiential culture teaching that was not only cognitive but also affective (Byram 1989, 98).

In manner of summary, during the emergence of the Learner Centered Methods there is a generalised discourse that language and culture are inseparable. This is reflected by the use of the 'marriage metaphor' (Risager 2007, 99) or by the frequent use of coinages like Linguaculture (Kramsch 1993) or Language-and-Culture (Byram 1994). The 'anthropological concept of culture', which Byram, among others, adopts, becomes a common reference, and with it arises the idea of the intercultural mission of FLT. The

anthropological concept of culture is still dominated by the holistic mode of thought with roots in the American cultural anthropology dating from the 1930's to the 1950's, but it is beginning to shift towards an interpretive and more dynamic approach represented by Geertz among others.

As seen before, there is another important culture-pedagogical tradition stemming from the European, and particularly the French tradition, the concept of 'civilisation'. It stresses the civilizing and humanizing task of language and culture pedagogy, now reinforced by sociolinguistic (for example Fichou 1973) and social-psychological (Byram 1989; Kramsch 1993) influences.

2.1.5. Learning Centered Methods

Learning-centered methods are principally concerned with cognitive processes of language learning. The methods have been so widespread in the ELT field that Johnson (2008, 184) suggests that the late 1990's and following will be known as the "Age of the Task". These methods (e.g., *The Natural Approach* by Krashen and Terrell, 1983/1988) seek to provide opportunities for learners to participate in open-ended meaningful interaction through communicative activities or problem-solving tasks in class, and they are largely based on Krashen's input hypothesis (1983) that states that the cause of L2 acquisition is input that is comprehensible or made comprehensible for the learner (Krashen and Terrell 1988, 32 -33; Swain 2000, 97). What is common to learning centered methods is the conviction that *meaning-making* will ultimately lead to grammatical as well as communicative mastery of the language and that learning takes place through interaction. In the context of the learning centered methods 'meaningful' (quite often left undefined) seems to stand for 'goal oriented' and 'relevant for learner needs'. Some socioculturally and ecologically oriented language and culture pedagogists such as Kramsch (1995) and van Lier (2000) have not continued using the term input or output as they consider that interaction is not merely processing information and providing opportunities to use the language. All social activity forms part of the learning environment (Swain 2000, 99), but it does not only *facilitate* learning: it *is* learning (van Lier 2000, 246). Perhaps the most important innovation brought along by this approach is that language development is considered more incidental than intentional. Language

learning is viewed as a nonlinear process, and therefore, instead of preselected, presequenced systematic language input it requires conditions in which learners can engage in meaningful activities in class. Language is believed to be learned best when learners are engaged in understanding, saying and doing something *with* language, and not when their attention is focused explicitly on linguistic features. (Kumaravadivelu 2001, 26-27; 2006, 91-92.)

One of the clearest learning centered methods, developed at roughly the same time as Krashen and Terrell's '*Natural Approach'* (1988), is Task-Based Teaching (TBT). It is still the most dominant method on the present language teaching arena. Prabhu (1987), in charge of an ELT project in Southern India, acknowledged that although CLT and notional/functional syllabi had added a valuable sociolinguistic dimension to language teaching, it was surprising how the structurally-based language teaching was failing to teach structures (Prabhu 1987, 14 - 15). Consequently he launched an experiment of task-based teaching often referred to as the Bangalore Project. Prabhu's answer to the 'learning question' was the striking and at the first sight paradoxical statement that the best way to teach structures ('form') was to concentrate on meaning or message ('content') (Prabhu 1987, 2, 115). Prabhu´s devised a syllabus of tasks – the 'procedural' syllabus – without any prescribed structural items. The idea is that whatever language is needed to complete the task will come up during the class, and over time the language content will be unconsciously absorbed (Johnson 2008, 181- 182; Prabhu 1987, 13 - 15).

The pendulum is close to the mentalistic end of the theoretical setting again. Teachers in TBT would model themselves on the Chomskyan 'caretakers' who softly guide the child, or the learner, through language acquisition avoiding practices like drilling and error correction (Johnson 2008, 182). Since language is acquired incidentally, as Kumaravadivelu would put it, and as comprehension precedes production - which is an important basis of the Natural Approach (ibid. 183; Krashen and Terrell 1988), production would 'emerge' in its own time. Krashen also introduces the concept of the 'affective filter' that needs to be lowered. Negative affective features (like anxiety) prevent the learner from being open to input and make it harder for acquisition to take place. (Johnson 2008, 183.) In collaborative FLT, as well as in the humanistic approaches (2.2.), it is considered fundamental to secure an environment where learners feel they

belong, where they can build up self-respect and where they are encouraged (Williams and Burden 1997, 35).

In spite of the large extension of the use of TBT in present time, there are still doubts about what exactly is meant by a task (Johnson 2008, 184). There seems to be little consensus about it. Johnson reports on the working definition offered by Wesche and Skehan (2002) partly based on Nunan (1989) on what a task in TBT should consist of. First of all, *meaning is primary* (even though form is not ignored). Secondly, there should be *a communication problem to solve*. Furthermore, there is *a relationship with real-world situations (*'things people really do'). The fourth characteristic is that *task completion has importance* (not doing them 'just because' or to practice language for a certain amount of time*).* Finally, *the task is assessed* in terms of on how adequately the task was solved (and not in relation to the language produced). (Johnson 2008, 185.) On the other hand, according to Willis's categorization in *A Framework for Task Based Teaching* (Willis 1996), tasks could range from activities as simple as writing lists or sorting and comparing to sharing personal experiences or getting involved in large scale projects, thus covering a range of already familiar classroom activities. Kumaravadivelu (2006, 96) remarks that the "task" is not a methodological construct but a curricular content and as such can be language-centered (grammar tasks), learner-centered (as in Nunan 1989) or learning-centered (for example Prabhu 1987). For a task to be learning-centered, it needs to engage the learner in negotiation for meaning (NfM), without explicit focus on form or function (Kumaravadivelu 2006, 96; Prabhu 1987, 23 -24).

Learning-centered methods are still closely connected to the ideas of 'meaningfulness' and now, more dynamically, to the processes of 'meaning-making', concepts that are at the heart of the present study, and fundamental to the theoretical positions we shall look at in Chapter 3: the interpretive anthropological view and the sociocultural approach which both are centered in the social construction of meaning. But next I shall turn to some of the cultural or culture-pedagogical implications of the learning centered approach.

2.1.6. Culture and Learning Centered Methods

Over the past 15 - 20 years, in culture teaching, the tendency has been the same as in pedagogy in general: the focus has moved from the 'content' (the 'necessary cultural knowledge') first to the individual learner characteristics and motivations, and then to the learning processes. In culture pedagogy, there has been a growing interest in the development of the consciousness and personality of individual learners both in connection with foreign cultures as in relation to their own cultural backgrounds. The emphasis has been on comparing cultures and reflecting on and understanding 'the other'. On the other hand, such concepts as intercultural competence and the intercultural speaker have gathered strength with attention being paid to what it takes to be able to mediate between various languages and various cultural contexts. (Byram 1989, 51; Risager 2007, 9-10.) In this context, the foreign language classroom has been considered to be a privileged site for 'global education' based on an awareness of multiculturality that quite often starts in the individual school class (Byram 1989, 51; Kramsch 1993, 29; 2009b, 210; Moskowitz 1978, 16; Risager 2007, 9-10, 125). Risager (2007, 74) notes that in general there is a move towards a more practice-oriented and 'dynamic' conception of culture, instead the previous more 'essentialist' or systemic views. There is a strong influence of models of language which had resisted segregation between language and culture, particularly the Russian cultural-historical tradition (Leontiev 1981 in Lantolf and Thorne 2006, 6; Vygotsky 1962 and 1978) and the dialogic views (Bakhtin and Wittgenstein). All of them oppose to the concept of language as a system that could be considered in abstraction from its actual employment in concrete goal-directed activities.

The need for global education was hastened by the European process of integration and the postcolonial societies' growing visibility on the world stage. Consequently, the geographical horizon of culture pedagogy widened from the 1980's not focusing solely on the most central target-language countries – which, in the case of ELT, had traditionally been the UK and the USA. Now countries like Ireland, Canada, Australia, India, and the English-speaking Africa found their way to the ELT map (Risager 2007, 76). Risager (ibid.) reports also on new international and global topics being included in teaching materials: colonialism and post- and neo-colonialism, global environmental issues and the arms race.

The 1990's were strongly characterised by internationalisation. FLT was promoted by an increased study travel, exchange programmes, and also by the explosion within information technology including the Internet. These developments led to increasing transnational personal contacts: there were greater opportunities of meeting students from other countries, either via student exchanges and trips (especially in Europe), or by e-mail, etc. Teaching of culture tended to become more oriented towards experienced culture and personal cultural encounters (Risager 2007, 105), thus emphasizing the interactive character of language learning. We can also see a growing recognition that learning does not only take place within the limited time and space of the language classroom, and the autonomous aspects and 'informal' contexts of foreign language learning receive more attention (Benson and Voller, 1997).

In TBT, the most dominant learning centered method, the foreign language is both an object of study as well as the medium of the instruction and the completion of the tasks. Byram (1989, 51) proposes language should not only be used in problem-solving, but as a medium of learning about the cultures associated with the cultures. In this line there have been several proposals. Among them, Crawford-Lange and Lange (as early as in 1984 as cited in Risager 2007, 74) emphasise that "culture is in the process of becoming and should therefore be taught as a process", and they offer practical suggestions for linguistic and cultural learning to be integrated in a theme- and problem-oriented programme in which students are guided through phases in connection with a cultural or societal theme and encouraged to engage in critical discussions around the theme (following the dialogic pedagogical ideas of Freire dating from 1972). They also claim that FLT that tackles cultural content in such a way will be well suited for 'global education' understood as an awareness of multiculturality in the world and in the individual school class, and argue that this should strongly influence all subjects at school. (Risager 2007, 74.) As said before (2.1.4.), also Byram's (1989, 51) fundamental claim is that FLT improves intercultural relationships.

We should notice, though, how the very definitions of the task, as seen above (Wesche and Skehan 2002 and Nunan 1989 in Johnson 2008, 184) have prevailed 'Western' and culturally embedded. They prioritize such value laden assumptions as interaction in unhierarchical Anglo-Saxon manner (a common inheritance of all CLT), the importance

in the completion of a clearly set 'task' in an efficient (and probably time-saving) manner, assessment in regards how well the job was done. In short, task-based language learning sounds like serious business, as it usually shows a heavy reliance on reasoning (the dominating overtone also in Prabhu 1987) and quite often is rationally and mathematically oriented (Brumfit 1984, 105), thus neglecting opportunities being created for more subtle and subjective, or perhaps more artistic and playful activities in class.

Risager (2007, 101) reminds that the predominant idea in culture pedagogy still has to do with the thematic content of language teaching. The scope of the possible themes, though, is widened due to the developments mentioned above, and also thanks to the psycholinguistically influenced recognition of the students' own qualifications and experiences: their knowledge of their own countries, their perceptions of themselves, their national identities (ibid.).

Many culture pedagogists present a partial break in their concept of the relationship between language and culture. Risager (2007, 121) remarks that Byram (1997) moves toward a view of a culture that is less system-oriented. Byram still writes about 'cultural beliefs, behaviours and meanings' (Byram 1997, 12), but otherwise refrains from discussing or defining the concept of culture in anthropological terms. In the 90's and more recently, he presents a view of culture that is more practice-oriented. He warns about presenting '*a* culture' as if it were unchanging over time or as if there were only one set of beliefs, meanings and behaviours in each country and remarks that "we should not think in terms of encounters between different language and culture systems, but rather of encounters between individuals with their own meanings…" (Byram 1997, 39 - 40). This view is close to Kramsch's (2009) vision of subject positions that are by definition intersubjective.

Alastair Pennycook (1997, 1998) and more recently Hilary Janks (2007) have written about the cultural-political role of the English language and about how to teach English in a critical pedagogical way from a postcolonial perspective. More recently, Pennycook (2007) has focused on the concept of culture as 'transcultural flows' in a dynamic scenario much less limited to national identifications or geographic locations.

To conclude, from the 1990's onwards, while the dominant FLT methodologies have focused on the learning processes, the concept of culture in relation to language teaching has become less systemic and more dynamic. The need for intercultural learning has become widely recognised, and most culture pedagogic theorists have dealt with intercultural issues and learning processes that could bridge cultural differences. Risager (2007, 138) divides the cultural side of language teaching in three main domains: the content, the context and the poetics. She says that from the 1990's on, we can observe a certain weakening of the first, and a growth of the other two dimensions. Risager (ibid.) claims that the contextual orientation is represented by Kramsch and, in part, by Byram. The content dimension is still defended by Byram. For him language teaching is, among other things, developing an explicit knowledge about the target-language countries and perhaps also about the larger global context. His concept of intercultural competence (Byram 1989) implies knowledge of nationally-bound self-understandings, including the learners' own national identities. Kramsch (1993, 2009), on the other hand, does not feel that a cohesive knowledge of the world should be attempted in the context of the FL class: the aim of language teaching is first and foremost to interpret texts, and not least literary texts, and develop a multilingual personality – no matter the thematic content. She also criticises the idea of, for example, forming a general link between the 'the German Language' and any 'German language community'. Risager's position is to argue for the importance of the content dimension, while she also promotes a general non-structuralist understanding of language and culture. (Risager 2007, 138.) With a language and culture pedagogy focused on learning processes we can also observe a growing interest in the individual learners' construction of multicultural or multilingual identities. Byram (1997) along with Seelye and Fichou (in Risager 2007, 98) are some of the few culture pedagogues who have taken an interest in sociolinguistics, dealing with language variation and language identity. As mentioned before, Byram is also well aware of the fact that students already have a first language that can be made use of in FLT, especially in developing language awareness and cultural awareness.

The concept of culture in learning-centered FLT shows a growing recognition of meaning-making as our central cultural activity. It also embeds language and culture learning more firmly in the context of concrete and goal-oriented social interaction. This is particularly important in the Vygostkyan sociocultural theory (Chapter 3.2.) which is, also, a view that allows giving space to the subjective and aesthetic aspects in foreign

language learning and teaching. In culture pedagogy we can observe a concern with individual and unique learner characteristics, which is not new in the FLT scene, though. For that reason we shall return to the Humanistic approaches.

2.2. Humanistic Approaches

'Humanistic approaches' emerged in the late 1960's and the 1970's within the larger framework of the CLT. Linguistically and pedagogically, the motives were the same: a revision of the grammar-translation and the audio-linguistic methods was needed, and the overall move in social sciences from behaviourist and structuralist viewpoints towards cognitivism and Generative Grammar (Chomsky 1957; 1965 in Johnson 2008, 42 - 53) was taking place. As we have seen above, previous methods had produced "structurally competent but communicatively incompetent learners" (Johnson 2008, 174). Everything to do with the L2 learner was gathering importance: the learner potential (inspiration was found in Chomsky's 'Language Acquisition Device'), the learner's processing the input and responding to it through cognitive processes (e.g. Krashen and Terrell 1983, 1, 19-20), and individual learner characteristics and responses (e.g. Dörnyei, 2005; Kohonen 1992, 17, 23). In this changing theoretical-methodological climate learners were now "discovered" to be different from each other and to react differently to the same stimuli.

Humanistic L2 teachers looked for solutions for learning in a wider framework, and found it in the concept of Humanism. It poured most directly from 'humanistic psychology' or the 'human potential movement' with such founding fathers as Carl Rogers (*Client-Centered Therapy*, 1951; *On Becoming a Person*, 1970) and Abraham Maslow (*Motivation and Personality*, 1950; *Toward a Psychology of Being*, 1962). Humanistic education, just like the human potential movement, was concerned with the 'whole' person. (Brown 1980, 76; Brumfit 1985, 79; Johnson 2008, 179; Moskowitz 1978, 11-12; Stevick 1990, 29-30; Williams and Burden 1997, 33-35.) Mind, body, emotions were conceived to be involved in the learning process, and only that – it is assumed – would make learning meaningful (Stevick 1990, 32). 'Meaningful', in the humanistic context, implies certain 'depth': "If what a student says makes little or no difference to him, it has little 'depth'" (Stevick 1980, 9). If there is 'depth', there is more energy from the learner's 'world of meaningful action' (ibid.). In more recent terms,

perhaps, we would say the learner 'invests' (e.g. van Lier 2000) more in his or her learning. The humanistic approaches underline the role of feelings, the value of self-discovery and the need for a construction of a positive self-concept in all learning. The context of learning should be nonthreatening and communication genuine to lower learners' anxiety and help them remain open and without defensiveness or resistance (which Krashen and Terrell 1983, 19-20, call 'affective filter') to learn. Instead of a FL 'class', there is a 'group' where nurturing interpersonal relations matter. If the affective side is attended, learning can be expected to be more effective, pervading and lasting. (Brown 1980, 76 - 78; Kohonen 1992, 15, 23; Moskowitz 1978, 14; Stevick 1990, 26; Williams and Burden 1997, 35.) Brown (1980, 77) asserts: "If the context of learning is properly created, human beings will learn." I think that the Humanistic teaching's spirit is quite well summarized by Curran's (1972), Community Language Learning's creator's maxim: "Learning is persons" (in Stevick 1990, 91).

Within the larger societal and political stage of the 1960's and the 1970's discussed before (2.1.4.), there was a "concern with the fulfilment of human potentialities and the democratic ideal of humanity as a whole", as Stevick (1990, 23) quotes Paul Kurtz (1973), another leading figure of the human potential movement. The Humanistic goals are boldly optimistic: if we, though integrating body, mind and emotions create 'harmony' with ourselves, we should be able to achieve greater degrees of harmony within small groups, whole cultures and the world at large (ibid. 32). The FL classroom, it is said, is the privileged site that offers opportunities for experiencing such integration, seldom found in other parts of the curriculum (Byram 1989, 51; Kramsch 2009, 210; Moskowitz 1978, 16; Risager 2007, 9-10, 125).

Humanistic approaches traditionally give a lot of importance to artistic involvement as part of holistic classroom work, and understand culture in language teaching in a wide humanizing frame-work. I also find art to be an essential asset in language teaching as it gives expression and symbolic forms to the sociocultural worlds the learners and the teachers are all immersed in, and I shall discuss the point in more length in Chapter 4. With the target-group of the present package, in adolescence, identity and self-acceptance – being optimistic and firm in one'a belief of being in control of one's own destiny – are particularly important issues, and I consider that promoting artistic exploration of 'oneself' together with the chance to share with 'others' should be a natural part of their

formation. It is important to help them express their individuality in constructive ways and to take decisions for themselves (Williams and Burden 1997, 32).

Some of the most sounded humanistic methods are the Discovery Learning (based on the work of Jeremy Bruner in 1960s), the Silent Way (Caleb Cattegno), Total Physical Response (James Asher 1977), Suggestopedia (Lozanov 1979) and the method most directly modeled on psychotherapy (Rogers 1951 and 1970): Community Language Learning or Counseling Learning (Curran 1972). (Brown 1980, 116 - 117; Johnson 2008, 179 - 181.) Johnson (2008, 181) places 'Dogme' (Meddings and Thornbury 2009) among the Humanistic proposals as well: it is a "movement away from an over-reliance on materials and technical wizardy in current language teaching" (Meddings and Thornbury 2009, 6). Learning is viewed as emerging from the here-and-now while the teacher focuses on the actual learners and the content that is relevant to them. Like most humanistically spirited FLT Dogme is conversation-driven, materials-light, and it focuses on emergent language (ibid.). Dogme has served as an inspiration for the present material package as well, and I have found it connected with many of the theoretical or ideological standpoints I have considered central to my work. It is also 'post-method' (2.3.) and 'ecological' (3.2.) in tone construing 'input' in terms of 'affordances', and it is dialogic and sociolinguistically sensitive in line with Freire's (1972) critical pedagogy (Meddings and Thornbury 2009, 7). For a more comprehensive view of these Humanistic methods, or Designer Methods - as they are sometimes called - one can resort to Brown (1994, 55 - 66) and Stevick's books *A Way and Ways* (1980) and *Humanism in Language Teaching* (1990) with detailed treatments of the Silent Way, Counseling-Learning and Suggestopedia. Rovasalo (2008) explores in her Master´s thesis the 'eclectic' uses of suggestopedia to promote oral skills within a humanistic and cooperative framework. For a more recent vision of these and many other methods there is Larsen-Freeman's and Anderson's book *Techniques & Principles in Language Teaching* (2011).

Johnson (2008, 180) remarks that, in fact, Humanistic methods contain many traditional overtones such as grammar-based and structural syllabuses and a strict teacher control over the input and classroom procedures. I see this to be the case particularly with the Silent Way and, to some extent, with Suggestopedia. Brown (1980, 77) and Humanistic language teachers such as Moscowitz (1978, 34) and Stevick (1990, 26) emphasize, though, the importance of the changing role of the Humanistic teacher who steps aside,

centers on the learner, and functions more as a facilitator conveying warmth and empathy in a relationship of trust. On the other hand, it seems to have been characteristic of Humanistic language teaching that there is a greater concern with the principles than with the actual techniques (Stevick 1990, 63) that might not fulfil the norms considered central in CLT.

Much of the literature of the time (for example Brown 1980, Moskowitz 1978, Stevick 1980) around the humanistic ELT is either extremely enthusiastic about the virtues and the benefits of the approach, and others are overtly skeptical about it. Widdowson (1990, 13) for instance, making allusion to Moskowitz's humanistic classic *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Classroom* (1978), wonders whether linking hands and caring and sharing is as effective a technique of ELT in Thailand and in Tanzania as it might be in Southern California. Such feasting with individuality might be a culturally defined and particularly Western focus, as Pennycook (1997, 39-40) suggests. Widdowson (1990, 13) reminds it depends on the cultural context of the educational settings whether a method encourages learning or creates problems. Others have been uneasy about the humanistically oriented teachers' common reference to FLT as potentially "therapeutic" (Brumfit 1982 in Stevick 1990, 66; Brumfit 1985, 82 - 83; Swan 2009, 134). Swan (ibid.) states that instructional efficiency should remain the language teacher's main concern (ibid. 125). Kumaravadivelu (2006, 94) deems that humanistic "nonmethods" lack theoretical substance, even though he recognizes that some of them as classroom procedures, are "highly innovative". Furthermore, he considers that humanistic language teaching is far too sensitive about the "emotional struggle to cope with the challenges of language learning" (2006, 92). In humanistically oriented literature, I have found more references made towards learner potential rather than learner incapacity to face challenges language learning imposes on learners, even though "keeping the emotional filter" low and handling anxiety and learner fears is an important issue in all psychologically informed FLT (Williams and Burden 1997, 35, 202, 206) I find Kumaravadivelu's scepticism about humanistic contributions to ELT surprising considering that many of the basic assumptions of the humanistic approaches are quite close to those of Kumaravadivelu's 'post-method pedagogy', to which we shall return in the following chapter.

It is thought-provoking to observe how much opposition humanistic teaching has encountered in applied linguistics. The most common argument is that there is little relation to any theory of language and little rigor in terms of methodology or syllabus design (Kumaravadivelu 2006, 94). I suspect that the rejection also has to do with a wider, and stronger, bias deeply rooted in Western thinking and academic practice: the tendency to assume and act according to a set of deeply embedded dichotomies. One of the strongest is separating, explicitly since Descartes, the mind from the body (Damasio 1994 in Kramsch 2009, 66; Johnson M., 2007, 4). Together with that division, reason is separated from emotion, thought from feeling, and it is needless to say that the (disembodied) 'mind', 'reason' and 'thought' are valued higher. Humanistic teaching stresses the importance of a holistic conception of humanity, learning and the learner. A conception like that necessarily considers the presence of the 'body', not only the abstract (and disembodied) 'mind'. M. Johnson (ibid. 1) notes that the denial of the mind/body dualism is still a provocative claim in public consciousness, and it is often found even threatening. Against such general academic and cultural climate, Humanistic approaches - that value the body, the feelings, the aesthetics and the arts - would easily arouse suspicion and even rejection. I will return to this point in Chapter 5 (*Our Culturally Embodied Minds*) because I consider it is central for a conception about the construction of meanings that does not overlook, as is so often the case, the importance of the aesthetic and the bodily spheres.

Culture pedagogy as part of FLT has always had a more holistic view of language learning, as it has seen language learner as someone who also develops other facets of the personality – especially a greater knowledge and understanding of the world. Risager (2007, 7) notes that, with different points of departure in humanities and/or social sciences, linguistics and sociolinguistics, language and culture pedagogy in general could be conceived as a corrective to the traditionally one-sided linguistic focus of FLT. Thus culture pedagogy, which I have reviewed alongside the methodological discussion, could in Risager's (ibid.) opinion be described as a "particular version of humanistic tendencies within language teaching – a version that is relatively cognitive in its orientation". She mentions Brooks (1968) as the one with the most every day - oriented, learner-centered view of the teaching of culture, interestingly drawing attention to both more and less visible and implicit aspects of everyday culture, including non-verbal communication (Risager 2007, 35). In terms of 'culture' as 'classroom context', Stevick (1990, 28-29)

distinguishes two trends in the humanistically oriented FLT: the 'unity-enforcing' one emphasizes a "shared stock of knowledge, insights, and manners" and the 'diversity-loving' one encourages unlikeness, individuality and multiplicity.

In regard to 'meaningful content' Moskowitz (1978, 12) remarks: "Traditionally education has poured the content into the student. Affective education draws it out of the student". The question of meaningful content is central to all of the views that emphasize the role of interaction (collaborative and cooperative learning, dialogism, the sociocultural language teaching theory, the ecological perspectives, Dogme). They have made the point about the weight of the social sphere in the learning of foreign languages. Anyhow, when we focus long enough on one aspect, some other might turn blurry or be overlooked. This has been the case, for example, with the otherwise welcome and necessary insistence on realistic communicative contexts inherited from CLT which made us forget that language is not there only to satisfy communicative needs. This is why I think that the humanistic approaches remind us in the FLT field in a very balancing and healthy manner about the importance of the more subtle aspects of language learning: the uniqueness of language learners, teachers and learning environments, inviting us to play with language, to be creative and artistic and not necessarily always bear the demands of the "real world" in mind.

In this sense, Sullivan (2000, 117) underlines the importance of considering the historical, cultural and institutional contexts of the world outside the classroom setting. In a sociocultural and ecological approach, it is a starting point that classroom practices are situated in particular environments. She reminds how ELT methodology is deeply associated with an Anglo-Saxon view of communication (Phillipson 1992; Pennycook 1994) which at the moment emphasizes the importance of authentic materials, informal learning, interaction, and learner and content-centered foci. It is also part and parcel of CLT methodology to celebrate individuality (and everything that comes with it: choice, autonomy, freedom, equality), learning as 'work' (teamwork, collaboration, co-construction, task-based learning), information exchange and technology and everything that is "real" or "realistic" ("real information about real events", "real tasks that relate to the real world".) (Sullivan 2000, 119 - 120.) As an English teacher in Vietnam she has learned to value "group harmony" (without dividing the totality of the group in teams) capable of bringing forth surrealistic collective narratives, benefit her teaching from a

more hierarchical conception of relationships and, importantly, broaden the scope of communicative classroom work with spontaneous language play as an aspect of language learning (ibid. 122). Her work is an example of humanistically influenced ELT in a context and culture sensitive manner.

I also think it is a cultural implication - in relation to how 'meanings' are constructed - that the Humanistic FLT gives space to the emotional (Williams and Burden 1997, 30), intuitive (Cattegno 1987 in Stevick 1990, 116) and the 'irrational' side of the language learners (Stevick 1990, 67) and not only through the different dynamics modeled on psychotherapeutic work. As it considers bodily and artistic activities and aesthetic appreciation (ibid. 23) as valuable contexts for language learning, it enriches the scope of possible 'allowances' in an era which, in my opinion, has conceived 'relevance' and 'meaning' rather narrowly. These aspects are often neglected in formal educational settings, even though emotions, and our inner - and bodily - subjective worlds, are vitally important for understanding human learning. Damasio (1994 in Kramsch 2009, 66) demonstrates, through case studies of people with brain damage, that cognition is embodied, and that rational cognition, judgment and moral value, usually associated with the brain, could not exist without emotions, usually associated with the body. Emotions guide us in our decision on what information we select and which direction we should take.

Whenever the students' needs and responses are the main concern in FLT classroom – and I think they should be at all times, whatever the theoretical or methodological viewpoint used – there are good reasons for reconsidering humanistic approaches to teaching, context-sensitively, of course. Rather than following this or that method, the humanistic proposals have several important messages for the teacher to enhance positive holistic development of the learners that goes beyond foreign language skills (Williams and Burden 1997, 38). One of the humanistic growth-promoting maxims is the recognition of each individual's search for personal meaning in the learning process. By encouraging the use of art and creative means to construct and express meaning we are manipulating multiple symbolic tools, not only language, thus broadening the scope of alternatives.

2.3. The "Post-Method Condition" and its Critique

Kumaravadivelu (2001, 2006) brings up Dick Allwrights's provoking plenary talk in 1991 where he announced "the Death of the Method" (in Kumaravadivelu 2006, 168) to advocate the need of FLT to move beyond the "limited and limiting concept of method" (Kumaravadivelu 2001, 2) towards a Post-Method Era. Kumaravadivelu claims that, particularly in the field of education, there is no substantial difference between common sense and theory (Cameron et al. 1992 in Kumaravadivelu 2001, 18) and sees that the harmful and artificial division of the two in the FLT field has created a privileged class of theorists and an underprivileged class of practitioners. Kumaravadivelu (ibid. 20) proposes that theory and practice should inform each other in the "teachers' theory of practice", which, in addition to speculative theory and empirical research, values the experiential knowledge of practicing teachers. Furthermore, he reports that many teachers are overwhelmed and dissatisfied (ibid. 29-32) by methodological overlapping, and each new method presented "with the fresh paint of new terminology that camouflages their fundamental similarity" (Rivers in Kumaravadivelu 2001, 24). It is true that Kumaravadivelu is not alone: Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011, xii-xiv) report on several critical views about how methods have been applied in FLT field. For example, Brumfit (1984) and Stevick (1990), in the learner-centered and Humanistic spirit, have stressed the role of interpersonal relationships - instead of methods as such - in encouraging learning. Pennycook (1997, 1998) criticizes the "colonizing" tradition of implementing methods whether they are appropriate or not for the local conditions. Prabhu (1990) says there is no such thing as the best method. Long (1991) draws from research that teachers do not really think about methods while planning their classes. Katz (1996) sees little connection between methods used as labels and what really goes on in the classrooms. Hinkel (2006) calls for more situationally relevant language pedagogy particularly in relation to culture.

In a very humanistic tone, and apparently influenced by Rogers (e.g. 1951, 1970), Kumaravadivelu reminds that teachers as well "attempt to become self-directed individuals" (Kumaravadivelu 2001, 4). Their role has changed from the "passive technicians" through the "reflective practitioners" towards the "transformative intellectuals" (ibid. 10), very much in the sense represented by Paulo Freire (1972) and Critical Pedagogy (e.g. Janks 2010). Freirean Critical Pedagogy underlines that any

classroom reality is socially constructed and historically determined, and any pedagogy is embedded in relations of power and dominance employed to create and sustain social inequalities. So, what is required is a pedagogy that empowers teachers and learners to transform these conditions. (Freire 1972 in Kumaravadivelu 2001, 13.) In more practical terms, Kumaravadivelu (ibid.) remarks that such pedagogy would take seriously the lived experiences that teachers and learners alike bring to the classroom. 'Post-method pedagogy' stresses the importance of going beyond the borders of the classroom, thus suggesting that learning, as transformative action, takes place both in and out the classroom (Kumaravadivelu 2001, 14). This happens through consciousness-raising and problem-*posing* (not simply 'solving', as in TBT) activities, in which teachers' and students' needs, wants, and situations are taken into account (ibid). This critical-pedagogic but also humanistic overtone becomes clearer when Kumaravadivelu (ibid. 14-15) uses a summary by Joe Kincheloe (1993) to describe transformative teaching. It cultivates self-directed enquiry, social contextualization, is committed to world-making in social interaction, promotes ownership of learners' own education and sensitivity toward linguistic and cultural diversity, and is committed to designing plans of action. It also values improvisation as a recognition of the uncertain (in terms of lesson plans and procedures), is interested in the words, concerns and experiences of the students, encourages self- and social reflection, and is concerned with the affective dimension of human beings.

Against this background, in *Macro-Strategies for Language Teaching* (2001) Kumaravadivelu offers a pedagogical framework derived from theoretical, empirical and experiential knowledge of L2 learning, teaching and teacher education to empower teachers to devise their own "relevant theories of practice". The macro-strategies are the following (Kumaravadivelu 2001, 39):

1. *Maximize learning opportunities*: Envisage teaching as a process of creating and utilizing learning opportunities, a process in which teachers strike a balance between their role as managers of teaching acts and their role as mediators of learning acts;

2. *Minimize perceptual mismatches*: Recognize potential perceptual mismatches between intentions and interpretations of the learner, the teacher, and the teacher educator;

3. *Facilitate negotiated interaction*: Meaningful learner-learner, learner-teacher classroom interaction in which learners are entitled and encouraged to initiate topic and talk, not just react and respond;

4. *Promote learner autonomy*: Help learners learn how to learn, equipping them with the means necessary to self-direct and self-monitor their own learning;

5. *Foster language awareness*: Draw learners' attention to the formal and functional properties of their L2 in order to increase the degree of explicitness required to promote L2 learning;

6. *Activate intuitive heuristics*: Provide rich textual data so that learners can infer and internalize underlying rules governing grammatical usage and communicative use;

7. *Contextualize linguistic input*: Highlight how language usage and use are shaped by linguistic, extralinguistic, situational, and extrasituational contexts;

8. *Integrate language skills*: Integrate language skills traditionally separated and sequenced as listening, speaking, reading, and writing;

9. *Ensure social relevance*: Be sensitive to the societal, political, economic, and educational environment in which L2 learning and teaching take place; and

10. *Raise cultural consciousness*: Treat learners as cultural informants so that they are encouraged to engage in a process of classroom participation that puts a premium on their power/knowledge.

Among the most interesting aspects of the macro strategies is the changing and, at the same time, very demanding role given to the teacher. Apart from being the traditional language and teaching experts as many of the macro-strategies denote (e.g. 1, 2, 5), they also are course (8) and material (6, 7) designers, learner-centered and communicative facilitators (1, 3, 4, 6, 10), expected to be sociolinguistically (9) and culturally (10) sensitive and informed agents in empowering the learners in their own learning processes. Kumaravadivelu, in 'abandoning' methods seems to have gathered many of them uneder the concept of the Post-Method Condition, combining language, learner and learning centered approaches. 'Culture' (10), apparently, is understood as 'knowledge', with a focus common in much of the learning centered culture pedagogy that recognizes and values the local sphere and the learners' own cultural identities. In contrast with the humanistic teaching, there is little emphasis on art, emotion, or involving the body. It seems like a very rational approach. Learners are considered 'cultural informants' which denotes ethnographic and anthropological influences in Kumaravadivelu's conception of 'culture'. Furthermore, his vision of culture does not disregard power relations: Post-Method thinking underlines their importance.

Alarmed by the discontent to do with methods as well, Vivian Cook and Li Wei (2009, 3) suggest that Applied Linguistics has drifted too far from its most central fields of study. They (ibid.) refer to Brumfit (1995) defining those principal tasks as "the theoretical and

empirical investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue". Some scholars are worried to find linguistics playing a lesser role within applied linguistics, whether in terms of current linguistic theory or descriptive tools. With the exception of Chomsky, linguistic theory has been hardly mentioned during the last twenty years, while theories originating from postmodernism, psychology and sociology have fed the applied linguistic research. (Cook and Wei 2009, 3.) According to Cook and Wei, applied linguists should place language in the centre of the research and offer solutions to language-related problems in the world of the real language users and, particularly, in language teaching. There is no place for it if there is no language content, or if language elements are handled without a theory of language (coming from the field of linguistics or elsewhere), or if the research base is not directly concerned with language teaching. They warn about applying theory from outside the language teaching field without showing a clear chain of logic demonstrating how and why it is relevant. (Ibid. 5.)

Likewise, Swan (2009, 124) appeals for applied linguists "to look at language itself": if their specific aim is teaching language, it should not be displaced by a focus on activities which may or may not constitute effective means of achieving these aims. The boost, he says, comes from CLT with its emphasis on language in use - diverting the attention from the linguistic centre - and from post-method views which tend to discourage concern with methodology. Both have increased interest in matters that for Swan are "peripheral" to teaching language itself. Among these he lists matters like learner characteristics and perceptions, societal needs, cultural contexts, economic imperatives, learner autonomy as well as teacher cognition, self-fulfillment and personal development. He agrees that language teaching is not only teaching language but says it should remain the "central business". (Swan 2009, 124- 125.)

It is a common claim that, from an ideological point of view, language-teaching methodology is, and must be allowed to be, neutral (Swan 2009, 128). Swan (ibid. 119) points at Kumaravadivelu'a macrostrategies as a whole instructional embodiment in favour of negotiated interaction, learner autonomy, intuitive heuristics, social relevance and the raising of cultural consciousness. On the other hand, he reminds, they have little to say about linguistic in-put, the organization of in-put materials into progressive syllabuses, the role of practice, the value of memorization, and the need for teachers to know grammar, phonology and lexis of the languages they are teaching (Swan 2009,

120). He observes the methodological discussion becoming ideologically coloured, usually glorifying "the applied linguistic equivalents of democracy and motherhood" (which include 'learner-centered', 'meaning-based', 'holistic', 'process', 'interaction', 'negotiation' and 'strategy'), and rejecting "undesirable" practices or attitudes (such as 'teacher-dominated', 'form-based', 'discrete', 'sentence-level', 'product', 'memorization', 'repetition', 'drill'). (Swan 2009, 122.) Pennycook (1997, 39) as well, from a different perspective, warns about the 'unquestionably desirable goals' within language education that, backed by dominant beliefs in liberal-individualistic and progressive education, claim a moral high ground. Both alert about biases taken for granted, such as many of the assertions about CLT ('meaning should be prioritized over form', 'natural language acquisition') which are not based on empirical evidence as to their efficacy in FLT (Swan 2009, 132) and which tend to be applied regardless of the social and cultural contexts of learning (Pennycook 1997, 40, 44). The failure to bring students close to a native-speaker level of accuracy has caused FLT to throw out methods and replace them by new promising looking ones, even though their "value should be judged solely by their efficacy". (Swan 2009, 132.) Therefore Swan regards macrostrategies as ideological in nature: they are all about what ought to work, what is right, what is self-evident, what is believed to be psychologically or sociologically desirable (Swan 2009, 123).

I do not think there is such a thing as ideological neutrality even in an activity apparently as innocently mechanistic as is Swan's conception of language teaching (according to him, quite often comparable to teaching how to ski or how to drive). Many of our choices, or the choices made for us – starting from the selection of the languages to be learned – are ideologically biased. Even the decision to demand ideological neutrality is ideologically informed; or, as Kramsch (2000b, 337) puts it, choosing which 'voices' we reinsribe into our own is a political act. And so is, of course, the choice of contents, of theoretical frameworks, methods and classroom procedures. I agree with Swan in that methods have their application, whatever their drawbacks and limitations. We should find the ends for which each existing method is most suitable. For example, learning through interaction or communicative tasks is certainly relevant to cover some aspects of language learning; for some other, it is not more helpful than for teaching skiing, driving or math. "Interaction is inefficient to learn the grammar of relative clauses", Swan (2009, 128) asserts. But it is quite appropriate, for example, when promoting the speaking skill

and fluency, or when we seek to experience language as part of the overall symbolic world - that is, 'culture' - we are all immersed in. Anyhow, it seems to me that Swan conceives 'interaction' quite narrowly to be only 'classroom talk', and overlooks the fact that 'Grammar' in itself is not something we need to master to speak a language (about the history of descriptive grammar in FLT: van Lier 2002, 159-160) . Going back to the common dichotomies, it is not a new idea that we should find a balance between form and content, accuracy and fluency, knowledge and skills (Nunan 1998 in Swan 2009, 124). We are back to the methodological pendulum observing it sway between the ends of the form and the meaning, control and freedom, imitation and expression, knowledge and skill. Swan, among others, emphasizes one end; post method thinking, among others, the other end.

I think that some of Swan's criticism is valid. Communicative language teaching and task based learning presuppose a prior knowledge of some language (Cook and Wei 2009, 7). "To exploit something it has to be there in the first place" (ibid.). This is also the case with regard to the material package included in the present work. For the basic knowledge base to be "fixed" in long-term memory there is a need for material that is carefully selected, presented and made available for the FL learners; courses need their "architecture". Only after that the interpersonal dynamics or other instructional situations can be exploited to the best advantage, or the material adapted according to the individual differences and local conditions (Swan 2008, 127.) Swan considers that the choice of input material is crucial, as "languages are vast and time is limited" (ibid. 124) and defends the course book as the most important vehicle of selection and presentation (Swan 2008, 131). On the other hand, there is no reason to assume that a FL could not also be learned – or the language learning process reinforced - by exposure to incidental "chunks", without systematic form-focus or a carefully graded course plan. Variety in methods enriches our teaching, and some methodologies suit certain teachers and learners better than others. I think the best "final" results are obtained when we combine focuses (language, learner, learning; collaborative and individual; inductive and deductive etc). The central claim of the present work is that one of the possible ways to integrate different foci is using art and emphasizing an aesthetic vision of meaning making in FLT, a point to which I shall return in Chapter 4.

Finally, we do need methods because the acquaintance with them helps teacher-trainees and practicing teachers to socialize into professional thinking and gives them tools for "naming the experience", as Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011, xi-xii) say in their recent text-book on language teaching methodology. Interestingly, instead of pointing out the drawbacks of each method – or un-method as Kumaravadivelu would call some of them – and playing the 'doubting-game', which is the most institutionalized procedure we are all familiar with in the academic sphere, these authors prefer to play the 'believing-game'. The believing game is based on a view that knowledge is an act of constructing, an act of investment and of involvement. It is rather like putting on the eyeglasses of another person, seeing methods as their originators saw them, attempting to understand before judging (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson 2011, 6 - 8).

It is interesting to observe the discussion about the changing role of the teacher. The CLT, humanistic approaches, TBT and the collaborative, interactional and dialogic models have all added ingredients to the model of the FL teacher. Kumaravadivelu's post-method pedagogy places a huge responsibility on the teacher's shoulders. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011, x) coincide with Kumaravadivelu (2006) in regarding new teachers as theory-builders. In the traditional role, the teacher applies theory to practice, more recently they are expected to be able to theorize their own practice (Kumaravadivelu 2006). Swan would clearly rather continue having the teachers apply courses that material design experts have produced making use of recent research in applied linguistics and related fields, and of course, relying on the long methodological tradition of accumulated experience. But at the end, any method is going to be shaped by a teacher's own understanding, beliefs, style, and level of experience (Brumfit 1985, 84). You will never find a method in a 'pure' state: they are given new lives in the hands of textbook writers, and specially, practicing teachers.

Another evident need, and a cultural implication of the post-method discussion, is the increasing contextualization in the use of the methods. Widdowson (2004, in Larsen-Freeman and Anderson 2011, xiv) observes that what we need is not so much a universal solution, but rather, a shift to localization, in which pedagogic practices are designed in relation to local contexts, needs and objectives. It is one of Pennycook's (1997, 48) basic tenets, and a requisite that Kumaravadivelu emphasizes as part of his Macrostrategies. Applied linguists still tend to impose theory-based solutions that ignore the reality that

teachers face in the classroom. A current assumption seems to be, for example, that task-based learning and NfM should be applied in the whole of ELT. Perhaps we should think of more specific cultural contexts. (Cook and Wei 2008, 7.) How each method is implemented in not only going to be affected by who the teacher is, but also by who the students are, what they and the teacher expect as appropriate social roles, the institutional constraints or demands, and factors connected to the wider sociocultural context where the instruction takes place. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson state that "even the 'right' method is not going to compensate for inadequate conditions of learning, or overcome socio-political inequities" (2011, xiv). I think, though, that there is no 'contextualization' without taking into account precisely those conditions of learning, and even less so, if we turn a blind eye to wider sociocultural and socio-political contexts. It might not be the most central task of the language teacher – Swan has been heard – but still, language teaching never takes place in a vacuum, neither is language, in any form, disconnected from the complex sociocultural worlds each learner, teacher and group are immersed in.

Culture, in relation to learning - centered methods is often conceived in terms of 'becoming' or 'emerging' in social interaction. Kumaravadivelu's post-method thinking invites us to observe, as well, the emerging of power relations in all educational contexts. There is no 'culture' without an exercise of 'power'. According to Hilary Janks (2010, 40), a sociocultural approach to language education will consider the relationship between language and power. Also, it would observe how the relation between language and identity – and difference – is constructed. At last, it would not neglect the role of language in creating differential access to social goods. (Ibid.) Power relations cannot be ignored or denied, and perhaps the healthiest thing to do is to learn to detect them, turning them more visible, giving them words. Pennycook (1997, 46) states, that even though we cannot step outside the cultural and ideological worlds around us, we can still learn to question and to become more aware of them. The ideal of Critical Freirean Pedagogy (Freire 1972) is to design and take transformative steps, even micro-steps, to 'transform social realities' (Janks 2010, 42) or, as Pennycook (1997, 46) a bit more modestly says, 'pursue cultural alternatives'. I think that, culturally, this is one of the most important implications of the Post-Method thinking, and I find it consistent with the anthropologically interpretive and sociocultural framework which I shall discuss in Chapter 3. It is, also, the part that Swan shuns as ideological, which, in my opinion, is an ideological judgment.

2.4. The Role of Culture in Foreign Language Teaching Materials

That culture, in one way or other, should form part of foreign language teaching, has always been taken for granted. The recipies for how this should happen, and more importantly, what is understood by 'culture', has varied. Eli Hinkel (1999, 1) remarks that definitions of culture are as varied as the fields of inquiry into human societies, groups, systems, behaviors, and activities. Sometimes culture and language are considered inseparable, sometimes "culture is a nice but dispensable icing on the cake" (Kasper and Mori 2010, 455). With regard to FLT materials, the concept is used to cover a range of situations that vary from the 'culture of the classroom' (Kramsch 1993, 47) to local, ethnic, academic or global cultures, just to mention a few. Perhaps, one of the most microscopic views is Kramsch' definition of culture as classroom interaction as part of her dialogic view of the 'Third Culture' (Kramsch 1990) but it is more common, though, to find presumptions about an underlying connection between culture and a particular macro level or society (Hinkel 1999, 1).

Most commonly, in FLT materials culture has been understood as the content and the context of language learning. It is thought that a second or foreign language can rarely be taught and learned without addressing the culture of the community in which it is used (Hinkel 1999, 2), often referred to as the 'target culture'. Mauranen (2008, 295) remarks that the objectives of the Finnish National Core Curriculum in relation to foreign languages are also based on these common assumptions that link language to target country cultures. Culture learning is also commonly considered essential for creating in the L2 learner an awareness of and empathy toward the culture of the L2 community, thus improving their motivation (Dornyei and Crizen 1998 in Johnson 2008, 132-133). The contents usually involve geographical knowledge, knowledge about the products and contributions of the target culture in the world, comparisons about ways of life, an understanding of values and attitudes of the L2 community. Cultural forming seeks to promote interest and curiosity and help learners interpret culturally relevant behaviour, and to conduct themselves in culturally appropriate ways. (Kumaravadivelu 2006, 208.) The "inappropriateness of non-native speakers that violate the cultural norms" has been vastly exemplified in research about sociopragmatic failure, communication breakdowns and L2 user stereotypes that reflect this bias (Hinkel 1999, 2 citing Byram 1989). In other words, the purpose of culture teaching has usually been to help the learner gain an

understanding of *native* speakers and their perspectives. Paradoxically though, as Kumaravadivelu (2001, 297-298) remarks, in such a scenario, cultural diversity is seldom explored and explained.

Cortazzi and Jin (1999) have explored the cultural contexts of a vast variety of textbooks used for teaching English as a foreign (EFL) and second (ESL) language. They remark that it is generally expected that textbooks should introduce target cultures. In practice, that means introducing cultural aspects of the so-called 1st circle English speaking countries (as defined in the model of World Englishes created by Katchru 1986 in McKay 2010, 97), most commonly Britain or the U.S., occasionally Canada or Australia). Others broaden the circle to cover a wider variety of countries where English is commonly used (2nd circle countries: India, South-Africa and so on). Quite interestingly, in some cultural contexts, for example in Venezuela, in Turkey and in Saudi-Arabia, there are course materials that are almost solely based on source culture contexts, that is: the culture that is familiar to the learners. In these cases, the assumption seems to be, that in this way the national identity is cherished and protected. Many recent text books, though, seem to reflect the global and international contexts in which English is used nowadays, showing L2 – interactions and exploring issues (and mismatches) that have to do with intercultural communication. Cortazzi and Jin suggest that one of the most important purposes of including varied cultural contexts in the teaching materials is to provide cultural mirrors for the learners (for example, giving them opportunities to compare cultural traits) that help form an intercultural competence. Such culture teaching has communicative ends, but it goes beyond it: it encourages the development of learners' cultural identities and an awareness of the identities of others. (Cortazzi and Jin 1999, 219.)

After an exploration of language and culture pedagogy during several decades in Chapter 2, it is clear that FLT can no longer make do with focusing on the 'target language' and 'target countries' – and on cultures as territorially defined phenomena. Risager (2007, 1) considers that this applies not only to English as the most widespread international language at present but also to the teaching of all other languages, no matter how many native speakers there are. Apart from developing the students' communicative competence in the target language, language and culture teaching ought to enable students develop into multilingually and multiculturally aware world citizens (ibid.).

Lantolf (2000b, 28) suggests the research on culture in language teaching should move on from the common attitutional issues and questions of developing tolerance and understanding of other cultures. He acknowledges their importance, though. Lantolf writes about 'second culture acquisition', and reports on research done on the degree and the ways in which L2 learners appropriate 2nd cultures as part of their L2 learning process. It strikes me as problematic that he seems to assume that second culture acquisition (different from 'awareness of') in itself should or could represent a necessary or desirable end of L2 education. It still reflects the common presumption that culture, together with language, can be acquired, as if it was an 'object' with an independent existence of the 'subject'. Byram (1989, 104) remarks that cultural meanings could be conceived as "objective" reality in the sense that they are shared between subjects, but not in the sense that they could exist independently of subjects. Perhaps to break out from these usual dualities (individual-social, self-other, native-non-native, L1 – L2, first culture – second culture, subjective - objective) Kramsch (2009b, 233) turns to the notion of a 'third culture' (springing from the notion of the 'third place' mentioned in 2.1.4.), understood as a place of intersection of multiple discourses rather than a body of information to be intellectualized or a set of skills and competences to be acquired (ibid.). Pennycook (1997, 35, 46), as well, has considered the culture of L2 learners to be a place of a struggle for a new 'voice' instead of simply replicating or mimicking the cultural models imposed on them. It is a search for cultural alternatives. Both Kramsch's 'third culture' and Pennycook's 'cultural alternatives' are subversive positions of critical exploration and search for new possibilities.

The review of culture and language pedagogy reveals how nationhood presents a central sociolinguistic problem in applied linguistics and in FLT (Pennycook 2010, 62). Evidently, it is a central issue that should occupy material designers each time they consider 'cultural contents' for FLT materials. Byram (1997, 54) states, realistically in my opinion, that even though countries and nationstates are not the inevitable units of linguistic and cultural allegiance, the national entity remains dominant, and it is the basis on which education systems are usually organized. Risager (2007, 125) alleges that what is precisely needed is FLT to support a transnational and intercultural approach – one that questions this national binding and its side effect: the belief in the inseparability of the national language and the national culture. She (ibid.) calls for a more dynamic comprehension of how linguistic and cultural flows characterise the world today very

much in the same sense, I assume, as Pennycook (2007, 2011) has advocated. I think it would be foolish not to acknowledge the strength of nationhood as a source of cultural identification and as a practicality, however unfashionable, restricting, deterministic or romantic it sounds in the academic spheres. Definitely we need to build a more inclusive and dynamic model of "nationhood", but still it will be founded on and situated in local and national histories, traditions, geographical and environmental conditions. We should not deny the value and the necessary persistence of local, regional and national identities in the light of the fashionable "cosmopolitan" global culture. The educated, unproblematically easy-going, well-earning, border-crossing and world-travelling multilingualism of the the ELT world does not belong to all learners, however insistent a good part of English language teaching materials has been in selling that image. Not buying this cultural and linguistic construct or questioning about its desirability should not marginalize anyone. On the other hand, it is true that not offering high-standard ELT would, and does, marginalize people and limit their access to information, academic studies and working opportunies. Those are valued "goods" in the context of our modernity, and instrumental for social mobility. Using Bourdier's terminology (e.g. in Derivry-Pland 2011, 183), in the 'linguistic markets' certain languages just seem to be better, more valuable than others. They count more than others as part of one's 'cultural capital'. ELT that is sociolinguistically and culturally more sensitive could help build multilingual identities that are more authentically based on individual choices. This could be done, for example, by designing more teaching materials which 'envoice' learners to participate more satisfactorily in their communities.

I think that ELT and material design should take into account the overall multilingual "langscape" with its power relations. Sociolinguistically informed and culturally sensitive ELT will recognize the value of the mother tongues, or any other languages, that belong to English language learners. It does not simply 'impose' English without raising consciousness and questioning its role in the linguistic market within the context of globalization. ELT should be increasingly flexible as regards model Englishes and move towards a more inclusive model. It should permit local preferences in relation to teaching styles and different (and perhaps culturally oriented) learner strategies. It could promote the creation of local teaching materials, thus freeing teachers and learners from the urge of necessarily having to enter the huge market of ELT materials, which not only transmit the hegemonic way of teaching but also many underlying values and assumptions in their

images and their discourses. Anyhow, a sociolinguistically sensitive English teacher would encourage learners to use and read these materials critically and promote the students' creation of other possible "imagined communities" (term from Anderson 1991 in Mauranen 2008, 297; and in McKay 2010, 98).

Culture is contextualized, but it is definitely not just 'background' to FLT. In part it is, as Mauranen (2008, 295) says, constantly being shaped through interaction. To support this view, I will turn to the anthropological interpretive theory and the sociocultural theory for a semiotic framework that allows conceiving 'culture' in a wider and, at the same time, more intimate and subjective manner.

3. CULTURE AS SYMBOLIC ACTIVITY

In this chapter I am going to focus on two semiotic frameworks that have influenced language and culture teaching. The anthropological viewpoints, and particularly the American tradition that has studied culture as analogous to language (Risager 2007, 93), have naturally been central to culture teaching as reviewed in Chapter 2.1. Since the 80's, and particularly in the 90's, the interpretive anthropology of Clifford Geertz (1973) and 'the anthropological concept of culture' have been common references in culture pedagogy as is reflected, for example, in the writings of Byram (1989, 1997). On the other hand, the sociocultural theory principally based on the work of Vygotsky (1962, 1978 and as discussed by Lantolf 2000a and Lantolf and Thorne 2006) has been the common ground for many of the so-called learning centered methods (2.1.5.) which have been in vogue during the last two decades, stressing the importance of social interaction. Such are, for example, the social constructivist frameworks, and the cooperative or collaborative learning models. The sociocultural theory is also behind the recent ecological and post-structuralistic perspectives seen in the works of van Lier (2000, 2004) and Kramsch (2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2009a, 2009b) which I shall discuss briefly in the end of the Chapter. Recently, post-structuralistic approaches to L2 education inspired by interactional sociolinguistics and ecological theories of learning have gained momentum (Ellis and Larsen-Freeman 2006 in Kramsch 2009a, 245).

These two major theoretical standpoints that arise from two distinct social sciences - anthropology and social psychology - share a view of human culture as concrete goal-directed activity situated in particular time and place and as observable through human interaction. Moreover, both of them are theories of mind. In them language and thought are deeply intertwined with social interaction as meaning making activity: activity that makes human beings 'human', which, according to the anthropological view, is synonymous to being 'cultural'.

3.1. Culture in Interpretive Anthropology

Geertz' (1973) concept of culture is essentially a semiotic one. Following Max Weber, he holds that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun,

culture taken to be those webs, and the study of culture to be a discipline that does not search laws through experimenting but meaning through interpretation (Geertz 1973, 5). Culture is the context in which signs (symbols) can be described and interpreted (Geertz 1973, 14). The interpretation is accomplished by making a 'thick description' of the semantic structures of the 'culture-as-a-text' (term by Risager 2006, 48), of which Geertz' *Interpretation of Cultures* (1973) includes illustrative examples.

Geertz defines culture as "historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life" (Geertz 1973, 89). Cultural acts - the construction and utilization of symbolic forms - are social events like any other: "as public as marriage and as observable as agriculture" (ibid. 91). In interpretive anthropology, culture is an "enacted document". It does not exist in someone's head, and though unphysical, it is not 'super organic', not an occult entity. In other words, culture can be viewed as symbolic activity. (Geertz 1973, 10.) Cultural forms are articulated through social action: we gain access to symbol systems by inspecting events (ibid. 17). Thus, the most important tools of the interpretive anthropologist are the different phases of the ethnographic fieldwork: participative observation of social interaction, ('thick') description that pays attention to microscopic detail, and a semiotic interpretation on a symbolic plane, in terms of cultural meaning (Geertz 1973, 20-23).

For Geertz culture and social structure are two different abstractions from the same phenomena, and they are separated only conceptually. "Culture is the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their action; social structure is the form that action takes, the network of - - social relations" (Geertz 1973, 145). Rituals, for example, are not only patterns of meaning, but also social interaction (ibid. 168).

According to Geertz, the aim of anthropology is the "enlargement of the universe of human discourse" (Geertz 1973, 14). Anthropology seeks to "converse" across borders (ibid. 13). Geertz is opposed to the uniformitarian view of man, the belief in a common Human Nature independent of time and place, or obscured by superficial differences in beliefs, values, customs and institutions. He holds that we cannot separate what man is

from where he is, who he is and what he believes. “Men unmodified by the customs of particular places do not in fact exist, have not existed, and most important, could not in the very nature of the case exist”. (Ibid. 35 - 36).

This is the dimension that Byram (1989) considers significant for the general intercultural education in relation to FLT which he describes as “an emancipation from the confines of one’s native habitat and culture” (ibid. vii). The anthropological notion of an ‘emic’ approach towards culture - that is, seeing things from the actors’ point of view, experiencing culture from “inside” - echoes with the long tradition within FLT to strive to promote an understanding of the ‘native’ and nationalistically conceived target cultures, but it also encounters a fertile ground in the freshly recognized urge for a more intercultural education. Byram believes that language teaching – using such activities as ethnographic fieldwork – should give students a critical insight into the world, with an emphasis on the implied national cultures, and encouraging fieldwork supported by the relatively short travelling distances in Europe (Risager 2007, 126 - 127; Roberts, Byram, Barro, Jordan and Street, 2000, 185). On the other hand, a cultural experience does not need to take place in a foreign country (Byram 1989, 145), and FLT has a long history seeking to create experiences of “foreignness” in the classroom. It is one of the cornerstones, for example, of experiential learning (Kohonen 1992) in the collaborative learning tradition (Nunan 1992, 1997). The anthropological concept of culture has also served to prompt fieldwork with ‘one’s own culture’: tolerance of other cultures is expected to grow if learners experience, even fragmentarily, their own culture as ‘strange’ and ‘other’, as not necessarily the ‘norm’. (Byram 1989, 20.)

Culture is then best seen not as concrete behaviour patterns (customs, usages, traditions) but has a set of control mechanisms (plans, recipes, rules, programmes) for the governing of the behaviour. Geertz (ibid. 44) states that “man is the animal most desperately dependent upon such extra genetic, outside-the-skin control mechanisms, such cultural programs, for ordering his behaviour.” Undirected by culture patterns, organized systems of significant symbols, man’s behaviour would be a mere chaos of pointless acts and exploding emotions and his experience shapeless. Culture, the accumulated totality of such patterns, is not just an ornament of human existence -- but an essential condition for it. (Ibid. 46.) “We are, in sum, incomplete or unfinished animals who complete or finish ourselves through culture”, Geertz resumes (ibid. 49).

> The "control mechanism" view of culture begins with the assumption that human thought is basically both social and public - that its natural habitat is the house yard, the marketplace, and the town square. Thinking consists not of "happenings in the head" (though happenings there and elsewhere are necessary for it to occur), but of a traffic in - - significant symbols - words for the most part but also gestures, drawings, musical sounds, mechanical devices like clocks, or natural objects like jewels - anything, in fact, that is disengaged from its mere actuality and used to impose meaning upon experience. From the point of view of any particular individual, such symbols are largely given. He finds them already current in the community when he is born, and they remain, with some additions, subtractions, and partial alterations he may or may not have had a hand in, in circulation after he dies. While he lives he uses them -- always with the same end in view: to put a construction upon the events through which he lives, to orient himself within "the ongoing course of experienced things", to adopt a vivid phrase of John Dewey's. (Geertz 1973, 45.)

Mind, for Geertz, is a rhetorical device, not a scientific concept. Geertz holds that cultural accumulation played an active role in the final stages of the biological evolution of Homo sapiens. Thus mind and body, culture and biology are intertwined. Much of our physical structure is result of culture. The human brain is thoroughly dependent upon cultural resources for its very operation, and those resources are, consequently, not adjuncts to, but constituents of, mental activity (Geertz 1973, 76). Thus culture is an ingredient, not supplementary, to human thought. This is also fundamental in Vygotsky's (1962, 1978) theory which I shall discuss in 4.2.

I consider that one of the most important contributions of the anthropological thinking for FLT lies in that it traces a road to the general through a concern with the particular, the circumstantial and the concrete. As we have seen, it is a concern present, for example, in the humanistic approaches, in Dogme and Kumaravadivelu's post-method pedagogy. Geertz (1973, 51-52) holds that "it is, in fact, by its power to draw general propositions out or particular phenomena that scientific theory - indeed, science itself - is to be judged". The ethnographic frame of mind is "microscopic", taking the capital letters out of the grand words (ibid. 21), making the generalizing concepts more local, more 'homely'. Furthermore, as Risager (2006, 48) remarks, interpretive anthropology is related to hermeneutics to literary interpretation. So, and importantly for the focus of the present work, it offers a view of culture that contemplates the aesthetic dimension of cultural practice. Because of his literary emphasis, Geertz is highly particularist in his orientation, unlike Lévi-Strauss and the structuralist schools which are Universalist, and unlike cognitive anthropology, which traditionally operates with an abstract concept of the individual (as does Chomsky in linguistics). (Risager 2006, 48.) The ethnographic influence can also be seen in the ecological approaches (van Lier 2004), in the dialogic

and intersubjective standpoint of Kramsch (2009a; 2009b), the sociolinguistic focus of Pennycook (2007) and in Dogme (Meddings and Thornbury 2009). All of them promote an attitude shift in language education, and a different way of being a teacher. As they prioritize, as Meddings and Thornbury (2009, 21) put it, the local over the global, the particular over the general, the individual over the crowd, they also, necessarily, vary according to the contexts in which learning takes place.

The semiotic concept of culture is much wider than the previous more pragmatic views of a society's culture as a kind of shared and systematic code, "whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members" (Geertz 1973, 11, citing Goodenough), a notion that has informed much of the nationalistically flavoured language-and-culture teaching Risager (2006) reviews. The 'code' notion implies that if the rules were written out and followed, it would be possible to pass as a native of a given "culture". Geertz frees us from an impossible mission remarking that "only romantics or spies would find a point in becoming 'natives' of another culture" (Geertz 1973, 13). The interpretive theory of culture as symbolic activity supports visions of foreign language teaching beyond its most common applications as provision of pragmatic cultural background information, creation of 'authentic' target-culture contexts or promotion of an understanding of intercultural differences. Of course, all of these aspects are valuable and necessary in foreign language education, but I think that the semiotic frameworks offer possibilities to explore how cultural meanings are created through multimodal, and particularly, artistic processes. I conceive this "language teaching as symbolic activity" in terms that are local and homely (as in Dogme, Meddings and Thornbury, 2009), ecologically (van Lier 2000, 2004) and sociolinguistically (Janks, 2010; McKay and Rubdy, 2009; McKay 2010, Pennycook 1997, 1998) sensitive, but still not tied to locally, historically or geographically defined 'cultures', taking into account each language learner's particularities and (inter)subjectivities as multilingual individuals (Kramsch 2009) that participate in the multiple and ever changing 'cultural flows' (Pennycook 2007) of the globalized world.

3.2. Culture in Sociocultural Theory

In the constructivist and social interactionist frameworks, children are born into a social world where learning occurs through interaction with other people. This contrasts with the Piagetian view that children would independently explore and discover the environment as well as with the behaviouristic standpoint that learning takes place as a result of the "adults' judicious use of rewards and punishments" (Williams and Burden 1997, 40). Now I will turn to the core statements of the sociocultural theory based on the ideas of Vygotsky (1962, 1978) that offer another semiotic model of how language and culture are conceived and transmitted while thinking develops and learning occurs.

Both the sociocultural theory and the anthropological interpretive theory are theories of mind. In both of them behaviour and consciousness arise together; consciousness is, in fact, anchored in social activity (Lantolf and Thorne 2006, 167; on Vygotsky: Roebuck 2000, 81) thus making it possible to observe consciousness in the organization of human behaviour. Both are based on the hermeneutical model that defies the confines of the reductive predictions and universals copied from the natural sciences and, instead, search for meaning and detailed interpretive explanations about real persons in their mental and physical activity (Roebuck 2000, 82). In what they differ is that in the Vygotskian tradition - a view of culture with roots in the 18th and 19th century German philosophy (Kant, Hegel, Marx and Engels) - culture is understood to be an "objective force that infuses social relationships and the historically developed uses of artefacts in concrete activity" (ibid.2). Thus the Vygotskyan view of the genesis of language, thought and culture is more directly rooted in human interactions in concrete goal directed activities in which different tools or artefacts - material or symbolic (mainly linguistic) - are created.

One of the most fundamental concepts of the sociocultural theory is the *mediated mind*. Just like we use physical tools to interact with our environment and with others, we use symbolic tools to mediate and regulate our relationships. Symbols, or signs, are culturally constructed, transmitted and modified artefacts. "Culturally shaped mind integrates symbolic artefacts into thinking". (Lantolf 2000a, 1.) Mediation is the part played by significant people in the learners' lives; they enhance learning by shaping the learning experiences and determining which social meanings the child is exposed to (Byram 1989, 111). The secret of learning lies in the nature of the social interaction between people

with different levels of skills and knowledge: the one who knows most helps the others. That makes language development possible. (Byram 1989, 106.) This is called the *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD*)*, another core concept of the Vygotskyan theory.

ZPD is a metaphor for the difference between what a person can achieve when acting alone and what the same person can accomplish when acting with support from someone else and/or cultural artefacts (Lantolf 2000a, 17). According to Vygotsky, in play children create, in collaboration, a zone of proximal development in which they perform beyond their current abilities (Vygotsky 1978 in Lantolf 2000a, 13; Sullivan 2000, 123). Or, people working together can co-construct contexts in which expertise emerges (as a feature of the group). This construction of opportunities has been conceived by van Lier (2000, 2004) as 'affordances', by Swain & Lapkin (1998 in Lantolf 2000a, 18) as 'occasions or learning'. It is important to note that novices do not merely copy: they transform and appropriate. According to Vygotsky the key to transformation resides in imitation, which together with collaboration in the ZPD is the source of all the specifically human characteristics of development (Vygotsky 1987 in Lantolf 2000a, 18; Lantolf and Thorne 2006, 167). I think that imitation could be given much wider and more creative uses in the foreign language classroom. Perhaps the connotation of imitation as audiolingual repetition of drills causes many teachers and learners to shun away from it. Language teachers do not need (and it could be counterproductive) to insist on the students producing the exact copy of what is offered. Also, interestingly, imitation has a central role in Steiner pedagogy as creative meaning making activity in which aesthetic experience forms an essential part of internalisation (Nicol and Taplin 2012, 20-24). ZDP is an activity, the "essential socialness of human beings" expressed as "revolutionary" activity (Lantolf and Thorne 2006, 289). I understand it to be transformative or creative activity that transforms through the creation of new meanings.

From the language educators' point of view, it is a compelling idea of the sociocultural theory that the genesis of language and the genesis of thinking - and thus, of culture - is the same. It happens through the different phases in the process of *internalisation* (Lantolf 2000a, 13). Wertsch and Stone (1985, in Byram 1989, 105) explain the complex process in simple terms: "Any function in the child's cultural development appears twice, or on two planes. First it appears on the social plane, and then on the psychological plane. First it appears between people as an interpsychological category, and then within the child as

an intrapsychological category". Thus, Byram (ibid) remarks, 'external' culture, in the sense of meanings and patterns of behaviour, is 'internalized' because of the individuals' innate disposition to fulfil an incomplete potential. This occurs by using *private* (voiced) and *inner speech* as tools for the semiotic system of language to be internalized for the means of self-regulation and cognitive orientation to a task or a situation (Thorne 2000, 231). Internalization, in essence, is appropriation (Wertsch): it is about making something one's own (Lantolf and Thorne 2006, 162). We learn 'manipulating': either concretely or mentally interacting with the surrounding world to prepare for an eventual activity (ibid. 163). Imitation, as we saw, is another powerful aid in internalization/appropriation (Lantolf and Thorne 2006, 167). The transformation of an interpersonal process into an intrapersonal one is a long succession of development events. The external form of activity occurs for a long time before turning inward. (Ibid.)

As language and thought arise together and, simultaneously, the culturally mediated mind is formed, then "learning a second language can lead to the reformation of one's mental system, including one's concept of self", as Lantolf (2000, 5) puts it. That happens when "publicly derived speech completes privately initiated thought" (Bakhurst 1991 as cited in Lantolf 2000a, 7). Speaking and linguistic activity is not only transmitting thoughts, as the communicative standpoint holds. By speaking, and by 'manipulating' language, we also mould and transform thinking.

Activity theory is the theoretical framework that informs sociocultural research (Lantolf 2000a, 8). Activity, in the sociocultural context, is doing something motivated by a biological or a culturally constructed need. Within the scope of the present work, and for the educative contexts, what is important is that each "task" is different for different learners. Teachers know how students tend to approach tasks in widely different and unpredictable ways (Donato 2000, 42) often transforming them to something different than originally intended. In the light of the activity theory, students' agency through the investment of their own goals, actions, cultural capitals and beliefs should be allowed more space in classroom work, and teachers could focus less on prescribed procedures and outcomes (Brooks & Donato 1994 in Donato 2000, 44). Also Roebuck emphasizes how subjects in psycholinguistic tasks (Coughlan & Duff 1994 in Roebuck 2000, 79, 84) are necessarily involved in different activities as they bring in their unique sociocultural histories, goals and capacities. It has been, as well, one of the corner stones of the

humanistically oriented FLT that learners would bring in their personal histories, values, assumptions, beliefs, needs, rights and obligations.

With the sociocultural framework, FLT has moved from the acquisition metaphor that tends to conceive FL learning as accumulation of knowledge towards metaphors of participation. This is a common denominator of many the learning centered methodologies (2.1.5.). Learning is made perceptible through increasing participation and emergent communication of learners with the teacher and each other. According to Donato (2000, 41) the participation metaphor, apart from bringing the social factors to the fore, defies the traditional distinction between the cognitive and affective aspects of learning. Furthermore, the sociocultural conception of mind rejects the binary oppositions of mind and body, individual and society, text and context (Kramsch 2000a, 139). It is a dialogic (Bakthin, Vygotsky) principle that we do not just use language in context: we shape the context that shapes us (ibid.). In sociocultural theory learners are viewed actively transforming their world and not merely conforming to it (Donato 2000, 46) which has to do with the performative aspect of language as potentially bringing forth social change as underlined by Freire (1972).

The sociocultural theory has also given rise to the *ecology* - metaphor. Kramsch (2002, 5) summarizes it as "the poststructuralist realization that learning is a nonlinear, relational human activity, co-constructed between humans and their environment, contingent upon their position in space and history, and a site for struggle for the control of social power and cultural memory". In her definition she addresses the question of social power, always present in linguistic and cultural practices, and I agree that it should not be overlooked in language and culture pedagogy. Ecological language pedagogy is highly context-sensitive and adapted to the demands of the environment; an ecological method is any method that works (use of L1, translation, dictation, memorization) in the sociocultural context. Ecological classroom work promotes re-readings, retellings, multiple interpretations of the same texts and multiple modalities (visual, verbal, gestural, musical) of meaning making and of expression. (Kramsch 2009a, 239.)

Van Lier (2000, 246) states that from an ecological perspective learning is not migration of meanings to the inside of the head but rather developing effective ways of dealing with the world and its meanings. We should not forget that meaning making is not only a

linguistic activity: it is a semiotic activity with others - more, equally or less competent in linguistic terms - from which language emerges (van Lier 2000, 251-2). As an alternative to 'input' van Lier proposes 'affordances', opportunities for meaningful action that a situation affords. What becomes an affordance depends on what the organism does, what it wants, and what is useful for it: "Leaf in a forest" has different meanings for a spider, a frog, an ant and a shaman, even though in all cases the leaf is the same (ibid. 253). Affordance is neither the actor nor the object: it is the relationship between the two, and the unit of analysis is not the perceived object or linguistic input, but the active learner, the activity itself (ibid). I find the concept of affordance to be particularly well suited for a pedagogy that emphasizes the aesthetic dimension of language education, to which I shall return in the following chapter.

Kramsch's line of ecological language pedagogy is also post-stucturalist in tone: notions of appropriation, translation and resignification of signs are central to it. Apart from a strong reliance on the dialogic concepts of Bakhtin, her work is influenced by the concept of the third space by Hobi Bhabha (in Kramsch 2009b, 237) which locates culture in the discursive practices of speakers and writers. The need to interpret is always present, and that is the third space: for the EFL learner it is the right to appropriate the English language and give it other meanings than native speakers would (ibid.). Since then, within an ecological perspective, Kramsch (2009a, 23) has 'resignified' the notion of the 3rd space (Kramsch 1993) as symbolic competence. The post-structuralist and ecologic approach to the relation of language and culture defines culture as an individual's subject position that changes according to the situation and to the way he/she chooses to belong, rather than to the place where she belongs (Kramsch 2009a, 241). Not only flesh and blood interlocutors in verbal exchanges are contemplated: also the remembered and the imagined, the stylized and the projected are present. Thus the notion of bounded speech communities is problematized and the attention focused on "open-ended, deterritorialized communicative practices rather than on the territorial boundedness posited by the one language – one culture assumption" (Blommaert 2005 in Kramsch 2009a, 247), the notion which has dominated much of the language-and-culture discussion reviewed in Chapter 1. At this stage culture is seen as a mode, not a place, of belonging. It is as imagined as real. It is both remembered and lived.

Both the sociocultural theory and the interpretive anthropological theory explain human activity through the process of observation, description and interpretation (Lantolf 2000a, 18). Within a sociocultural framework, learning is a semiotic process emergent through participation in socially mediated activities. Social participation should not be understood too narrowly as simply "team work" of "classroom talk" which in itself has never secured a communicative, interactive, genuinely participative or otherwise meaningful class. We should remember that learners find access to cultural tools in a wide variety of ways, and that the "universe of human discourse" (Geertz) is vast. In the material package students use material objects, photographs, images, dialogues, tales and art materials to interact. In the next chapter I shall turn to rituals, myth and art as symbolic activities with rich meaning making potential.

4. RITUALS, MYTH AND ART IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

> "Language evokes ideas; it does not represent them" (Slobin 1982).
>
> "In order to make up our minds we must know how we feel about things; and to know how we feel about things we need the public images of sentiment that only rituals, myth and art can provide" (Geertz 1973, 82).

Foreign language instruction particularly as CLT has been predominantly anchored around the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of referential meanings (Kramsch 2009a, 190). The proposals springing from semiotic theories of language, mind and culture – such as the interpretive anthropological model and the sociocultural framework - allow the construction of meaning, and culture, to be understood in a much wider scope. For example, the multilingual perspective to language learning which Kramsch (2009a) has recently advocated strives to help the multilingual subject express and interpret subject positions that are sometimes 'non-negotiable'. At the end, we are not so concerned just about 'transmitting information'; it is the realm of the *symbolic* (emotions, memories, values and subjective positions) that is much more central to us. She claims that societal changes call for an ecologically oriented pedagogy that not only approaches language learning and language use as an instrumental activity but as a subjective experience, "linked to a speaker's position in space and history, and to his or her struggle for the control of social power and cultural memory" (Kramsch 2009a, 190.) This means teaching language and culture as a living form, experienced and remembered bodily, with a relation to an 'other' that is mediated by symbolic forms (ibid. 191). In this chapter, I am going to discuss an aspect that is often neglected or considered rather decorative in the overall FLT syllabi: the aesthetic sphere that dwells at every instance of human experience, but which we, perhaps, can come to grips with most powerfully through the concrete experiences of ritual, myth and art.

Art has been taken into consideration in language and culture pedagogy as part of the cultural background knowledge particularly in the European '*civilisation*' (Fr.) tradition with its 'encyclopedic' emphasis on 'high' culture and fine arts (2.1.4.). Art has also been present along the for-long-shared paths of language and literature teaching, with undeniable benefits both for language as for culture learning. In relation to the humanistic FLT tradition - which has always promoted art and artistic expression as part of

classroom work - Williams and Burden (1997, 35) refer to the famous model of the 'hierarchy of needs' by Maslow (1968, 1979) usually presented as a pyramid. On the base there are 'maintenance' or 'deficiency' needs, then 'growth' or 'being' needs, after which follow the cognitive needs, and on the peak of the pyramid the need to be different and creative: the aesthetic needs. In humanistic education, art is a starting point: it contributes to "help students become more like themselves and less like each other" (Hamachek 1977 in Williams and Burden 1997, 36). Williams and Burden (1997, 39) point to the strong links Humanistic approaches have with constructivism or social interactionism as both are concerned with the individuals' search for personal meaning. I totally agree with them, even though if the students' need of being 'like themselves' and constructing their subjectivities creatively was the starting point - and I definitely think it should be - then the aesthetic needs should not be visualized as the glazing on the top of the cake after all the other more fundamental needs were satisfied. Some authors like the American philosophers John Dewey (1934) and M. Johnson (2008) as well as a complete educational tradition such as the Steiner or Waldorf pedagogy (Nicol and Taplin 2012, 122) have rendered a much more fundamental role to aesthetics in the process of human meaning making. Aesthetics is central in Geertz' interpretive anthropology (Geertz 1973, 81 - 82), and Vygotsky (1971 in Kramsch 2009a, 198) gives importance to the "aesthetic zone of proximal development that occurs at the boundary of art and life, in between the actual child and the imagined child". According to him, we create an aesthetic ZPD in play and through art (ibid.), even though I think the aesthetic experience can be understood more broadly in connection to many other activities that form part of our more 'domestic' everyday lives (which is, again, a basic tenet of Steiner education: Nicol and Taplin 2012, 14). This is the aesthetic aspect of culture that could be given much more scope within FLT as part of the classroom activities: experiencing art, finding pleasure in the rituals and learning through the meanings created in the process.

Mark Johnson (2008, 209) remarks how philosophy of language has focused almost exclusively on language, spoken or written, as the bearer of meaning, while the common dichotomies of Western thought have rendered a lesser role to the arts, together with feelings and the body (ibid. 211). He claims that to explore the deeper roots of meaning we should look beyond linguistic meaning and into the processes of meaning in the art, "where immanent bodily meaning is paramount". For him aesthetics is not just art theory

(about how we make judgments about beauty), but should be regarded as an essential part of the study of how humans make and experience meaning. (Johnson, M. 2008, 209.)

M. Johnson (2008) frequently refers to the work of John Dewey (1934), the American philosopher whose writings have also been influential for Geertz' interpretive anthropology as well as for the more recent ecological viewpoints of van Lier (2004) and Pennycook (2009). Dewey (*Art as Experience*, 1934) saw the marginalization of the art and the aesthetic and advocated for a rediscovery of art as a condition of life and an exemplary of human meaning-making (Johnson M. 2008, 212). For Dewey the aesthetic sphere was not an "idle luxury or transcendent ideality", but the "clarified and intensified development of traits that belong to every normally complete experience" (Dewey 1934 in Johnson, M. 2008, 212). Art reminds us that meaning is not exclusive linguistic. Johnson's central thesis is that "what we call 'mind' and what we call 'body' are not two things, but rather aspects of one organic process, so that all our meaning, thought, and language emerge from the aesthetic dimensions of this embodied activity" (Johnson, M. 2008, 1). I find his view compatible with and enriching of the anthropological and the sociocultural - ecological perspectives: in it the whole organism, mind and body, interacting with the environment, is taken into account.

That is what occurs in rituals, the 'cultural performances', that can be religious, artistic, political, or perhaps related to the organization of the most concrete and domestic spheres of our cultural experience. Educational settings and classroom practices are full of rituals. Rituals have very much the same quality as art. In them, in Geertz' (1973, 112) words, "the world as lived and the world as imagined, fused under the agency of a single set of symbolic forms, turns out to be the same world". They give a concrete and experienced social form to meanings: rituals are not merely spectacles to be watched but to be enacted (ibid. 116). In a ritual we "leap" into a symbolic framework of meaning, and "the ritual ended, returned again to the common sense world, a man is - unless, as sometimes happens, the experience fails to register - changed. And as he is changed, so also is the common - sense world, for it is now seen as but the partial form of a wider reality which corrects and completes it" (ibid. 122). According to Geertz' interpretive anthropological theory meaning can only be "stored" in symbols, dramatized in rituals, related in myths (ibid. 127). The ritualistic aspect can also be seen in the performative dimension of language as utterances acting upon reality (Austin 1962 in Kramsch 2009a,

8). Pennycook (2007, 58-59) refers to the performative aspect of language and reminds that within an ecological perspective language not merely represents thought or outer reality: it creates and performs thought in dialogue with others.

Myths, and other ancient forms of literature such as fables and fairy tales, reach and enact the deeper meanings of phenomena beneath the entertaining plots (Gersie and King 1990, 23 -24; Kramsch 2009a, 11). Using myths in FLT we can highlight the fact that language makes meaning not only by referring to or standing for things, but by evoking them. In myths, language is used less for its objective truth value than for the subjective beliefs and emotions that it expresses, elicits and performs. Thus mythic speech focuses on the aesthetic aspect of language and on the affective impact of the words. (Kramsch 2009a, 11.) Myths and traditional tales also express essential cultural experience enabling us to connect our personal experience to the collective experiences of the human race (Gersie and King 1990, 24). Fairy-tales and fairy-tale-like narratives underline the power of language to bring about events in a magical way. They uncover the nature and the power of symbolic forms to bring about social existence. (Kramsch 2009a, 40.) Myths and fairy tales are full of examples of the performative - and thus possibly transformative - features of language. I appreciate Kramsch (ibid. 14) reminding us that reducing language to its informational value (be it grammatical, social, cultural information) causes pedagogies to miss an important dimension of the experience: the dimension of the subjective relevance the language can have for the learner. This is not to deny that, in the language and culture pedagogy context, the work with written and oral forms of literature also offers an important portal to 'foreign experiences', as Risager (2007, 6.) puts it: "other ways of living, other ways of seeing the world, other perceptions, perspectives and states of mind" thus bringing valid cultural information to the fore.

In the sphere of the aesthetic, 'interaction' needs to be understood in a wider perspective than it usually is within FLT. Halliday (1997 in Sullivan 2000, 129), in the midst of the communicative boom, recognized that in some contexts (classrooms in China and in India) successful 'communicative' involvement incorporates interaction with texts. Apart from everything that we can regard as 'texts' (be them written, visual, musical) I would add anything that can serve as 'affordances': in the context of the material package to follow, principally rituals (both observed and enacted), myths and other 'folktales', art and different materials manipulated artistically. Dialogue is not restricted to only verbal

face-to-face interaction: Vygotsky even said that writing was having a conversation with a sheet of paper (Holquist 1990 in Lantolf and Thorne 2006, 10). We all, as socialized and 'acculturated' subjects, are "full of the voices of others" (Bakthin in Kramsch 2000b, 337), and art can offer different channels for 'interacting' with these voices. We can encourage students to give meanings to all signs: paralinguistic, gestural, musical and visual. The semiotic frameworks offer pedagogical alternatives to teach language and culture as systems of linguistic and non-linguistic signs in a socially and historically situated environment (Kramsch 2000, 152.). They allow us to view the language learner as someone who interacts - in a broad sense - by conceiving new meanings by manipulating signs created by others.

Kramsch, in her definition of the aesthetic, focuses on the "formal aspects of language as symbolic system combined with the subjective resonances of these forms in the emotions, memories and fantasies of their users" (Kramsch 2009a, 197). It is through the aesthetic experience of writing and other forms of artistic expression that learners can enact the social subjects they might want to become (ibid. 195). Aesthetic experiences are characteristically 'open': they often take the form of a *what…if* scenario, and they are seldom 'conclusive'. Narrative is an artistic genre that has become popular among language teachers who have students create autobiographical narratives, diaries, poems and journals as reflexive practice (Kramsch 2009a, 195; Pavlenko and Lantolf 2000; Sullivan 2000). Animation, painting, poetry, theatre, music and writing can also help imagine a future that is not restricted to one language or one semiotic modality. Norton (2010, 363) reports on multimodal pedagogies that include drawing, photography and drama incorporated into the English curriculum in Uganda. Researches (Kendrick et al., 2006; Kendrick & Jones, 2008 in Norton 2010, 363) argue that "multimodal pedagogies offer teachers innovative ways of validating students' literacies, experiences and cultures, and are highly effective in supporting English language learning in the classroom". Norton underlines how these learners are provided with diverse opportunities to take ownership over meaning-making, and to reimagine an expanded range of identities for the future. In essence, she says, "these remarkable teachers are seeking to make the desirable possible" (ibid. 364). The transformation that, according to Vygotsky (1971, in Kramsch 2009a, 198), occurs at the boundary of art and life, in the aesthetic zone of proximal development, is not only an emotional one, but also a cognitive one. Heath and Roach (1999 in Kramsch 2009a, 198) have documented how artistic creativity in its various

forms brings about cognitive benefits (such as hypothesizing, problem-solving, evaluating cause-effect) that are similar to those gained through scientific thought. The founder of Steiner - Waldorf education, Rudolf Steiner, said the same thing with regard to small children: “It is art that awakens their intelligence to full life” (quoted in Juenemann and Weitmann 1994 in Nicol and Taplin 2012, 122).

There is no cognition without emotion, no thinking without feeling. Geertz’ (1973) interpretive anthropology and M. Johnson (2008, 9, largely based on Dewey 1934) both argue for the central role of emotion in how we make sense of the world. For Geertz, it is mental activity that chiefly determines the way a person meets his surrounding world. And it is very emotional mental activity: “It is sensation remembered and anticipated, feared and sought, or even imagined and eschewed that is important to human life. It is perception moulded by imagination that gives us the outward world that we know” (Geertz 1973, 81). Geertz holds that we are not so concerned with solving problems but with clarifying feelings, and for this, too, we need cultural resources (ibid.). M. Johnson (2008, 10) has a ‘naturalistic’ view of meaning making. It takes place within the flow of experience that cannot exist without a biological organism engaging with its environment. Thus meanings emerge “from the bottom up” - not as abstract constructions of a disembodied mind. From this perspective, promoting the aesthetic experience in relation to concrete (be them artistic, ritualistic, or ‘every-day-life-like’) activities in the FLL context should help in integrating cognition and emotion, form and meaning, and in making language learning more ‘embodied’.

I consider promoting empathy and emotional involvement important for all learners - that is one of the basic tenets of humanistic approaches (about them for example Williams and Burden 1997, 30) - but perhaps teenagers and young adults are in a moment that is particularly fruitful and sensitive. All art (theatre, literature, music, visual arts, cinema, television series) offer excellent means and materials for promoting emotional involvement, which in the best cases subtly ‘seduce’ students to learn rather than convince them through reasoning (or in the most devastating and still quite real cases: through sheer pressure, at least in some ‘cultures of learning’). When talking about cultural products (cinema, literature) or expressions of ‘high’ culture, I am by no means suggesting that teaching culture should of could be restricted to them. Television, networking, youth cultures are some of the most obvious examples of today’s ‘popular’

cultures. What is most important, from the teacher's and the learners' point of view is that we should remember that classroom is not a lonely planet: we belong to a wider context where capacity for empathy should also be exercised. The 'real needs' of the 'real world' are by no means separated from the EFL – learning situation, and they should not be reduced to isolated or mechanistic functions or tasks. On the other hand, "cultural imagination is no 'less real' than cultural reality" (Kramsch 1993: 207). I think that teaching 'culture' in a semiotic framework is ultimately about seeking to interpret phenomena as parts of a whole. It is an integrating activity.

Finally, when considering the aesthetic dimension to FLT we cannot disregard the importance that pleasure has in all learning. A foreign language learner, the multilingual speaker, derives pleasure "from understanding and being understood, from discovering multiple layers of meaning and having the power and the ability to manipulate meanings" (Kramsch 1993, 30). An aesthetic experience engages one totally; it is by definition holistic. For Kramsch (2000, 149): the "semiotic pleasure of the text" (Barthes 1975), can consist in students constructing themselves as authorial or discursive selves as narrators. As Kramsch emphasises the poetic dimension of language and language learning, she recommends memorizing poems and playing with formal characteristics (like sounds, rhythms, melodies) of language: just like studying a piece of music written by someone else, it helps to make the poem one's own (Stevick 1988 in Kramsch 1993, 157). 'Variation in permanence' not only brings individual pleasure, it creates a bond among the group (ibid. 158). It is a principle we can find in the thinking of Vygotsky (1987 in Lantolf 2000a, 18; Lantolf and Thorne 2006, 167) in Waldorf pedagogy that cherishes rhythms and repetitions (Nicol and Taplin 2012, 20-24), and we can most certainly find multiple ways of applying the principle playfully to add pleasure to classroom work, for example while working with rituals, myth and art.

5. OUR CULTURALLY EMBODIED MINDS

> "The word, at first, is a conventional substitute for the gesture".
> (Vygotsky in Verity 2000, 204)

> "A child counts with his fingers before he counts 'in his head'; he feels love on his skin before he feels it 'in his heart'. Not only ideas, but emotions too, are cultural artifacts in man." (Geertz 1973, 81)

Language or culture would not be conceivable without symbolically mediated minds. Minds are made, meanings constructed and language learned in concrete interactions with social and physical environments through mediation and internalization. This is, in a nutshell, what the sociocultural theory (3.2.) claims. Geertz (1973, 36) considers that instead of trying to draw a troublesome line between what is natural, universal and constant in man ('nature') and what is conventional, local and variable ('culture') we should conceive man not only stratigraphically (and separating in parts) but synthetically, as relations between biological, psychological, social and cultural factors of human life. He gives cardinal importance to the cultural level - culture as semiotic meaning-making activity - which is the only one distinctive to the human being. (Ibid 37 - 38). Both the interpretive anthropological and the sociocultural view have been replicated in much of the recent FLT. It seems to me, though, that what is often overlooked is that according to both visions meaning-making is an activity deeply rooted in our living bodies, which - in this aesthetically focussed semiotic framework - is a synonym of the mind. It is also the phenomenological (Husserl 1859 - 1938) conviction that meaning emerges from a person's engagement with the world, through "perception-in-action" (van Lier cited in Kramsch 2002, 9) which is necessarily a 'bodily' event. Ultimately, or in the first place, the world is perceived and mediated through the body (Marcel Merleau-ponty 1908 - 1961, *Phenomenology of Perception* 1945, 1962 in Kramsch 2002, 10 - 11).

Many of the recent proposals such as interactionalism, collaborative or cooperative learning, dialogism, critical language pedagogy and post-method thinking all promote - for slightly different reasons and in different terminologies - the idea of education and language education as humanizing, transformative or potentially liberating activities. I would gladly subscribe to a good part of their agendas, but I believe there is still more in the play, though perhaps in more subtle and less grandiose terms. I think that we should not study languages ignoring their affective resonances in the bodies of speakers and

hearers. The anthropological and sociocultural theories of meaning and mind prompt viewing the process of learning foreign languages as semiotic, historically and culturally grounded personal experience that brings about subjective responses in the speakers: perceptions, emotions, memories, fantasies, desires, projections, identifications, physical sensations. There are numerous accounts (e.g. first person narratives in Pavlenko and Lantolf 2000) that show how central these experiences are to the language-learning process. Kramsch (2009a, 246) considers the "multilingual learners' heightened awareness of the embodied nature of language" to be an important future issue for investigation together with the emotions associated with the use of different languages, dialects or registers. Often the process of becoming multilingual also implies having to cope with sensations of loss of power and of emotional bafflement (Pavlenko and Lantolf 2000, 160-163) for which the FLT context should, in my opinion, find a channel of expression. Kramsch (2009a, 5) as well as Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000, 159-160) coincide in that with the current theoretical paradigms of the SLA research these phenomena are difficult to grasp. If FL teaching and SLA research continues focusing only on the communicative and informative value of language, the symbolic aspects or emotional effects together with the bodily dimension of foreign language learning is overlooked. An aesthetic approach to FLT could highlight the value of learning languages as vivid and bodily meaning making processes; not only codes. When culture is understood as the making of the minds, language can no longer be taken as a given, a code that students need to learn, but "rather as a major aspect of the cultural domain in which our lives are constructed and reconstructed" (Pennycook 1997, 49).

Van Lier (2000, 246) is among those who have criticized the reductionist view that "learning takes place in the brain" by information processing, as if we were computers. In *The Meaning of the Body* (2007), M. Johnson comments how the most central of the searches in all humanistic fields of study – namely, the search for the construction of 'meaning' - so often takes an abstract conceptual and propositional structure. He is referring to contemporary philosophy, but I would extend this claim to the field of language education as well. I agree with Johnson that we commonly come across with quite "eviscerated" views of mind, thought, and language (Johnson, M. 2007, x). In Johnson's opinion, the explicit separation of the mind from the body which is so all-pervasive in Western philosophy and lay thinking (about *Descartes' Error* by Damasio 1994 in Kramsch 2009, 66; Johnson M. 2007, 4) has caused a cultural misunderstanding

of, and consequent prejudice against, aesthetics. He claims that aesthetics should not be too narrowly construed as the study of art and so-called aesthetic experience: it is the study of the human capacity to make and experience meaning (Johnson M. 2007, x-xi). Johnson (ibid.) deems that if the arts are misconceived as a minor, nonpractical, wholly subjective dimension of human life, aesthetics becomes merely a decorative element with little perceived relevance to the nature of mind and cognition. Among he most serious misconceptions Johnson lists the view of the mind as disembodied; the conviction that thinking transcends feeling; the denial of feelings as part of meaning and knowledge; the belief that aesthetics concerns matters of subjective taste; and the contemplation of the arts as a luxury rather than a condition of full human flourishing. It is important to notice that in an embodied view of meaning-making the 'aesthetic' and the 'bodily' spheres go always hand in hand. They are totally intertwined: the heart of the notion consists of a unified mind and body.

Furthermore, it is vital we revalued rhythm and pace in the field of language education, where teachers and learners alike are all too used to hurrying to the next point, often urged by institutional pressures and competitiveness. Body is truly 'ecological', 'situated' and 'context sensitive': it responds to the environment, be it of social, cultural or physical nature. The time of the 'body' is different from the swiftness that we habitually demand of the 'mind': it is more conservative, needs maturation and appreciates repetition and rituals. "The body likes to re-member, re-thread, re-cognize" (Kramsch 2009a, 202-203). A FLT that brings the aesthetic sphere to the foreground would foster a more 'bodily' conception of time: it would promote cycles of understanding to gain more depth, play with variations and allow time for finding different meanings. Spending time on detail produces a more memorable and more enriching learning experience in the long run. It is, also, a basic given of Steiner education. An aesthetic approach to FLT appeals to the subtle pleasure - always a bodily experience - that learners find in making meaning (Barthes 1975 in Kramsch 2009a, 208) which Kramsch describes as "perceived match between form and content, between what you wanted to say and how you said it, between a word and the resonances it has for you" (ibid.). As is also argued by M. Johnson (2007, x-xi), the aesthetic sphere is neither a luxury nor a random by-product: it is the crucial experience of building a bridge between form and meaning. For that reason, approaches to foreign language teaching that underline the importance of the aesthetic and bodily sphere should not be dismissed as mere flights of the imagination or leisurely pauses in

the middle of the more ‘serious’ classroom work. Language learning engages learners cognitively, emotionally, culturally and aesthetically, thus not only involving ‘mind’ as traditionally undertood, as a disembodied entity. It is my conviction that the symbolic uses of language are deeply embodied, and can be turned palpable through the ancient and, at the same time, ever – renewing cultural resources of ritual, myth and art to help language learners lay bridges between forms and meanings.

6. MATERIAL PACKAGE

6.1. Cornerstones

The material package owes a great deal to both learner and learning centered methods. It is grounded on the assumption that learning foreign languages is more enjoyable, and more effective, if we focus on meaning and base teaching on contents rather than following structural, notional or functional syllabi. Nonetheless, I am not suggesting that learning a foreign language without 'noticing' language in itself would be enough. In the Finnish upper secondary school - where I visualize these materials would be used - students already have a working knowledge of English. The upper-intermediate or advanced level learner can well 'do things with language' – instead of paying explicit attention to it. They know 'grammar', have a vast vocabulary base and have practiced their reading, writing and listening skills extensively. Speaking skills tend to be more neglected. Rovasalo (2008, 28-31) reports on research conducted on the practicing of the oral skills in the Finnish upper secondary school, and concludes that even though the speaking skill is clearly recorded in the national curriculum, in practice it occupies a minor role, in spite of teachers and students alike considering oral work important and enjoyable (Huuskonen and Kähkönen 2006 in Rovasalo 2008, 30). In the dynamics included in the present material package, speaking and presentation skills have a major role, even though I consider that alternating the classic four language skills is more dynamic and enriching. On the other hand, what has traditionally been considered 'teaching language in itself' (grammar and vocabulary, idiomatic uses etc.), would in the present context 'emerge' during class room work and during the meaningmaking processes learners are immersed in. Constant error correction is not necessary; supporting learners with their language and scaffolding them is, as well as helping them 'notice' the language by drawing their attention to linguistic features when opportunities arise.

Learning-centered methods emphasize, above all, the role that social interaction has in the construction of language learning, principally through meaning focused tasks. In the present work, though, both 'interaction' and 'meaning' have connotations that are rarely contemplated. The semiotic theories - the anthropologically interpretive and the sociocultural standpoints - that lay in the heart of the theoretical framework for the package, understand interaction as symbolic activity that brings forth not only language

but also culturally constructed minds. Thus the package seeks to promote interaction in a broader sense: not only as the face-to-face verbal interaction ('classroom talk'), but interactions with the environments that surround the learners (including objects and materials), or interaction with the 'voices of others we are full of', as Bakhtin (in Kramsch 2000b, 337) says, through visualizing, reflecting, writing and other forms of artistic and bodily expression. Furthermore, rituals, myth and art offer cultural texts that link us with the accumulated human experience. Interaction is not only verbal or linguistic communication: it is multimodal, and gestural, expression. I believe that by broadening the scope of meanings, the focus also enhances the learning of vocabulary, linguistic structures, expressions, and offers opportunities for useful practice and for continued learning. Also, it builds the learner's confidence in the skills that are developing, and most importantly, brings pleasure.

Humanistic approaches have been central to the conception of the package. They share the ideal of promoting holistic personal growth in the learners. One of the tenets of humanistic teaching as well as of Steiner education is that particularly artistic involvement makes learning more meaningful and memorable. Thus, in the material, the process of generating something new is important, as is sharing what results from it. Methods like the Silent Way and Suggestopedia have emphasized the importance of promoting a relaxing and pressure-free atmosphere to encourage learning. In the material package, teachers are suggested to open the lessons with short relaxation exercises and to use calm music on the background to keep the students close to the creative alpha-state while they listen, draw and write. On other occasions, music is used to arouse or to create images. Williams and Burden (1997, 202) remind that language classrooms in particular need to be places where learners are encouraged to use the new language, to try out new ways of expressing meanings, to negotiate, to make mistakes without fear, and to learn to learn from both successes and failures. A suitable environment for language learning enhances trust, confidence and self-esteem. Still, the authors (ibid.) warn about making sweeping statements, even from the emotional point of view, about suitable contexts for learning: each individual will construct his or her own sense of environment. I would assume, though, that everyone would appreciate positive and safe classroom climates and find them more conducive to learning than, for example, learning cultures that promote sheer pressure or competition.

The material strives to foster an ecological culture. It seeks to be context-sensitive and adapted to the demands of varying local environments. From the ecological perspective, any method that works is valuable. That would bring on stage – as Kramsch (2009b, 238-239) remarks - the ones CLT has tended to censure: memorization, dictation, translation, use of L1, poems, literature, repetition together with multiple interpretations and modes of meaning making (visual, verbal, gestural, musical) and modalities of expression (spoken, written, drawn, electronic). It depends on teachers, learners, institutional environments and general cultural climates what feels right and is found beneficial for learning. It is a Dogme – principle (Meddings & Thornbury, 2009) that the emphasis on the "here-and-now" would focus the teacher on actual learners and free him or her from following methodological or ideological prescriptions. Lantolf (2000a, 25), as well, has exhorted teaching to become more flexible and more transformative: instead of sticking to rigidly constructed lessons and prescribed outcomes it should favour more improvisation. The same has been proposed by different humanistic approaches and by post-method thinking. Kramsch (2009a) talks about the transformative quality of multilingual minds. With an open mind and sensitivity the language teacher can benefit the FL class from the cultural packages and multilingual potentials of individual learners. In the material package, I have sought to apply the anthropological principle that engaging with the 'distant' or the 'different' sensitizes to the meanings of one's own language and culture, or to language and culture in general. "The experience of the foreign always implies a reconsideration of the familiar" (Kramsch 2009a, 5). In general, there seems to be a need to move on toward more open-ended language teaching methodologies, on one hand, and to be more sensitive towards local cultural and social contexts together with the other languages that form part of the linguistic and cultural resources of the learners.

As seen in Chapter 2, language and culture teaching has usually gone hand in hand with the assumption that the culturally authentic texts for foreign language learning should originate from native language-and-culture contexts. This material package promotes learners' generating their own texts and building their own 'authentic' materials. In other cases, the teacher (who as well is an authentic example of a multilingual subject) will provide or create texts for them. I think that it is a central sociolinguistic contribution (see e.g. Cook 2002a about the L2 user perspective) to FLT that language generated by learners and teachers (most probably L2 users as well) should be more valued.

Sociolinguistic perspectives give L1 its place, too. It is a valid tool when clearing doubts, highlighting differences between languages, and I think, during some stages while doing teamwork as well. FLT should promote learners' awareness of all the linguistic and cultural resources they have at hand. Moreover, when culture is conceived in a broader sense, it includes any cultural contexts or 'imagined communities' that the learners and the teacher wish to bring to the English language class.

Finally, the material package promotes a view of meaning making to be essentially an aesthetic activity because it links body to mind, and form to meaning. The activities should all allow space for the bodily aspects of learning and for alternative and multimodal ways of representing subjective meanings. Also, it is important to find aesthetic pleasure in the language itself: in a poem, in an idea or emotion well expressed, in metaphors, in the oral traditions or, perhaps, in a single word thoroughly experienced and explored.

6.2. Target Group

The material package has been prepared with upper secondary school students in mind. Some of the activities might be most suited for third-year students (e.g. Ethnographic Project, Lesson to Remember) because conceptually and in terms of presentation and linguistic skills they might be more demanding. Principally, the material is aimed as a resource for voluntary English courses, even though it can be used to form or complement any other courses as well. I think the materials could suit the following courses of the upper secondary school English language curriculum particularly well: A2/B2 Communication and leisure (*Virtual Trip*, *Lesson to Remember*, *Art Attack*), A4 Society and the surrounding world and A5/B4 Culture (*One World Many Rhythms, Ethnographic Project, Table Theatre, Cultural Heroes, Unusualtopia, Photographic Walk*), A8/B7 Globalization and internationalization (*Virtual Trip*). Some of the materials could be applied to cater for an entire course. Many others are shorter activities that could be integrated in any context. (National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003: 105-106.)

The materials could be easily adapted to suit different age groups. I have used variations of *Cultural Bodies* and *Dream Paths* with children (6 to 12), teenagers (12 to 15) and with adult learners in workshops (*Cultural Bodies*) and in corporate English language courses (*Dream Paths*). In terms of contents (as much of the material is 'learner-generated') the dynamics are open-ended and could be used to focus on more specific areas of interest a group is working on. Most activities require an intermediate or upper-intermediate level of proficiency, and the exercises are focused on the speaking and presentation skills.

6.3. The Structure of the Lessons

"Good teaching is all a question of rhythm and timing" (Kramsch 2009b, 203). According to Steiner (Waldorf) education, as well, a good lesson has an organic rhythm. Waldorf teachers talk about alternating 'thinking, feeling and willing activities'. While thinking activities stimulate the intellect, feeling activities involve the emotions, and willing activities motivate students by having them do things with their bodies. (Uhrmacher 1993, 91.) Kohonen (1992, 14) sees learning as a cyclic process integrating immediate experience, reflection, abstract conceptualization and action. A rhythmic lesson has a form that is not rigid or mechanistic: it responds to what takes place and is flexible. It is both ritualistic and spontaneous. It is important to give each class a 'living form'. Apart from adding to the aesthetic pleasure that the lesson can give, it encourages learning by making the experience more relaxing and free of innecessary pressures.

The lessons in the material usually have this form:

a. *Warm-up*. A short activity that awakens the curiosity about the class and introduces the topic in an imaginative way. In some lessons the warm-up can consist of a longer activity: for example listening to a story, listening to a piece of music, observing what the teacher does. Often the ideal warm-up is bodily, involving movement, stretching, breathing, doing rhythms. Sometimes the class, instead of being 'activated' could rather use some focusing or calming down. It can be promoted with movement as well.

b. *Hands-on-work*. Covering the teaching point. This is the part in which you 'do' your teaching and the learners 'do' a good part of their learning. It can be an artistic process, a series of interactions, a ritual, or a presentation given. Learning is interaction: we should try to make our lessons interactive, in the broad sense of the word.

c. *Integration*. The part of the class in which you manipulate new information, internalize it, using new skills, exposing or sharing what has been created. It can also be a reflection or a summary of what has been learned. Reflecting on and talking about learning is beneficial for learning (Kohonen 1992, 25). Sometimes the lesson can be closed with a relaxation, a short game, or a classroom ritual specifically created for the purpose.

Usually the warm-ups or the integrations are included in the individual dynamics of the material package. If not, teachers can use any of the ideas given in *Classroom rituals*, or devise their own short ceremonies.

7. CONCLUSION

Most FLT still strives to develop communicative competence as exchange of information and execution of pragmatic tasks. Knowledge of foreign languages, and particularly of the English language, is often proclaimed to be an 'asset' that will open doors in the pursuit of professional and material success. As Kachru, the Indian linguist and creator of the model of World Englishes said: English, like the fabled Aladdin's lamp, provides its master with linguistic power (Kachru 1986 in McKay 2010, 97). I deeply sympathize with Kramsch (2009a, 18) when she suggests that by rallying the body, heart and mind connection the foreign language experience could reveal sources of personal fulfilment that are usually left unexplored due to such one-sided emphasis on external criteria of success. She pleads for a greater consideration of the aesthetic aspects of language learning. By enhancing the aesthetic aspects of FLT we might draw learners' attention to less utilitarian and at the same time more authentically 'empowering' horizons. It can be an edifying experience for learners if we succeed in helping them *take notice* of the many semiotic and aesthetic resources they have at hand.

Furthermore, Kramsch (2009a, 2) observes how language has been taught and learned mostly as a tool for the description of a stable and agreed-upon reality. We seldom emphasize that by using language we construct the very realities we refer to, and can act upon them through the categories we create, ultimately changing the ways in which we perceive them. If foreign languages are taught and studied as mere tools for the formulation and communication of rational thought and information we narrow the scope of possible meanings. According to Paolo Freire (1972, 61) world can be transformed by naming it, in dialogue, "which imposes itself as the way in which men achieve significance as men". According to him, constructing knowledge in interaction makes us truly human. Recognizing a situation, naming what is wrong as a problem are the first steps of transformative social action (Janks 2010, 42 referring to Freire). I would add that being able to name 'what is good', what one values and would like to cherish is an important social action as well. Foreign language learners should be invited to experience not only the 'power' but the 'magic' of the words. That happens most authentically when they are driven to take action and learn by an inherent 'desire' that according to Kristeva (1980) is the vital force that moves us. Sometimes desire requires clinging to the familiar,

to what belongs to us: one's own accent, mother tongue, rituals, celebrations etc. (Kramsch 2009, 14 referring to Kristeva 1980). FLT should allow plenty of space for the familiar. But other occasions, of course, desire gives wings to explore the unknown and to widen or to 'soften' one's borders.

Most of the activities in the present package have been shaped by the desires of my students in Mexico. I feel indebted for all their contributions: lots of enthusiasm, lots of effort, lots of (sometimes a bit boisterous) participation, generous suggestions for improvements and, always, a treasure in meanings. I feel privileged for having had the opportunity to 'resignify' many of the activities that were created there, in interaction, through trial and error, or as fortunate improvisations. I hope the materials will find new lives in hands of other teachers and learners, always adapting to new circumstances.

Learning languages is more than pragmatic communication or interaction to complete tasks. And 'mind' is more than a recipient, located in the head, to process input and produce output. Learning languages is, above all, about using symbols, signs. In this material package I would like to remind foreign language learners of their semiotic potential: making meaning is both a capacity and a need, closely intertwined with language and with culture. The concreteness of rituals, myth and art offer excellent means for internalizing meanings through repetition, rephrasing, remembering, redoing, remaking. They foster interaction in a concrete and bodily way. Interaction cannot be taken for only verbal or linguistic communication: it is multimodal, and gestural, construction and expression of meanings. I hope the activities included in the package will all allow space for the bodily aspects of learning and for alternative and multimodal ways of representing subjective meanings. They are afforded to promote the aesthetic pleasure that can be found in constructing meanings.

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Material Package

Rituals, Myth and Art for the English Language Class

Anu Kivinen

TABLE OF CONTENTS

To the Teacher,

"The more potential meanings they are encouraged to discover, the richer the opportunities for learning" (Kramsch 1993, 67).

The linking thread between the materials presented in *Rituals, Myths and Art for the English Language Class* is that they all seek to promote a search for meanings. They are grounded on the belief that learning foreign languages is more enjoyable, and more effective, if we focus on contents. Foreign language teaching has long understood 'meaningful contents' as communicating objective information and completing pragmatic tasks through classroom talk, and even though it has rightfully underlined the role of social interaction in constructing learning, other important aspects have been overlooked. It is my conviction as well that through interaction minds are made, languages learned and cultures created. Therefore, the package promotes interaction in a broader sense, not only the face-to-face verbal interaction. Learners interact with the environments that surround them; with their own personal and cultural histories through exploration, reflection, writing and other forms of artistic expression; or with the 'distant and the exotic' by imagining and investigating. Besides, rituals, myth and art are cultural 'containers' that, on one hand, link us with accumulated human experience, and on the other, offer means for creating and expressing new or renewed meanings.

We should not overlook that from each individual learner's perspective learning a foreign language is a process that involves each one subjectively. The materials invite learners to make the meanings in the foreign language *theirs,* and sometimes in an unorthodox manner. I believe this goal is best attained when promoted as an aesthetic experience. It links body to mind, and form to meaning. One of the tenets of humanistic teaching as well as of Steiner education is that particularly artistic involvement makes learning more meaningful and memorable. Art is seen to be an asset in promoting holistic personal growth and wellbeing in learners, a goal that Finnish National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools (2003:12) also states. Rituals, myth and art - three powerfully concrete vehicles for human meanings – offer excellent means for the aesthetic to grow. There are no clear-cut frontiers between them: rituals evoke myths, myths are presented artistically or as a ritual, and so worth. What is common to all of them is that they put us in touch with the aesthetic aspects of meaning making and with its affective impact. It is important for a language learner to find

beauty in the language itself: in the sounds, in an idea or emotion well expressed, in a metaphor, in a poem or a tale, or in a single word closely felt.

The activities are aimed as a resource to complement an English language course. I hope they would offer learners and teachers refreshing and a bit mysterious ways of *participating,* and not only in the immediate classroom work, but in the ever broadening worlds of the multilingual subjects that they all are. The upper-intermediate or advanced level learner of the upper secondary school can well 'do things with language' instead of paying explicit attention to it. Nonetheless, I am not suggesting that learning a foreign language without 'noticing' language in itself would be enough. In the dynamics included in the present material, speaking and presentation skills have a major role, even though I consider that alternating the classic four language skills is more dynamic and enriching. On the other hand, what has traditionally been considered 'teaching language in itself' (grammar and vocabulary, idiomatic uses etc.), would in the present context 'emerge' during class room work and the meaning making processes learners are immersed in. Constant error correction is not necessary; supporting learners with their language and scaffolding them is, as well as helping them 'notice' the language by drawing attention to linguistic features when opportunities and explicit doubts arise.

Foreign language teaching has usually gone hand in hand with the assumption that the 'culturally authentic texts' used as teaching materials should originate from native language-and-culture contexts. This material package promotes learners' generating their own texts and building their own 'authentic' materials. In other cases, the teacher (who as well is an authentic example of a multilingual subject) will provide or create texts for them. I think that language generated by learners and teachers should be valued. The activities usually imply a good amount of 'investment' - which in olden times used to be called 'work' or 'effort' - from the learner's part. My experience with the materials has been that they usually offer a scope that is broad and open enough for each learner to find a channel for personal styles and interests. Finally, that is the point. There is space for healthy transgression, as well: it is conducive to learning when converted into invented autobiographies, absurd dialogues, or subversive performances. On the other hand, at the end it depends on each individual learner in which ways each one relates with the 'allowances' available, or which is the most relevant or valuable part of the experience in each case. It is important to remain open to unforeseen outcomes.

Exploring the symbolic world with our students is a privilege. As teachers, we have the opportunity to refresh our own meanings in interaction with our students. Teachers undergo personal changes, and their audiences are always renewed: with cyclic rhythm, through enriching repetitions, one can always reconnect with texts and materials differently. *Rituals, Myths and Art for the English Language Class* strives to promote the aesthetic pleasure that can be found in constructing meanings. The activities will work for you if you find them meaningful, and, if you do: make them yours!

CLASSROOM RITUALS: The Structure of the Lessons

"Good teaching is all a question of rhythm and timing" (Kramsch 2009). According to Steiner (Waldorf) education, as well, a good lesson has an organic rhythm. Waldorf teachers talk about alternating 'thinking, feeling and willing activities'. While thinking activities stimulate the intellect, feeling activities involve the emotions, and willing activities motivate students by having them do things with their bodies. (Uhrmacher 1993.) A rhythmic lesson has a form that is not rigid or mechanistic: it responds to what takes place, and remains flexible. It can be both ritualistic and spontaneous, always allowing space for improvisations. It is important to give each class a 'living form'. It contributes to the aesthetic experience that the lesson can be, and by making the class more relaxing and pressure-free, it encourages learning.

The lessons in the material package usually have this form:

a. *Warm-up*. A short activity that awakens the curiosity about the class and introduces the topic in an imaginative way. In some lessons the warm-up can consist of a longer activity: for example listening to a story, listening to a piece of music, observing what the teacher does. Often the ideal warm-up is bodily, involving movement, stretching, breathing, doing rhythms. Sometimes the class, instead of being 'activated' could rather use some focusing or calming down. It can be promoted with soft movement as well.

b. *Hands-on-work.* Covering the teaching point. This is the part in which you 'do' your teaching and the learners 'do' a good part of their learning. It can be an artistic process, a series of interactions, a ritual, a presentation given. Learning is interaction: we should try to make our lessons interactive, in the broad sense of the word.

c. *Integration.* The part of the class in which you manipulate new information, internalize it, use new skills, expose or share what has been created. It can be a summary of what has been learned. ("Mention something you learned today. What helped you?") Experience needs to be processed consciously by reflecting on it. Sometimes the lesson can be closed with a relaxation, an invitation to remain in silence listening to the sounds around us, a short game, or a classroom ritual

specifically created for the purpose. Through rituals we create collective memories that bond the class together.

RITUALS

Rituals are 'cultural performances'. They can be religious, artistic, political, or perhaps related to the organization of the most concrete and domestic spheres of our cultural experience. 'Sunday breakfast' may be experienced as a ritual. Educational settings and classroom practices are full of rituals. Rituals have very much the same quality as art. They give a concrete and experienced social form to meanings. They are not merely spectacles to be watched: they are enacted. In a ritual we "leap" into a symbolic framework, and when the ritual ends, we return again to the common sense world, somehow changed. (Geertz 1973.) Durkheim (1912) talks about the "serious life" that some human activities have when they are given a deeper ritualistic and symbolic meaning that our everyday activities usually have. Turner (1969), anthropologist specialized in rituals, says that rituals occupy a place that lies at the threshold of the old and the new. And perhaps, between what is 'real' and what is 'imagined'? We can easily imagine language learning to take place at that kind of thresholds.

1. New Fire Ceremony

What it is about:

- Ceremony with the objective of creating New Light/Fire for the New Year/School Year/Semester. It could be used for ending a cycle as well.

Time needed:

- *Lesson One* (45 min.) to write and to prepare.
- *Lesson Two* (45 min.) for the Ceremony Approximately a minute of delivery time should be contemplated per student.

Material needed:

- A candle or a lantern. Incense, if it does not bother anyone.
- Calm and solemn background music. Gregorian chants create the right atmosphere, and ceremonies with Arvo Pärt's music have turned out well. Many other religious or spiritual music traditions could be explored as well (Tibetan chants, for example).

  Suggested music:
  - Arvo Pärt: *Pari Intervallo, De Profundis, Summa* or *Stabat Mater.*
  - Or: Gregorian chants.

What is practiced:

- Creative writing techniques: narrowing down from a vast text, expanding from key words.
- Developing a sense of unity of the group and awareness about the importance of each one's individual contribution. Helping each other peer-checking and giving suggestions.
- Self expression.
- Self-control and concentration.
- Building up strategies to memorize short texts.

Description:

The dynamic takes two classes. During the 1st one, students are told that they are going to participate in a Ceremony with the objective of creating new Light/Fire for the Cycle to begin. With this, they usually take it very seriously. A solemn tone, when taken playfully and with a sense of humour, can be surprisingly contagious! Each one will represent a "human quality" or a "human experience" in the Ceremony. Everyone will receive a personal assignment, which the teacher – presumably – has carefully pondered upon during the previous days. They will write a reflection, or a poem, about the word given to them. Before that, a short review of some techniques for creative writing would do nicely. During the second class, the Ceremony is carried out, seated in a circle on the floor, with uplifting music (Gregorian chants, for example). Sometimes I have used a scent stick in the centre. The teacher piles the texts, keeps them in front of her, opens the ceremony and starts calling the "qualities" out, one by one. A candle will circulate among the participants, always in search of the next one to talk. It must be handled with care, and it cannot cross the circle nor skip anyone! While the

students recite their thoughts, they are asked to fix their eyes on the flame “to empower the words”. (It is, actually, a fine exercise to have more control over eye contact while speaking.). At the end, the teacher closes the ceremony, places the candle in the centre, and the group blows it off. After that, everyone can applaud!

This is what you do:

Lesson One:

1. Tell your students they are going to participate in a Ceremony to create new Light/Fire/Energy for the new cycle to start. Each one will be assigned and represent an important human quality or value. Explain that they are going to write a poem or a reflection of around 40 to 50 words. Then pass individually with each student assigning them a word from a list. By now you might know them quite well and have the ‘feel’ for the right ‘quality’ for each one. If you feel uncertain, you could offer two or three options, but still with the message that you (as the ‘master of ceremonies’) are suggesting each word for a special reason. Students appreciate the personal tone. Knowing them, you might offer a special mission depending on their interests and characteristics: Dance, Music, Nature… Of course, it is important that they feel at ease with their topics.
2. Invite students to find their own way to create a text. Remind of different techniques for creative writing: narrowing down from a vaster text, expanding from key-words, free association, using a drawing, a mind map etc. Students can leave the whole process on the paper they hand in together with the polished final version of about 40 - 50 words. Circulate, and suggest improvements when appropriate. You can have them peer-check their texts in pairs or in small groups. In the end of the class, pick the texts up.

Lesson Two:

3. The following class give the texts back, and define a time for practicing the poems individually or in pairs. Have them think of strategies for memorizing the texts: for example, relating the content to their own bodies with subtle movements, or to intonation, using rhythm. Those are techniques that actors use!
4. During the last 30 min. approximately (depending on the size of the group), the Ceremony is carried out, seated in a circle, with uplifting music (Gregorian chanting,

for example). Pile the texts, and keep them in front of you (in case anyone needed prompting), and open the ceremony (for instance: “We are gathered here today to create New Light for the Semester to begin with our words…”). Tell the “Brothers and Sisters” to honour the occasion with Absolute Silence. State that the candle will circulate among them, always in search of the next one to speak. It must be handled with care, and it cannot cross the circle nor skip anyone! Suggest them to fix their eyes on the flame “to empower the words”. Then start calling the “qualities” out, one by one (“The first one to speak is…Courage”.)

5. After the last participation, the candle will return to you, and you can close the ceremony in the same elevated tone. Perhaps you would like to recite your personal poem about a quality as well! Then thank the Brothers and Sisters for their words and place the candle in the centre for the group to blow it off. After that, everyone can applaud!

Instructions you can give:

1. Write a poem or a reflection of around 40 to 50 words about the human quality or aspect that will be assigned to you. You will be a “representative” of this part or our shared experience in the Ceremony we are going to celebrate.
2. Find the way that suits YOU best to work on the text. You can start with a mind-map, or some keywords, and then expand it to a text. Or would you rather let your words flow freely, and then polish the text to make it more concise?
3. When satisfied with your text (and after having it peer-checked for mistakes) think of how you would like to recite it. Memorize it! Find your own way of memorizing. Don’t forget that we learn things better when we relate them to our own body, movement, breathing, voice. Train your body to recite the “poem”.
4. We will be seated in a circle in absolute silence listening to the music. Each one will be called out by the quality/experience he/she represents. Wait until the candle arrives to you, and hold it looking at the flame while you recite. The candle can’t go across the circle, neither skip anyone. Keep the light moving in one direction or another through the ceremony.
5. Wait until the Ceremony is closed to give applause to everyone!

Comments:

- In relation to contents, encourage students to foster originality, personal style and flavour in their texts. For example they can print their personal stamp by going for concrete and personal images to illustrate abstract ideas. In terms of delivery, students should be reminded about the importance of using varied intonation, rhythm, and an expressive tone of voice consistent with what they want to express.

- It is a principle in humanistic teaching and in suggestopedia that people learn more if their minds are clear of other things and - as far as possible - free of anxiety. Suggestopedia uses classical music to promote relaxation to help learning. For a recent review of humanistic principles, and for an interesting master thesis about the applications of the suggestopedic method you can turn to:

Larsen-Freeman, Diane and Anderson, Marti. 2011. *Techniques & Principles in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rovasalo, Sanna. 2008. *A Cookbook for Hungry Teachers : Suggestopedy and Cooperative Learning in Practising Oral Skills.* A Material Package. A Pro Gradu Thesis: University of Jyväskylä.

Examples of topics for the *New Fire Ceremony*:

- Joy
- Effort
- Mission
- Brotherhood
- Friendship
- Courage
- Forgiveness
- Beauty
- Truth
- Simplicity
- Adventure
- Silence
- Laughter
- Union
- Wisdom
- Love
- Movement
- Spring/Summer/Autumn/Winter
- Celebration

2. One World, Many Rhythms

What it is about:

- Listening to ceremonial music from different parts of the world to evoke images and to prompt creative writing. Discussion in teams and preparation of creative presentations about rituals.

Time needed:

- Three periods of 45 min.
- *Lesson One*. Listening to the samples of music and writing.
- *Lessons Two and Three*. Preparing and giving presentations.

Material needed:

- From 4 to 6 samples of ceremonial music from around the world. The number of the pieces depends on the size of the group and on the time available: each song will be presented by a team of 3 to 4. For example, *Sacred Music of the World: Ceremonial Songs and Dances from 30 Cultures* (Arc Music) is a double cd with a vast collection and it includes detailed descriptions of the ritual contexts. I have also used *Anthologie De La Musique Des Pygmes Aka* with fascinating music related, for example, to the process of recollecting honey among the Pygmies of Central Africa.
- A piece of paper for each student per each musical sample. Recycling A4 sheets cut in four is a good idea.

What is practiced:

- Attentive and concentrated listening.
- Writing with the flow of music.
- Discussions in teams based on the material generated by students.
- Presentation skills.

Description:

The process takes three classes. In the first one, students listen to a selection of ritual music from different cultural contexts around the world. Each one has as many pieces of paper as there are samples. While they listen, they can close their eyes, trying to imagine the context in which the music was recorded and describe the images on the papers. At the end of the lesson, teams are formed to work on each piece of music.

During the following class students are given time to prepare their team presentations. You can encourage them to do them creatively, perhaps with a demonstration of the ritual included! The third class will be dedicated to the presentations and for class discussion about the different scenarios people imagined. At the end the teacher can reveal the origins of each piece and give information about the ritual contexts.

This is what you do:

Lesson One.

- Tell students they are going to listen to samples of music from different cultures around the world. The music is ceremonial, used in a ritual context, which means that something specific is taking place while the music is being presented. Recommend them to close their eyes while they listen, and allow ideas and images flow freely. Some of the pieces might be quite long; in that case play only as much you consider necessary. When they are ready, they will write their impressions down on the separate pieces of paper. Number the papers clearly! Students usually enjoy trying to guess from which part of the world or which country each music comes from. Questions like these may help while they listen and write:

    a. Contexts: Where are they (outside, inside, in a temple, in a school building, on a field)? What are they doing (sitting, walking in a procession, praying, working, dancing)? What time of the day or of the year is it?
    b. Meanings: What kind of cultural values or sentiments does the music transmit to you?
    c. From which part of the world do you think this music comes from?

- Form as many teams as there are pieces of music. You can do this, for example, by a random count from 1 to 4 - 6. Then the first, or the last, representative of each team will pick the correspondingly numbered papers up. Each team will get together to read their bunch of papers. At the end of the class they will go through the notes, skimming

the subjective impressions about that particular piece of music by the members of the group. They can pay attention to the following:

> What kind of similarities can you find in the impressions or the images produced?
> Which were the most strikingly different interpretations?
> From which part of the world or from what culture did people think the music came?

Remind the teams to keep the papers and bring them for the following class!

Lesson Two.

- Now the teams can concentrate on preparing their own visions about the piece of music. You can play the samples again, or have them in the background. The teams should discuss which scenarios or ceremonial contexts they consider most probable or attractive and get ready to report on it. If they cannot reach a consensus, they will report on their differing views. You can circulate, participate in the discussions, and give suggestions. Tell them that it is not important for their interpretations to be 'correct' but to be 'possible', and the more detail they elaborate, the more plausible the actual ritual they report on becomes. The most interesting and memorable presentations result if the students also recreate the ceremony as they imagine it for the rest of the group. They can also involve the others as part of the context!

Lesson Three.

- The teams will pass to give their presentation. At the end of each presentation you can reveal where the music came from, and what the ceremonial context and purpose was. I have seen that it is amazing how close students get in their guesses and how sensitive they are to the general tone, atmosphere and meaning of the music.

Comments:

- **Suggested music**: The first album contains a vast selection of pieces of music in varied context and it includes detailed descriptions of the contexts. The second one is a fascinating album of the rich musical culture among the Pygmies of Central Africa, also with descriptions about the contexts and the uses of the music.

  - *Sacred Music of the World: Ceremonial Songs and Dances from 30 Cultures*, Arc Music 2000, 2 CD

- *Centrafrique : anthologie de la musique des pygmées Aka*, Harmonia Mundi, 2002, 2 CD

Examples for a typical 'musical palette' I have used in this activity:

- Rebirth of a Siberian shaman.
- Meditation in a Buddhist temple in Tibet.
- Pearl divers from Bahrain: morning prayer.
- A wedding in India.
- Funeral ceremony in Japan.
- The feast upon honey collectors homecoming among the Pygmies in Central Africa.
- Lullaby from Finland.

3. Virtual Trip

What it is about:

- In a warm-up activity, students will play a game with a map to evoke a longing for faraway. They will write descriptive messages from their travel destinations.
- For the following classes, in pairs, students take turns to be the "tour guides" that take the group to trips all around the world.

Time needed:

- One lesson (45 min.) dedicated to the warm-up activity and to do an introduction.
- Following lessons**:** 15 to 20 minutes per pair for the presentations. They can ask for more time if they think they need it (perhaps up to 30 min.). Sometimes an extra time is required because of the activities with the audience.

Material needed:

- A vast map of the world and a bottle or a pen for the warm-up activity. Pieces of paper to make post-cards.
- Each pair is expected to bring rich visual material and any props they can think of for their presentations.

What is practiced:

- Creative writing.

- Looking for information.
- Organizing work in pairs.
- Preparing audio-visual aids for presentations.
- Presentations skills. Coming up with original and interactive ways of involving the audience during presentations. Promoting natural movement and tone of voice while giving a presentation.

Description:

In a ritualistic warm-up activity, that could take around 30 min., students' appetite for travelling is awakened. In a game everyone is taken to different destinations on earth, and they will write messages/post-cards to describe the places. About 10 min. at the end of the class could be reserved for explaining the rest of the process.

For the following lesson, students prepare presentations in pairs. The destinations of the *Virtual Trip* can vary from a jungle tour or an arctic expedition to the most elegant plans in Venice or Dubai. The task is much more fun if they really act like tour guides and immerse the group in "life-like" experiences. It is important to remind them that they are not expected to give lecture about countries or touristic attractions. Instead, the group would like to know where they are going to sleep, eat, which places they are going to visit (not too many museums, please! The plan has to be balanced and more or less realistic). The imaginary trip could take about 3 days. It would be useful to learn some words in the local languages, to hear about the customs (what we should or should not do in each place) and to receive all sorts of recommendations from the guides who know the local conditions. At least in one part of their tour the presentation should be very clearly interactive. Perhaps the guides will have the group choose between two different museums and have the 'tourists' visit the museums simultaneously (in two different corners of the classroom with the two separate guides). Or perhaps they are going to cue and "buy" a snack using the local language; recognize animal sounds in the jungle; find the panda hiding in the bamboo forest; spot attractions or the hotel they are staying at on the map of New York; sit in a temple and listen to, or even, join chanting. Usually, students have great ideas for these interactions. Obviously, this is a very visual activity, and they can prepare power point presentations to guide through each step of the trip (again: without converting it into a heavily loaded informative speech). There are many other means they can use, too: sounds, music, clothing, tickets, brochures, books, food (if kept under control), souvenirs…

This is what you do:

Introductory Lesson.

- Gather the class around a map. By turns, have each student close the eyes and place the non-writing end of a pen randomly on the map. As an alternative, you could use a spinning bottle. It will point at each participant's travel destination in the warm-up activity. Have them elicit definitions of where they have landed and the very first images that come to their mind when they think of the place.
- After that, individually, people draft a postcard (possibly with a drawing) or a message from their locations but without stating where they are. They can describe the surroundings, what they have been up to, and how they feel there. Have a look at the drafts and help them make adjustments.

- Take the postcards and redistribute them at random. People read them and try to guess who sent each one and from where. You can round the activity off discussing who was the happiest/least fortunate of the travellers!

(Idea adopted from *Teaching Unplugged* by Meddings and Thornbury 2009)

- For the rest of the activity, in pairs, tell your students to choose a place to visit. They will investigate about it at home. Set a calendar for the Virtual Trips. You can give them the following instructions for preparing their presentations:

Instructions you can give:

1. Choose a place you would love to visit. When you have decided, pick the experiences you want to include in a travel plan. Make it varied, and something you would really enjoy doing. It has to be (more or less) realistic! Remember we will have to sleep somewhere (hotels? bed and breakfast? tents? around a bonfire?), try the local food, meet local people, and transport from place to place.
3. Organize your trip into a 15 – 20 min. presentation. At least one part of the presentation will be clearly interactive: you will have the group DO something with you. Check how long it takes beforehand!

4. Use rich visual material to illustrate the places we see, the people we meet, the dishes we eat. You can also use many other additional materials.
5. Elaborate and use an outline indicating who covers which point. Remember that an outline is not a script: you should not read from notes or from the screen. It would keep you from being in touch with the audience. Don't forget to plan a capturing opening beforehand and include it in the outline, as well as a nice conclusion/farewell.

Comments:

- I have seen that teenagers can get particularly excited about this assignment, and invest admirable amounts of energy in finding out about their dream destinations and in structuring their presentations to make them more engaging. So much so, that the sometimes-a-bit-stressful business of "having to give a presentation" is seen in a new light. We should not underestimate the force of *desire* (Kristeva 1980) and of the dreams when it gets activated! An activity like invites students to enter new and exotic worlds with a vast variety of languages spoken and different cultural 'rituals' exhibited - and it also allows being 'someone else' and inhabit one's body in different roles. Foreign language teaching searches to enable students to broaden the confines of their own language and culture and to see them, as well, in a new light, with renewed meanings.

- A useful resource book on presentations with fine chapters about how to prepare and present audio-visual aids, to prepare and use hand-outs and the PowerPoint both effectively and aesthetically:

  Chivers, Barbara and Shoolbred, Michael. 2007. Students' Guide to Presentations: Making Your Presentation Count. London, GBR: SAGE Publications Inc.

4. Ethnographic Project

What it is about:

- The warm-up activities (3 lessons) familiarize the students with some basic concepts of anthropology and ethnographic research. They search to raise curiosity about cultural phenomena.

- In teams, students investigate about a ‘culture’ or a community and then present it in ‘emic’ (in ethnography, experienced from the “inside”) terms for the class.
- Developing an eye for different cultural representations, traits or practices. Interpreting ritualistic behaviour – homely and familiar, or distant and exotic - in a cultural context.

Time needed:

- An entire course can be built around this theme. The warm-up activity can be used separately from the rest.
- *Lesson 1* (45 min.): the warm-up activity about ‘everyday rituals’.
- *Lesson 2* (45 min.): brainstorm about ‘culture’ and ‘cultural representations ’, ‘traits’ or ‘practices’. Creating teams for the presentations.
- *Lesson 3* (45 min.): an introduction about some anthropological and ethnographic concepts before explaining the project for the teams.
- *Further Lessons*: 15 to 20 min. of presentation time per team. Some presentations might require more time because of the activities with the audience (perhaps up to 30 min.). Also, reserve time for discussions!

Material needed:

- A2 size sheets of paper (for *Lesson 3).*
- Students will bring different audio-visual aids and other props for the presentations.

What is practiced:

- Ethnographic investigation: observation, description and interpretation (which implies writing, speaking and listening). Some activities involve the students artistically.
- Looking for information.
- Organizing work in pairs or in teams.
- Presentation skills: preparing visual aids (PowerPoint or cardboards and other props) and dynamics. Coming up with original and interactive ways of involving the audience.

- The activities search to promote curiosity about and sensitivity towards cultural phenomena, and in the best case, also a sense of discovery about the deeper meanings conveyed in cultural practices.

Description:

This assignment is a cousin of the '*Virtual Trip'*, but this time, instead of being immersed in the leisurely rituals of tourism, the students are invited to adopt a "deeper" anthropological point of view. Students receive a warm-up task before the first session dedicated to the activity. It helps to introduce the basic steps of the ethnographic method: observation, description and interpretation. Another preparatory session is dedicated to brainstorming about what 'culture' is, and reviewing (on the way) vocabulary to do with cultural phenomena. After that, I have given a short introduction about anthropology in a nutshell, covering some of the most basic concepts that are useful for the assignment. These concepts could include ideas like 'ethno-centric' or 'euro-centric' views vs. 'cultural relativism'. Also, 'field trip', 'field diary', 'participative observation', 'thick description', 'emic point of view' are some of the central contributions of anthropology to the social sciences. I have talked a little about anthropological theories, and among them about the 'cultural configuration theory' from the 50's (Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead), which - in spite of being now considered too simplistic as anthropological theory - has turned out to be helpful in conceiving this task. According to it, to get to the deep "core" of a culture, you observe and describe the "cultural traits" or "manifestations" of the "surface". The traits are not isolated, but they form a 'pattern' (like a 'personality'). At this stage, for most students these concepts are new, and this model is simple enough, and at the same time, profound enough to start being familiarized with anthropological thinking and with the idea of 'culture' as 'meanings'. In the context of this material, we want the dynamic to illustrate how people conceive and give expression to cultural meanings, and how each student and each team makes interpretations in terms of meanings.

And that is the task in the presentations that follow. In pairs, students choose a 'culture' (in the context of an ethnic group, or an urban cultural identity, or - more problematically - a 'national identity'), pick some (not too many) 'representative traits' (music, school, food, rituals related to different contexts, family organization, justice, government, clothing, religions, different celebrations etc.) and describe them in order to offer a glimpse of the "core" of the culture, with the "core values" (using the 'configuration'

terminology of the 50's). Alternative ways of giving the presentation is choosing a 'cultural practice' or a ritual (for example, a wedding ceremony, children's games, or a popular sport), and give a detailed ('thick') description of it; or they could compare rituals with the same 'functions' in several cultural contexts, again striving to interpret meanings.

This is what you do:

Before the first class dedicated to the Ethnographic Project, give your students a warm-up task. Tell them to choose one common, habitual, repetitive 'pattern' or 'ritual' in their lives, and just pay attention to it. It could be what happens in the bus stop, during the school meal, in the beginning of the math class, in a sports training, or during breakfast at home. Ask them to write a short description of what they have observed.

Lesson One.

- In the following class, organize students into random teams. Tell them to read their descriptions to each other and talk about the experience of observing something commonplace and familiar to them.
- Then, have them make interpretations about what they have observed and described: what 'deeper meanings' could those social contexts reveal about the culture they live in? Encourage them to be adventurous with their interpretations, and imagine possible interpretations.
- As the last step, each team will report on something they have learned through observing, describing and interpreting.
- Finally, tell them that they have gone through the basic three steps used in ethnographic research: observation, description and interpretation. It consists of making 'visible' what is taken for granted.

Lesson Two

- Start the following class brainstorming about the word 'culture'. One way to do this is writing 'culture' in the middle of the board, and start adding aspects around it. Writing will get a bit hectic now: you might like to have a couple of secretaries. Everyone should think of some examples. Perhaps they will first offer more obvious aspects like 'literature' or 'architecture' and then come to think of others like 'housing', 'education' or more concrete ones like 'clothing' or 'food'. When they offer very

general terms like ‘traditions’, ‘customs’ or ‘celebrations’, ask them to be more specific. Then, under celebrations, you would have weddings, funerals, religious cults, the beginning and the end-of-the-cycle celebrations etc. When school, work, health care, family, economy and leisure have been recorded, you have made your point: our lives are totally intertwined with cultural expressions. Human life is organized by culture.

- To integrate, students get in teams to reorganize the concepts on the board under any categories or fields they can think of. There are no correct answers: leave it up to them to find fields of observable traits/practices.
- Each team can pass to the board to explain or write down their conclusions. They might include terms like physical culture, social organization, political organization, arts, health etc.
- At the end of the class you could do a poll about which fields or aspects each one finds most interesting or attractive. This could help you to get them organized in teams according to affinities in interest for the presentations they are going to work on.

Additionally or alternately:

- In teams, student discuss if the cultural representations or traits on the board could be *universal*. Have them write a list of those cultural fields that they think would be common to all humanity!
- Have each team write or explain their lists.
- At the end, you might like to tell them with them a list of ‘cultural universals’ created by Donald Brown (1991) in his book *Human Universals*. He lists around 70 aspects of culture under these general headings:

    a. *Language and cognition* (e.g. colour terms, metaphors, units of time, taboo words).
    b. *Society* (e.g. personal names, law, gifts, visiting, family).
    c. *Myth, Ritual and Aesthetics* (e.g. dream interpretation, magical thinking, beliefs about death, play, toys, body adornment, hairstyles, melody).
    d. *Technology* (e.g. shelter, tools, weapons, lever, cooking).

- Again, at the end of the class you could do a poll about which fields or aspects each one finds most interesting or attractive. Get them organized in teams according to affinities in interest for the presentations that follow.

Lesson Three

- Now it is time to get 'teacherly' and lecture a bit about anthropology and ethnographic research. Apart from being helpful in conceiving the team presentations for the rest of the course, it adds 'importance' to the issue, and this usually appeals to our (sometimes quite) teacher-centred students.

One way to give 'lecture' in an engaging and interactive manner is by doing 'paper-framing'. It goes like this:

- Students need A4 size sheets of paper. Ask them to fold them in the half. Then again in the half, pressing the borders. Then once more in the half, marking the bends. And again, one more time in the middle, marking the lines with a fingernail. After that, when you open the paper, there are 16 boxes to contain 16 central ideas to do with anthropological thinking and ethnographic research.
- Students will listen to the 16 ideas you present to them. On one side, they are going to make drawings that remind them of the ideas. On the other side, behind the drawing, they will write *only* 3 to 5 keywords about the idea. At the end, they will have a reminder of useful concepts for their ethnographic presentations.
- While you explain the ideas, you can sketch your own drawings on a similar frame on the board. Just remind them that those are *yours* (and they can use them if they want to), but that everyone is free to make their visual notes in their own style, using their own images.
- To manipulate the new information, you could also do some 'backtracking': once in a while, go back to the previous images asking what they stand for. Ideas get repeated and expressed in different words.

However, as the aim is not to try to train students as anthropologists, it is necessary to be selective with the concepts. I would choose the following principles or ideas for this activity. You might like to change some of them. This is a flexible technique for teaching any contents you like!

1. Anthropology studies humankind from a *holistic* perspective: it integrates both human biology and culture. Anthropology is also holistic because it covers the entire temporal

and geographical range of human existence and experience: it studies all of humanity, all aspects of humanity, at all time periods.

2. Modern cultural anthropology as a discipline has moved, and promoted a move, from *ethnocentricity* (and euro-centricity: very much the result of Colonialism) towards a concept of *cultural relativism.* It means that each culture must be considered in it own terms, instead of being rated by the standards of another one (Kroeber 1950 in Rosado 1990). Instead of one centre, there are many centres.

    - Note: it is worthwhile to clarify that, in anthropological thinking, this does not mean that *all* cultural practices are equally valid or of equal worth. That each cultural trait may be understood in its context does not mean that each practice is appropriate. It seems, for example, that those practices that allow human beings to predict and control events in their lives are more successful and 'work better' (Bagish 1990 in Rosado 1990).

3. Anthropologists do ethnography, and ethnographic research is done in the 'field', as 'fieldwork'.

4. Ethnography is 'microscopic': it is always local, and it traces a road to the general through a concern with the particular, the circumstantial and the concrete (Geertz 1973).

5. The key method in ethnography is *participant observation*. The ethnographer is both a participant and an observer. He or she participates in the community she studies, and interacts with the *informants*. Participating in a community helps to understand culture from an *emic* perspective, that is: 'from the inside'.

6. An ethnographer has to learn to be *reflexive* about his or her own interpretations. We draw on our own social and cultural knowledge in order to judge and label experiences.

7. The ethnographer makes field notes and keeps them in a *field diary*. In the field diary he or she explores the tension between being a participant and an observer. It helps build *reflexivity*.

8. Ethnographic research consists of three main steps: *observation*, ('thick') *description* (of *data*) and *interpretation* (of *data*). That means that data is always interpreted in a concrete context.

9. Non-verbal communication and the use of social space (proxemics) are important in ethnographic research. People make meaning out of the use of their bodies and of space.

10. Some theories of anthropology reflect the notion of *functionalism* (Malinowski): We eat because we are hungry and repair the roof or we will get wet. So, an important part of an ethnographic project is to describe what people do and to understand, in their terms, *why* they do it. Functionalist view is also realistic: it assumes that it is possible to see and describe the world as it is.

11. Other theories reflect *constructivism*: social life is seen as constructed by interactions and texts. The 'real world' does not exist out there as a set of objective facts; it is constructed by us in our everyday lives and language is the chief instrument for doing this.

12. In a *cognitive* view, culture is seen as *knowledge*. It is what one has to know or believe in order to operate in an acceptable manner (Goodenough 1964). (Culture 'in the spider's head').

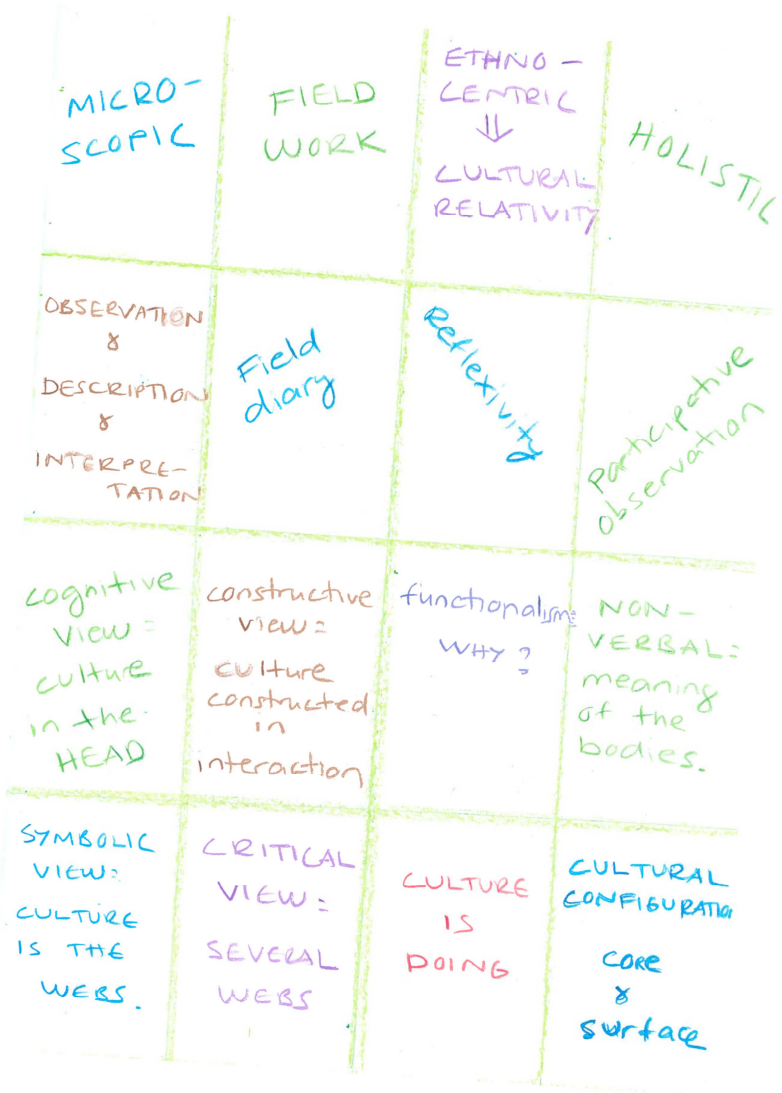
13. The *symbolic* view of culture: a system of public meanings. Cultural meanings do not reside in people's heads but are shared among those who could be said to have the same culture (Geertz 1973). We eat certain kinds of food and take care of our households not just because it is functional but because it has symbolic meaning. In this case, culture is the spider's web, and the spider lives in the midst of the web it weaves.

14. The *critical* view of culture: Issues of power are placed at the centre (Fairclough, 1996). Who decides and why which are the 'real' or the 'right' functions or meanings? How did the dominant view come to prevail? The critical view is particularly sensitive to the colonial associations of the earlier days of the discipline. So an ethnographer

today would not talk about a group he has studied as, for example, *The Finns*. There is a danger in taking dominant cultural practices as the 'givens' of a culture. In any community there are varieties and struggles over meaning which are observable in the actions of small groups. In this view, the spider ponders among several webs shared with others.

15. Nowadays culture is seen as a verb: culture is '*doing'* rather than 'being'. It is not so much what culture is but what it does (Street, 1993). We can get closer to this active, dynamic view of culture if we talk about culture as processes or *practices*. Members of society are *agents* of culture, not merely bearers of culture (Ochs, 1997).

16. Another view that you can use in an ethnographic project is the cultural configuration theory from the 50's (Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead). In it, to get to the deep "core" of a culture, you observe and describe the "cultural traits" or "manifestations" of the "surface". The traits are not isolated, but they form a 'pattern' (like a 'personality'). Culture is conceived as being sustained by 'core values' which are observable in the cultural traits. (*You can ask*: Which general orientation does this view reflect: functionalist or constructivist? Is it a cognitivist, a symbolic or a critical view? Why?)



Instructions for preparing the team presentations:

1. In pairs or in teams, choose
    - a 'culture' (could be an ethnic group, or a cultural identity, or even a 'national identity'), pick some (not too many!) 'representative traits' (music, school, food, rituals, family organization, justice, government, clothing, religions, different celebrations etc.) and describe them in order to offer a glimpse of the "core" of the culture, with the "core values" (using the 'configuration' theory of the 50's).

- a ritual (for example, a wedding ceremony, children's games, or a popular sport), and give a detailed ('thick') description of it, interpreting the meanings woven into it.
- rituals with the same 'functions' in different cultural contexts, again striving to interpret meanings.

2. Try to adopt the 'emic' insider's point of view, as if you were doing fieldwork or 'participative observation'. Avoid judging cultural practices from the outside.
3. Organize your material into a 15 – 20 min. presentation. At least one part of the presentation should be clearly interactive, like a cultural immersion! It could be playing a game, trying some food, drinking tea, saying a prayer, greeting each other, learning a dance, participating in a ceremony, selling and buying…
4. Use rich visual material to illustrate your main points. You can also use many other additional materials to create a cultural experience, such as objects, music and textiles.
5. Hand in an outline indicating who covered which point. Don't forget to plan a capturing opening beforehand and include it in the outline, as well as a conclusion with some of your daring interpretations and insights about the culture.

Suggestion for an integration of the course: **Class Diary**

Each class, students by turns (could be using the same teams) are asked to complete a class diary. These diaries have a dual purpose: they foster the habit of reflexivity as when keeping a field diary, and most importantly, they provide an opportunity for students to give their own account of what happens in the session along with any comments and reflections on what they had learned, what works and what does not, how the class was organised, etc. Making the diaries a regular part of the classes accustoms students to reflect on their learning and also to be frank in their reactions to the course. It also helps the teacher to see how the course is enfolding, and often students include important suggestions for improving the course or the presentations. At the end of the course the teacher or some volunteers could comment on the notes in the class diary.

Comments:

The purpose of the activities, at this stage, is to promote an open minded vision of cultural diversity, to detect prejudices and to question some 'cultural' and thus constructed aspects that we tend to take as 'natural'. It can also contribute to developing 'an ethnographic

imagination' (Atkinson 1990 in Rosado 1990) – conceiving cultural life differently due to an intense engagement with it. Perhaps it is worth repeating, that there is no intention of turning students into anthropologists or ethnographers, and obviously, the major learning outcome will not be knowledge about a 'culture' or 'cultures' in an encyclopaedic or positivist sense. The learning we have in mind here is more personal and reflexive and anchored to the idea of constructing meanings in an aesthetic way: thus such insistence on the ritualistic aspects of our everyday cultural experiences. 'Doing things' artistically and through ritualistic engagement is also a way to integrate intellectual and conceptual development with affective involvement and change. The series of activities develops skills and creates opportunities for interaction in an 'ethnographic mind-set' that tends to promote a palpable sense of belonging to a group or to different communities as cultural beings. Thus they might broaden the scope of experiencing belonging across borders or stable identities. Using a foreign language can help to take the necessary distance to be 'reflexive'. Also, it might reveal unexpected or 'exotic' meanings even in the most familiar cultural sphere. It is important language learners notice how they can mediate between different languages and cultural practices, and in doing so, develop a growing understanding of themselves and their own cultural contexts as well (about intercultural competence in Roberts, Byram, Barro, Jordan and Street 2000, 42-43).

Sources:

An exhaustive guide on the uses of ethnographic concepts and projects in the context of foreign language teaching and in building the 'intercultural competence':

> Roberts, C., Byram, M., Barro, A., Jordan, S., and Street, B. (2000). *Language Learners as Ethnographers*. Clevedon, GBR: Multilingual Matters Limited.

A discussion of the still controversial concept of cultural relativism in the context of cultural teaching:

> Rosado, Caleb (1990). *The Concept of Cultural Relativism in a Multicultural World. (Or Teaching the Concept of Cultural Relativism to Ethnocentric Students*). In Rosado Consulting for Change in Human Systems [online]. http://www.rosado.net/articles-relativism.html (Accessed 14 Apr 2013)

The theme of human or cultural universals is intriguing. There are two often-cited books on the topic. Brown lists around 70 universals under four general categories.

Brown, Donald (1991). *Human Universals*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Pinker includes more than 200 universals and categorizes them from an evolutionary standpoint. You can find a list in

Human Universals. Education WordPress [online].
http://humanuniversals.com/human-universals/ (Accessed 14 Apr 2013)

Pinker, Stephen (2002). *The Blank Slate*. New York: Viking Press

5. A Lesson to Remember

What it is about:

- In pairs, students share their some of their cultural expertise giving an interactive and original lesson about a topic that is important to them.
- 'Teaching as a ritual': Exploring how to give a well-structured and engaging lesson

Time needed:

- An entire course can be built around this theme.
- *Lesson One* (45 min.): the warm-up activity is an introduction, which, simultaneously serves as a demonstration of the activity.
- *Further Lessons*: 15 to 20 min. of presentation time per team. Some presentations might require more time. In this activity, though, it is important to try to stay within the allotted time: it forms part of the ritualistic side of teaching!

Material needed:

- A2 size sheets of paper (for *Lesson One).*
- Students will bring different audio-visual aids and other props for the lessons they give.

What is practiced:

- Learning to organize an effective lesson based on some central approaches in the field of education.

- Preparing attractive materials and dynamics for the class.
- Building a sense of positive leadership.
- Showing flexibility with one's lesson plan: sometimes you have to adapt and change the plan!

Description:

To introduce the 'Lesson to Remember', I have first given an introduction about some concepts to do with education and with ways of promoting effective and enjoyable learning. At the same time, this has been a demonstration of the 'Lesson to Remember'. Most concepts I have introduced come from Humanistic approaches, such as suggestopedia, and from Steiner education, or are related to such focuses as cooperative learning, multiple intelligences, emotional intelligence and neuro-linguistic programming. After the demonstration, which introduces the "method", students receive a 'recipe' to prepare an effective lesson about any topic they want to.

This is what you do:

Lesson One:

- *Warm-Up*: Tell your students that you are going to give a Lesson on the topic of effective and enjoyable learning. At the same time, your lesson will serve as a demonstration of what they are expected to do during the following classes. At the end of the class they are going to receive instructions for that assignment, and by then, those instructions will make sense to them! Let's start.
    - Write, in silence, these sentences on the board:

      I hear, and I forget.
      I see, and I remember.
      I do, and I understand.
      -Chinese proverb-

      Tell everyone to stand up, and repeat each line as a choir after you. I've used gestures with each line, to make the point! Have them imitate the gestures as well. You can point at your ears with "I hear", at your eyes with "I see", and show your hands with "I do". Use expressive gestures and tone of voice with "forget", "remember" and "understand" (with understand I have placed my hands on my heart). This causes curiosity about what will follow.

Hands on work:

- Students need A2 size sheets of paper. Don't tell them yet that you are going to do 'picture-framing' (used in 'Ethnographic Project'). Just have them follow your instructions as follows:
- Fold the paper in the half. Then again in the half, pressing the borders. Then once more in the half, marking the bends. And again, one more time in the middle, marking the lines with a fingernail. After that, before you open the paper, how many squares or boxes will you have? (Let them think and answer: they enjoy this part, and you can have fun, too, being exaggeratedly teacher-like, giving positive feedback, encouraging, congratulating etc. It is perfect if it feels like a 'game'). Then open the papers: and yes, there *are* 16 squares.
- Tell students they will hear 16 ideas that are related to learning and they are going to use the sheet as their notebooks. It is called 'picture framing'. On one side, they make drawings that remind them of the ideas. The drawings g*o in order*. On the other side, behind the drawing, they will write *only* 3 to 5 keywords about the idea, but this time in any of the squares: *in random order*. At the end, they will have a reminder of useful concepts for their 'Lessons to Remember'.
- While you explain, sketch your own drawings on a similar frame on the board. Remind them that those are *yours* (and they are welcome to use them), but that everyone can make their visual notes in their own style, using their own images.
- While you go through the process, you get to manipulate the concepts more if you do some 'backtracking' once in a while: go back to the previous images asking what they stand for. Ideas get repeated and expressed in different words, and students are more involved. Find the list of the suggested 16 concepts after the class plan.

Integration:

- When the sheet is complete, tell students to turn the paper. Now you will play a game of bingo on the other side. Call out concepts, and students will cross them out on the other side of the paper, which has the written words. The first one/ones to have a vertical, horizontal or diagonal line wins/win. You can congratulate the winner/winners with a handshake!

- You can move on to give them a useful ‘recipe’ for building a lesson that usually functions. They should use it to make their lesson plans and outlines for the ‘Lessons to Remember’.

Lesson plan

1. Field.
2. Teaching point: the objective of the lesson.
3. The structure of the lesson:
    a. *Warm-up*. A short activity that awakens the curiosity about the class and introduces the topic in an imaginative way.
    b. *Hands-on-work*. Cover teaching point. This is the part in which you ‘do’ your teaching and the learners ‘do’ a good part of their learning. Learning is interaction: think of interactive ways of covering your teaching point.
    c. *Integration*. The part of the class in which you manipulate new information or use new skills. It can also be a reflection or a summary of what has been learned.

Instructions you can give:

- In pairs, choose a topic from a field that interests you. It can be something academic or not (could be about a hobby that you have). Narrow the topic down into a teaching point that you can cover during a short class (15 to 20 min.). Structure the class in three parts as shown above.
- When planning your lesson, try to take into account some of the basic principles for effective learning that were given to you in the demonstration. Experiment with teaching in a dynamic and interactive way keeping in mind the rhythm of your class.
- Prepare good visual (and/or auditory) material for your class. Don’t forget movement either: learning is a bodily process!
- You will have the opportunity to practice good management of the group: take your learners into account, involve them in activities, give opportunities to participate, show clarity in the instructions.

The 16 suggested concepts for picture-framing:

1. Learning should be **F**un. We learn much better if we enjoy it, find pleasure in learning.

2. When we learn, we always use our **I**magination. We imagine the process, and the possible outcomes.

   > Einstein said: "Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand".

3. We learn better if we are **R**elaxed. (You can tell that it is a basic principle of, for example, *suggestopedia*, in which music is used to help learners enter the creative alpha-state.)

4. **E**motions form part of the learning process. (Learning is never merely 'rational' or cognitive.)

   > Backtrack the first four ideas, and mark the letters in the boxes to get a 'title': FIRE. Have someone elicit the word. It is a basic formula that is easy to remember!

5. Each learner is different and uses diverse learning strategies or styles.

6. Brain is a flexible organ: it changes all the time. We can learn new skills and exercise our brains (and our minds) through all our lives.

7. Body and Mind work together. Learning is holistic.

8. We learn by interacting. We interact with each other directly or through the cultural 'texts' or products created by others. We also interact with nature and with the material world.

9. While we learn, we pay both *focused* and *peripheral* attention to things around us, and we have to take it into account. (Focused attention: drawing notes while I listen. Peripheral: noises in the background, or 'I didn't have breakfast', or it is too cold/dark/uncomfortable etc.). Body-mind works on several tasks simultaneously.

10. We learn by repeating, 'retracing', manipulating things and actions physically and mentally. This happens through interactions with others and with our environment.

    You can tell them that through this process learning is 'internalized' (in sociocultural theory). Students can reflect on how this requires doing '*private speech*' – speaking to ourselves - or *inner speech*, when our interactions and dialogues become thoughts.

11. Our mind moves from the whole to the parts. When we learn, first we need to build a 'whole picture'. At first we construct an image, or a context; after that we can concentrate on the parts. Our mind makes interpretations all the time: it can't avoid it!

12. Making mistakes is a natural part of learning: we are not only learning how to do something; we are also figuring out how *not* to do something. We also learn from mistakes.

13. To learn, we need to involve our bodies (through movement and by 'listening' to it), our hearts (as learning is emotional) and our heads, and in that order.

    It is one of the principles of Steiner education. Bodies and movement are related to 'willing' (motivation) activities, hearts to feeling activities, and heads to intellectual thinking activities.

14. Each brain (and body-mind) is both an artist and a scientist. We should promote learning both as artists and as scientists: we can be both.

    You can talk to them about the different orientations or domains in the right and left hemispheres of the brain. In very general terms, the right hemisphere is the 'artist' and the left hemisphere is the 'scientist'. The left side has functions that are more analytical, the right side synthetizes more. Usually, one is more dominant than the other. (Gardner 1993). The view might be simplistic, but the point is that art and science should be integrated.

15. There are several intelligences, not only one. (Ask them which intelligences they have heard of.) Multiple intelligences imply we also have multiple memories

(elicit examples: who remembers numbers, melodies, has a strong visual memory, remembers by retracing actions etc.).

> Howard Gardner's famous list of multiple intelligences includes eight 'modalities': spatial, linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. Later he suggested that existential or moral intelligence should be included.

16. Mind needs engaging challenges, but it doesn't react well to threat. To continue learning, we need to feel that we have succeeded.


F
I
R
E
6x3=16
16?
6x3=18

Sources:

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Lantolf, James P. (2000a). *Introducing sociocultural theory*. In Lantolf, James P. (Ed.) (2000). *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1- 26.

MYTH.

According to Geertz' (1973) interpretive anthropological theory meaning is "stored" in symbols, dramatized in rituals and related in myths. Myths and other forms of oral tradition such as fables and fairy tales are powerful ancient vehicles for experiences and deep cultural knowledge. They highlight the fact that language not only makes meaning by referring to things but by evoking them. Rather than using language for its objective truth value, in myths we bring to surface the subjective beliefs and emotions that it entails. Researches claim that they fill a widespread human need: people construct and tell myths and tales to make sense of their worlds. They put order to things; they instruct, heal, entertain and mystify. Typically, myths throw light upon man's eternal questions. In them we meet gods, heroes, animals and forces of nature. They often contain descriptions and explanations of creations, origins and meanings. They touch on both material and spiritual culture. We can find myths circulating around us: the socially constructed reality continues being explained and narrated everywhere. When we start explaining the world as we know it, we are at the threshold of mythical thinking.

6. My name.

What it is about:

- Exploring cultural history and subjective meanings through one's name.

Time needed:

- Two periods of 45 minutes.

Material needed:

- Paper, pencils and background music.
-

What is practiced:

- Listening to a story, speaking and writing.
- Artistic expression.
- Doing a little investigation – fieldwork about one's name.
- Oral expression. Presentation skills.

Description:

The dynamic could start with a soothing storytelling session. You can find annexed a version of Grimm Brothers' Rumpelstiltskin to be read to the students for a 10 min get-away. I recommend you to play calm music on the background to complete the homely sensation of children's bedtime… Actually, Rumpelstiltkin is quite a disturbing fairy tale full of twisted, vain and selfish characters, but perhaps instead of going into too much literary analysis, the teacher could just bring the listeners back to the classroom reality by having them share, each one of them, one image from the story. After that, you can draw their attention to the importance that Rumpelstiltkin's name proper has in the story, and discuss it with the class. In fairy tales knowing and using appropriately the names of persons and things is a matter of life and death… Now you can have them start working with their own names!

This is what you do:

Lesson one.

- As described above, surprise your students with a relaxing story time. Start playing background music that you find comfortable (find suggestions below), invite students to stretch, yawn, and breathe deeply, closing their eyes while they listen, if they want to. At any age, fairy tales have a hypnotizing effect, and you can enhance it with the

calm pace and steady rhythm of your reading. With a paused rhythm, it will take you about 10 minutes.

- After reading the story, continue playing the music for a moment more. Invite the students to 'return' to the classroom reality, subtly, and tell them to think of one image, and one image only, from the story. That is the cover of their 'personal Rumpelstiltkin edition': what is it? Then have them form teams of 3 to 4.
- In teams, each student will narrate the image that they found most striking, the image that remained. They should also make interpretations of their choices: why that particular character, object, line, feature, emotion etc.? After the round, it will be evident that each listener constructed a different, subjective version of Rumpelstilskin. Ask if anyone from the teams would like to share an image and an interpretation, or any reflections on the story and the activity. This might take you about 15 - 20 min.
- Invite the class to interpret what Rumpelstiltkin's name meant. Why did he want to keep it in the dark? Why did he disintegrate when his name was discovered? What *does* his name mean? Tell the class that there are no correct answers: any ideas or interpretations are as good.
- During the rest of the lesson, you can play some music again, and tell your students, individually, to write their names in the middle of a sheet of paper. Then they can start illustrating the paper around it with information, memories, images, drawings that come to their mind in relation to their own names. Tell them that they are going to take the sheet back home and complete it there. They can investigate about the origins or etymologies of their names, talk to their parents about them, and play with their names (how do they sound? What do they feel like?). Also, they can play with the individual letters of their names and use them to write a poem, or an acronym. Completing the sheet with an 'investigation' or reflection about their own names is homework, and remind them that the important associations will be made and meanings given by them.

Lesson two

- Form new teams for the first part of the activity. It could take about 20 min. Showing their sheets, students share their investigations about their names: explain what they found out about the shared cultural background or origin of the names; tell as much as they want to about the more personal reasons of their parents for choosing the name;

and finally talk about whatever other associations or connotations does their name have for them. After that they interchange the sheets for the following part of the activity.

- For the rest of the lesson, invite students to get seated in a circle on the floor. Play pleasant and relaxing background music. Place a 'name pot' or hat in the middle of the circle: it holds within, on small papers, the 'secret names' of the participants. After that, a student picks the first paper up, reads the name, and the one with the sheet of that person will talk about the meanings of the name. The steps add a sense of ceremony to the dynamic! You can set a time limit, for example a minute, approximately, and use an instrument (could be a triangle) to signal the time. At this stage students are not expected to go into so much detail, but summarize about what they have heard. When all names have been picked up and explained, the sheets are returned back to their authors.

Rumpelstiltskin

By the side of a wood, in a country a long way off, ran a fine stream of water; and upon the stream there stood a mill. The miller's house was close by, and the miller, you must know, had a very beautiful daughter. She was, moreover, very shrewd and clever; and the miller was so proud of her, that he one day told the king of the land, who used to come and hunt in the wood, that his daughter could spin gold out of straw. Now this king was very fond of money; and when he heard the miller's boast his greediness was raised, and he sent for the girl to be brought before him. Then he led her to a chamber in his palace where there was a great heap of straw, and gave her a spinning-wheel, and said, 'All this must be spun into gold before morning, as you love your life.' It was in vain that the poor maiden said that it was only a silly boast of her father, for that she could do no such thing as spin straw into gold: the chamber door was locked, and she was left alone.

She sat down in one corner of the room, and began to bewail her hard fate; when on a sudden the door opened, and a droll-looking little man hobbled in, and said, 'Good morrow to you, my good lass; what are you weeping for?' 'Alas!' said she, 'I must spin this straw into gold, and I know not how.' 'What will you give me,' said the hobgoblin, 'to do it for you?' 'My necklace,' replied the maiden. He took her at her word, and sat himself down to the wheel, and whistled and sang:

'Round about, round about,
Lo and behold!
Reel away, reel away,
Straw into gold!'

And round about the wheel went merrily; the work was quickly done, and the straw was all spun into gold.

When the king came and saw this, he was greatly astonished and pleased; but his heart grew still more greedy of gain, and he shut up the poor miller's daughter again with a fresh task. Then she knew not what to do, and sat down once more to weep; but the dwarf soon opened the door, and said, 'What will you give me to do your task?' 'The ring on my finger,' said she. So her little friend took the ring, and began to work at the wheel again, and whistled and sang:

'Round about, round about,
Lo and behold!
Reel away, reel away,
Straw into gold!'

till, long before morning, all was done again.

The king was greatly delighted to see all this glittering treasure; but still he had not enough: so he took the miller's daughter to a yet larger heap, and said, 'All this must be spun tonight; and if it is, you shall be my queen.' As soon as she was alone that dwarf came in, and said, 'What will you give me to spin gold for you this third time?' 'I have nothing left,' said she. 'Then say you will give me,' said the little man, 'the first little child that you may have when you are queen.' 'That may never be,' thought the miller's daughter: and as she knew no other way to get her task done, she said she would do what he asked. Round went the wheel again to the old song, and the manikin once more spun the heap into gold. The king came in the morning, and, finding all he wanted, was forced to keep his word; so he married the miller's daughter, and she really became queen.

At the birth of her first little child she was very glad, and forgot the dwarf, and what she had said. But one day he came into her room, where she was sitting playing with her baby, and put her in mind of it. Then she grieved sorely at her misfortune, and said she would give him all the wealth of the kingdom if he would let her off, but in vain; till at last her tears softened him, and he said, 'I will give you three days' grace, and if during that time you tell me my name, you shall keep your child.'

Now the queen lay awake all night, thinking of all the odd names that she had ever heard; and she sent messengers all over the land to find out new ones. The next day the little man came, and she began with TIMOTHY, ICHABOD, BENJAMIN, JEREMIAH, and all the names she could remember; but to all and each of them he said, 'Madam, that is not my name.'

The second day she began with all the comical names she could hear of, BANDY-LEGS, HUNCHBACK, CROOK-SHANKS, and so on; but the little gentleman still said to every one of them, 'Madam, that is not my name.'

The third day one of the messengers came back, and said, 'I have travelled two days without hearing of any other names; but yesterday, as I was climbing a high hill, among the trees of the forest where the fox and the hare bid each other good night, I saw a little hut; and before the hut burnt a fire; and round about the fire a funny little dwarf was dancing upon one leg, and singing:

'"Merrily the feast I'll make.
Today I'll brew, tomorrow bake;
Merrily I'll dance and sing,
For next day will a stranger bring.

Little does my lady dream
Rumpelstiltskin is my name!"

When the queen heard this she jumped for joy, and as soon as her little friend came she sat down upon her throne, and called all her court round to enjoy the fun; and the nurse stood by her side with the baby in her arms, as if it was quite ready to be given up. Then the little man began to chuckle at the thought of having the poor child, to take home with him to his hut in the woods; and he cried out, 'Now, lady, what is my name?' 'Is it JOHN?' asked she. 'No, madam!' 'Is it TOM?' 'No, madam!' 'Is it JEMMY?' 'It is not.' 'Can your name be RUMPELSTILTSKIN?' said the lady slyly. 'Some witch told you that!– some witch told you that!' cried the little man, and dashed his right foot in a rage so deep into the floor, that he was forced to lay hold of it with both hands to pull it out.

Then he made the best of his way off, while the nurse laughed and the baby crowed; and all the court jeered at him for having had so much trouble for nothing, and said, 'We wish you a very good morning, and a merry feast, Mr RUMPLESTILTSKIN!'

Source: Fairytales by the Grimm Brothers. Authorama. Public Domain Books.
http://www.authorama.com/grimms-fairy-tales-25.html (Accessed on 13 May 2013)

Suggested music:

Claude Debussy: Prélude Nº 8. *Très calme et doucement expressif (La fille aux cheveuz du lin).*
Prélude Nº 10. *Profundément calme (La Cathédrale engloutie*)
Images(oubliées) 1894. *Lent (Mélancolique et doux).*

Comments:

- This activity can prove very enriching in a multicultural class as students will expose both the cultural histories and some of more personal meanings attached to their names.

7. Say a word.

What it is about:

- Multimodal presentations in teams to discover and present possible meanings of words they have chosen.

Time needed:

- One class is probably enough.

Material needed:

- Cardboards or large sheets of paper for making drawings or posters.

What is practiced:

- Speaking and presentation skills.
- Artistic expression: finding multimodal expressions for the meaning of a word.
- Team work.

Description:

- In a warm-up activity, students will listen to a short piece of music (Chopin suggested) to evoke images. They write, quickly, a list of words associated to their perception of the music. Then they form teams of three to compare the lists and discuss the similarities and differences in them. Each team will choose one word and think of three different ways of 'saying' it, multimodally (without actually pronouncing the word). They can use drawing, movement, sounds… To integrate each team presents the words to the rest of the class, and the others try to guess what the word was.

This is what you do:

- Play a short piece of music, preferably one with a lot of movement and emotion (a short piece by Chopin is suggested: find a list in below), and tell students to write a list of words while they listen to it. Whatever words come to their mind. If the some of the words are in their native tongue, or in *any* language, it is ok. The pieces of music suggested take about 2 min.
- Students get in teams of three. They compare lists, and find if any of the words are repeated. They can discuss how similarly/differently they perceived the music. Perhaps there are words that apparently have nothing to do with the music in itself.
- Have them choose one word from the lists. If it is in L1, ask them (or help them) to translate or look for an equivalent in English. If they end up choosing a word that is

not in the lists, it is perfectly fine, too: finally, they 'negotiated' about it, and the word springs from the process. Tell them to keep the word in secret!

- Tell them that they are going to find three different ways of 'saying' that word without simply 'saying' it. They can use, for example, drawing, movement, music or sounds, or build a short dialogue, or a pantomime, around the word. Encourage them to be adventurous and open to unconventional ways of representing the words. How the word sounds, or 'feels like', can be a good starting point. Set a time limit. (Perhaps 20 min.)
- Each team will pass to present their words for the rest of the class. Remind them that they should not reveal them too straightforwardly. Now the job of the rest of the class is to figure out what the word is.

Suggested music:

Frederic Chopin:	Etude Opus 10/1 in C.
	Etude Opus 10/2 in a minor.
	Etude Opus 10/4 c# minor.
	Etude Opus 10/9 f minor.

Comments:

- The target language is not just a code, and linguistic practice is meaningful, and meaning-producing, practice. The language and culture pedagogist Karen Risager suggests that foreign language teaching should always remind students of semantic and pragmatic variability in language, both in their first language(s) and in the target language – by including, for example, discussions of possible meanings of words like 'work' or 'friend' or 'no' (Risager 2007, 237).

- It is also important to remind them of the fact that language is not the only way to construct and express meaning. This is why in this activity different modes are explored: graphic, acoustic, visual, gestural… How many ways are there to express 'joy' or 'yes'? Language is best learned with all the senses: with the sounds, the shapes, the colours, the rhythms, the tastes of words, the gestures and facial expressions that accompany them. A word always has many meanings, and when students manipulate them artistically, meanings become more personal and emotional.

Also, foreign language learners have the advantage that they are more free to play with words in FL as their meanings are not so clearly 'anchored' anywhere: the words 'float' more freely, allowing more space around them.

- It would be interesting to share that in Steiner or Waldorf schools students practice '*eurythmy*', a body movement that results in 'visible speech'. It highlights a person's capacity to communicate through non-verbal gestures. Eurythmy is made up of discreet movements that, among other things, represent phonetic sounds. Each phonetic sound, represented gestures, in turn stands for different aspects of the human experience. In the site mentioned below, you can find a description of the physical movements of some eurythmy alphabets, as well as some of the ideas associated with each one of them.

Source:

OpenWaldorf.com. http://www.openwaldorf.com/eurythmy.html
(Accessed on 11 May 2013)

8. Table Theatre.

What it is about:

- An exploration of folktales: myths, fables, fairy-tales, legends.
- Artistic presentations with self-made symbolic sceneries on the table.
- It is possible to organize of an event.

Time needed:

- An entire course can be built around this theme.
- *Lesson One* (45 min.): Revision and discussion of folktales.
- *Lesson Two* (45 min.): Suggested a demonstration of a 'table theatre' by the teacher. Plenty of time should be reserved for the discussion.
- *Following classes*. For students' table theatre presentations in pairs: around 10 – 15 min. each pair. The presentations might be short; the rest of the time is for the discussions.

Material needed:

- A table.
- For the demonstration by the teacher, preparation of any materials (fabrics, different papers, cardboards, natural elements, symbolic objects etc.) to be placed on the table.
- Students will bring different materials and self-made or symbolic artefacts for their table theatre presentations.

What is practiced:

- Reading and listening to folktales.
- Memorizing and presenting, artistically, a folktale**.**
- Coordinating and associating language (and memory) with gestures, objects and materials.
- Organizing a project in pairs.
- Organizing a class/school event.
- Learning about oral tradition and appreciating how meanings are transmitted by it. Recognizing similarities and differences across cultures.
- Elaborating and valuing materials and objects made by hand.
- In an assignment like this: recognizing the importance of careful preparation, rehearsing, good memorization and controlled delivery.

Description:

This project could culminate in a bigger event with artistic presentations of folktales (myths, legends, fables, fairy tales, or mixtures of them) using an oriental technique called ‘table theatre’, often used in the context of Steiner education. First of all, folktales and in general oral traditions (types, themes, functions, typical characteristics) are reviewed and discussed in class. The teacher could give a demonstration of a table theatre presentation. I have presented a Chinese legend, and afterwards we have discussed it in class. The point is, that all what is placed on the table, and everything you do during the presentation, is linked to the meanings you find in the tale. All materials and effects (colours, sounds, forms, textures, natural elements, objects) should be carefully chosen, with a symbolic value, and ideally (at least for the most part) made by the students. The presentation has a highly ritual quality: everything you do, each gesture, is given significance. Students will pay attention to their ritualistic

openings and conclusions, to their overall bodily expression during delivery and to a controlled use of voice (pace, rhythm, intonation, audibility). Obviously, as oral tradition is based on memory, they will edit their folktales carefully and memorize a version they find comfortable. The script could be marked with some 'stage directions' (use of the material on the table, symbolic gestures etc., see example included below). Each tale and presentation is discussed in class.

This is what you do:

Lesson One.

- Prepare the board with the title 'folktales' beforehand. Divide it in four parts: Myths, Legends, Fables, Fairy tales. Receive the class with soft music on the background (suggested: *The Solveig's Song* from *Per Gynt* by Edward Grieg). You might like to do a short stretching to warm up and relax before you start with a team activity. Then divide the class in four teams (you could do this by having them say, one by one, 'myth', 'legend', 'fable', 'fairy tale', thus assigning themselves a team. Assign each team a corner or a space in the classroom so that they are not too close to each other.
- Give each team a copy of a folktale: a myth, a legend, a fable or a fairy tale correspondingly. You will find a set annexed here, but obviously, there is a wealth of stories you can choose from. It is important though, that the examples are quite representative of the genre. Tell that one from each team will read the tale - others listen - and pay attention to the typical features of that particular variety in folktales. After that, allot them some time to discuss the point and make notes. Some of the typical characteristics will be found in the tale they read, but not all of course. Tell them to think of other myths, fables, legends and fairy tales and gather all the information they can from the team.
- Someone from each team will pass to the board with a frame you have prepared meanwhile. Under each heading you can organize slots for Characters, Themes, Features and Purposes. Students fill in the info.
- Go through the frame with the whole class. Ask students to copy the notes from the board. Revising it together, new ideas will arise and you can continue adding information on the board.
- You can integrate the lesson having everyone give an example of a memorable tale from childhood.

Lesson Two. This lesson implies quite a bit of preparation from the teacher. On the other hand, you prepare a tale for a table theatre once, and can repeat the 'ritual' countless times. Besides, my experience has been that students really appreciate the effort, and the teacher's openness to certain 'exposure' or 'fragility' that artistic expression often implies. It totally depends on each teacher whether and how you would like to give a demonstration. Definitely it is important you feel at ease, and choose a tale that *you* find meaningful, and that you enjoy the process of preparing the material for the presentation, and giving it. As an example only, I will include a script (including my 'stage directions') of the tale I have used. I have rewritten it from several different versions I have seen of the same tale. Even though I have used it for years (taking good care of the material I once prepared!) I enjoy redoing it each time. I have noticed students get more inspired about the course after the demonstration.

1. Tell the group that you have prepared a presentation of a folktale for them. The technique is called 'Table Theatre', it has oriental origins, and it is used for example in Steiner education. The attention should fall on the table and on everything that takes place there: the table, not so much the narrator, is under the spotlights.

The Wise Old Man (folktale from China)

[Opening: possibly lighting a scent stick, then slowly and ceremoniously uncovering the table which is covered by the blue cloth. Fold it calmly and place on the floor. Maintain a calm tone of voice and an even pace all through the presentation.]

Many, many years ago, on the northern border of China, there lived an old man who led a righteous life. [Showing the old man] *He led a quiet life, dedicating hours to silent contemplation.* [Take the box and show the mediation balls, shaking them to make them sound] *He honoured the teachings of his ancestors. The old man took loving care of his humble house,* [move the rake as if doing gardening] *and worked his garden and his field. He had witnessed with silent joy the growth of his son* [show the son], *a spirited strong young man.*

The old man had a beautiful mare [take the silhouette of the brown horse slowly moving it above the table] *which was praised far and wide. One day, for no reason at all, this beautiful horse ran away and disappeared* [away it goes, across the border]. *It ran away to the nomad tribes that lived across the border. What a shame! Everyone in the village pitied the old man* [throw a stone or two on the table] *and offered sympathy for his misfortune. The old man just said: "Perhaps one day this turns out to be a blessing"* [Just touch a flower thoughtfully].

*Some months later his horse returned***,** [bring the brown horse from across the border moving it subtly] *bringing with it a splendid stallion of the kind the nomads used* [introduce the black horse, following the other]. *The neighbors congratulated the wise old man* [take some flowers from the table and let them fall]. *Such lovely strong horses! But even though the old man was happy to have his horse back, he only said: "Perhaps one day this will bring misfortune".* [Touch a stone thoughtfully].

Their household was richer because of the fine horse. The son grew fond of the black stallion and enjoyed going for long rides in the surrounding valleys. [Suggest riding with the black horse and the young man]. *One day, during a ride, for no reason at all, the horse threw the son; he fell and broke his leg.* [Away goes the horse, the young man lying.] *Everyone in the village commiserated with them for such great misfortune* [throw stones on the table], *but even though the old man felt heartbroken he only said, "Perhaps one day this turns out to be a blessing".* [Touch a stone thoughtfully].

A year later the nomads came in force across the border [start drawing the transparent red cloth from across the border] *and started invading the northern villages* [move the red piece of cloth on the table, as it was a wave]. *A war broke out and all the able-bodied young men of the village had to take their bows, join the army and go into battle. The battles went on for years, and the village lost nine of every ten young men.* [Many stones.] *The old man, and his lame son, had not been sent to war. They survived and continued taking care of each other, suffering life's hardships* [touch stones], *and rejoicing in its many blessings* [a final shower with the flowers].

[Go for the blue cloth, and address the audience before unfolding it:] *Truly, blessing turns to misfortune, and misfortune to blessing. The changes have no end, nor can the mystery be fathomed.* [Cover the table],

Turn the scent stick off, and you might give an 'Oriental' bow to the audience.

2. After the presentation, start uncovering the table again, object by object, while you store (or have someone help you store) the materials. With each item brainstorm. What does it stand for? Look for associations, connotations. The students will add to the list of meanings that was contemplated. With the box of mediation balls you can promote discussion about the traditional religions and philosophies of the East, and finally have them talk about Taoism, yin and yang, and all the ideas in the tale that are related to the unifying principle of balance between the opposites.

Materials used:

- *Three transparent pieces of fabrics*:
    - *Brown* on the table, as the base. (Earth, certain time and place, 'yin.')
    - *Blue* on the top. (Heaven, timelessness, spirituality, 'yang'. Used to open and to close the presentation.)
    - *Red*. (War, fire, destruction, violence. Used to symbolize the invasion by the tribes from across the border).
- *Two characters:* the old man and the son out of rolls of toilet paper covered with baize. Purple for the old man, light blue for his son. Balls of wool for the heads.
- Out of cardboard boxes (possibly covering them/it with glue with water and newspaper and painting them grey) a representation of the 'border', suggesting the '*Great Wall of China*'.
- Out of cardboard the silhouettes of the *two different horses*, possibly covered with the mixture of glue and water and newspaper, painted brown and black.
- Small *stones* for hardships and misfortune. *Flowers* for the blessings of life.
- A small wooden *rake* to represent work.
- *A box with Chinese meditation balls* to represent tradition, ancestors and their teachings, Taoism.

3. At the end of the lesson, give instructions for the Table Theatre presentations, have them form the pairs, and agree about the schedule.

Instructions you can give:

1. In pairs, choose a folktale from any part of the world. Discuss the meanings you find in it, and think of a way to present it with symbolic actions, gestures and representative elements on a table.
2. The material on the table has to be made by you. Be sensitive to the quality of the material: what is it impression or sensation you would like to produce? Think of colours, forms, textures, sounds, objects. You can also introduce objects typical or representative of the culture area, textiles, natural elements (stones, pines, leaves, flowers, shells…) and musical instruments (or music in the background).
3. As this presentation (just like all scenic arts) is very ritualistic, open and close your theatre with symbolic actions that are clear and will captivate the audience's attention.
4. Edit the tale you chose to the exact form you are going to use. Indicate who is saying what, and insert some stage directions. Learn it very well. The only "outline" you can use is the material on the table: when you practice, you will learn to relate the

language to the movements and to the objects on the table. They will guide you through the presentation.

5. After the presentation, receive the feedback of your audience and answer the questions. You should be able to explain the meaning of each item you used, in case there were doubts about it.

Comments:

- Some of the pairs might like to participate in organizing an event for the school and give the by then well-rehearsed and polished table theatre -presentations to a wider audience. A model that functions nicely is organizing 'performance corners' e.g. in the school cafeteria, library or another suitable space. The class could set there, for example, 6 or 9 tables with different presentations, and have three of them 'running' simultaneously. The performances run as a chain reaction, so to say. So the audiences can flow freely from table to table to see the presentations. The whole even could take an hour or two during which each theatre would be presented two or three times.

- Encourage your students to explore different options for the tale they want to present. Would they like it to be distant and exotic, or a familiar tale they remember from the childhood days? Or perhaps they would choose a tale that is somehow related to their personal cultural histories? Tell them that they can be original and adventurous in their interpretations as well. Remind them about the value of memory and memorization in the context of oral tradition: repeating the structure and even the exact words brings forth a 'magical' quality to storytelling. Language in the tales should be cherished rather than flattened down into a totally colloquial translation. Obviously, in the evaluation or assessment the enthusiasm and effort shown in the elaboration and quality of the material should be taken into account. Remind them that imagination and creativity are more important than 'perfection' in the elaboration of the materials (the demonstration should help to make that point). In terms of delivery, remind them as well about the importance of paying attention to the use of their voice: pace, rhythm, intonation, audibility. Some tales might call for a more varied and emotional expression. Others might well be presented with a steady and calm style.

- In the course of these presentations you might easily find opportunities to reflect about the effects of artistic work. What is the function of ‘rituals’ in art? What makes a presentation ‘artistic’? What does ‘aesthetic quality’ consist of?

Samples of Folktales:

Fable:

The Bear as Judge (Finland)

A dispute arose among a number of animals, namely the wolf, the fox, the cat, and the hare. Unable to settle matters by themselves, they summoned the bear to act as judge.

The bear asked the disputants, "What are you quarrelling about?"

"We are arguing about the question as to how many ways each of us has to save his life in time of danger," they answered.

The bear first asked the wolf, "Now, how many ways do you have to escape?"

"A hundred," was the answer.

"And you?" he asked the fox.

"A thousand," he answered.

Then the bear asked the hare, "How many do you know?"

"I have only my fast legs," was the answer.

Finally the bear asked the cat, "How many ways to escape do you know?"

"Only one," answered the cat.

Then the bear decided to put them all to the test in order to see how each one would save himself in time of danger. He suddenly threw himself at the wolf and crushed him half to death. Seeing what had happened to the wolf, the fox started to run away, but the bear grabbed him by the tip of his tail, and even to this day the fox has a white spot on his tail. The hare, with his fast legs, escaped by running away.

The cat climbed a tree, and from his high perch sang down, "The one who knows a hundred ways was captured; the one who knows a thousand ways was injured; Longlegs must run on forever; and the one who has only one way to escape sits high in a tree and holds his own."

So it is.

Legend:

Lorelei (Germany)

Her beauty was her undoing. Lorelei was not willfully seductive, but men could not resist her charms, and she could not resist their advances. She was bringing scandal and disgrace to the respectable town of Bacharach-on-the-Rhine.

There was even talk that she must be a witch or a woman possessed of the devil. The bishop, however, would not hear of an execution without due process, and he summoned her to his court. His questions were at first stern and severe. Her answers were simple and sincere. The bishop's severity, his piety, and his priesthood, however, did not prevail, and in the end he pronounced her free of all guilt.

"I cannot continue like this!" she cried. "My eyes are the destruction of every man who looks into them. I have loved only one man, and he abandoned me and left for a distant land. Please let me die!"

But the good bishop could not bring himself to pronounce a death sentence. Instead, he proposed that she dedicate herself to God, and called three knights to accompany her to the convent. Arrangements were made forthwith, and the three knights were soon underway with their beautiful ward.

When their path led them past a high cliff overlooking the Rhine, Lorelei had one last request of her escorts. "Please," she said, "let me climb the cliff and have one last look into the Rhine." Unable to deny her this wish, the three knights tethered their horses, and the four of them climbed to the top of the cliff.

Standing at the edge of the precipice, Lorelei said, "See that boat on the Rhine. The boatman is my lover!" And with no further warning, she jumped from the cliff into the Rhine.

The three knights also met their death there, without a priest and without a grave.

Who is the singer of this song?
A boatman on the Rhine,
And we always hear the echo
Of the Three-Knight-Stone:

Lorelei,
Lorelei,
Lorelei

As though there were three of us.

Myth:

Maui muri catches the sun (Polynesia)

Maui muri noticed that no matter how hard his people worked, they never had enough daylight in which to finish their tasks. Maui muri said, “There is never enough time for he men to fish in the sea or for the women to cook the food. The Sun-god, Ra, moves too quickly across the sky. I must make Ra move slowly.

Maui muri and his brothers made a huge rope out of coconut fibers. The Maui muri lay in wait for Ra. When he saw Ra he tried to throw the rope around him but the rope broke and Ra escaped, flying across the sky as quickly as ever.

Maui muri made a second, stronger cord of coconut husks which he braided into an even stronger rope but for the second time, Ra escaped.

After much thought, Maui muri asked his sister Hina to give him some of her hair. He cut off long strands and braided them into a very, very strong rope. He travelled eastward to wait for the first glimpse of Ra. When the Sun-god appeared Maui muri threw his noose around Ra's neck and held tight. Ra kicked and screamed, struggling in vain. When the Sun-god realized he could not free himself he asked Maui muri what he wanted.
"You must move more slowly across the sky so that we will have more time to do our work. Promise me this and I will let you go." Ra promised, but just to make sure he kept his word, Maui muri left some strands of Hina's hair hanging from the sun. You can still see them when the sun is going down and the last rays of light fill the sky. Since that time, people have had more daylight to do their work.

Fairy tale

The Real Princess (by Hans Christian Andersen)

There was once a Prince who wished to marry a Princess; but then she must be a real Princess. He travelled all over the world in hopes of finding such a lady; but there was always something wrong. Princesses he found in plenty; but whether they were real Princesses it was impossible for him to decide, for now one thing, now another, seemed to him not quite right about the ladies. At last he returned to his palace quite cast down, because he wished so much to have a real Princess for his wife.

One evening a fearful tempest arose, it thundered and lightened, and the rain poured down from the sky in torrents: besides, it was as dark as pitch. All at once there was heard a violent knocking at the door, and the old King, the Prince's father, went out himself to open it.

It was a Princess who was standing outside the door. What with the rain and the wind, she was in a sad condition; the water trickled down from her hair, and her clothes clung to her body. She said she was a real Princess.

"Ah! we shall soon see that!" thought the old Queen-mother; however, she said not a word of what she was going to do; but went quietly into the bedroom, took all the bed-clothes off the bed, and put three little peas on the bedstead. She then laid twenty mattresses one upon another over the three peas, and put twenty feather beds over the mattresses.

Upon this bed the Princess was to pass the night.

The next morning she was asked how she had slept. "Oh, very badly indeed!" she replied. "I have scarcely closed my eyes the whole night through. I do not know what was in my bed, but I had something hard under me, and am all over black and blue. It has hurt me so much!"

Now it was plain that the lady must be a real Princess, since she had been able to feel the three little peas

through the twenty mattresses and twenty feather beds. None but a real Princess could have had such a delicate sense of feeling.

The Prince accordingly made her his wife; being now convinced that he had found a real Princess. The three peas were however put into the cabinet of curiosities, where they are still to be seen, provided they are not lost.

Wasn't this a lady of real delicacy?

Lesson One. Table of Folktales.

	Myths	Fables	Legends	Fairy tales
Characters	Gods, goddesses; Supernatural beings; Mythical beasts; Heroic people	Animals personifying human beings. Natural forces. Plants.	People (e.g. King Arthur) with extraordinary qualities. Ordinary people with extraordinary fates.	Magical characters such as elves, fairies, goblins and giants. Animals. Princes, princesses, kings, queens. Clever children.
Themes	Origins, creations. Natural events. Battles: triumph and tragedy.	Human virtues and flaws. Behaviour.	People's deeds, lives; love and suffering; extraordinary people.	Good and evil. Trials, tests, journeys. Many based on folktales: Little Red Riding Hood, Ugly Duckling
Features	Mythical time	Usually short. A moral. Panchtantram (India) Aesop De LaFontaine	Historical time, mixture of fact and tale.	Involve magic. Magical numbers: 3 and 7. No ´fairies´, necessarily!
Purposes	Explain how our world works,	Teach a lesson. Often funny and entertaining	Entertain. Build identity.	Teach lessons to children. Have a soothing effect. "And they lived happily ever after". At the end everything is in order.

Sources:

The Bear as Judge and *Lorelei*:

- Folklore and Mythology Electronic Texts. Edited and/or translated by D.L. Ashliman. [online]. http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/folktexts.html (Accessed on 18 May 2013).

Maui muri catches the sun:

- Gersie, Alida and King, Nancy (1990). *Storymaking in Education and Therapy*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

The Real Princess:

- World of Tales [online]. http://www.worldoftales.com/ (Accessed on 17 May 2013).

9. My Cultural Hero

What it is about:

- Presenting people students admire as if they were "them", in first person.
- Either dramatized presentations/monologues, or dramatized interviews

Time needed:

- *Lesson One* (45 min.). Warm-up activities about famous and admirable people from different walks of life. Discussing what makes a person 'admirable'.
- *Following lessons.* Individual presentations (5 - 10 min.) by students. Afterwards the person they represent will be 'interviewed'.

Material needed:

- For the warm-up activity large sheets of paper placed in different corners of the classroom. You can use the board as well.
- Students will bring props (clothing, simple scenery) for their presentations.

What is practiced:

- Reading and writing about real people (historical or contemporary) and presenting them in an inventive and entertaining form in front of the class.

- Drama skills: use of voice, use of space, linking language to movement and gestures, improvising.
- Developing empathy: understanding the other. Recognizing the worth of the lives of real people. Searching not simply to admire, but also understand lives of others by putting yourself in their shoes.
- Exploring one's values: what do we admire in people?

Description:

Students will find out about the biographies of historical persons and present them in class in first person, acting as if they were the persons they chose. The recommendation is to pick people they admire and perhaps would identify with: thus the connotation of being 'cultural heroes', almost mythical beings. To find ideas, it helps if you brainstorm about famous historical persons they know, starting from the most canonized: statesmen, civil rights movement leaders, scientists, painters, musicians, writers, philosophers, inventors. Naturally, soon enough you will get to the list soccer or hockey players, actors and singers, designers. Sometimes the most admired person is one's grandmother. All the ideas are welcome, even though too many presentations about teen idols in one group might get a bit repetitive and flat. It is important to encourage students to be adventurous and look for more variety, and emphasize how interesting it will be to get to 'meet' people from different walks of life during a large scope of history. During the presentation, the speaker will be immersed (at least for a moment) in an activity, or a series of activities, that they would imagine typical and representative of the person they chose (Van Gogh painting, Einstein working on equations, John Lennon playing the guitar, Anna Pavlova putting the ballet shoes on). They can use a series of images as a scenery (but the aim is not to give an informative presentation), and they are expected to use costumes (at least change their clothing) and other items to make the presentation more dynamic and entertaining. They can also interact with the audience and involve them, for a short moment, perhaps to begin the presentation, for example. After the 5 to 10 min. presentation, the speaker will be interviewed by the audience for a few more minutes. When answering the questions, they can't say "I don't know" or "I can't remember". The idea is to improvise and still sound convincing!

This is what you do:

Lesson One:

- You might like to receive the class with some epic music from movies: you could use an easily recognizable classic from films like the themes of *Star Wars*, *Lord of the Rings*, *Superman*, *Indiana Jones.* Beethoven's 3rd Symphony *"Eroica"* would also create the right epic mood.
- You need to have prepared some large sheets of paper beforehand and placed or taped them in different corners of the classroom. Draw a vertical line in the middle and on the top of the second column "Why"?
- Ask students which historical persons do we usually find admirable. When they start giving categories (politicians, civil rights movement leaders, scientists, painters, musicians, writers, philosophers, inventors, designers, millionaires, actors etc.) choose some of them to be written on the top of the first columns on the papers. Before you run out of papers, ask one more question: Who else would you admire? And probably after that you can add a couple of more imaginative categories (like teachers, saints, rally drivers etc.)
- Set a time limit, for example the length of a heroic piece of music, and tell everyone to get up and circulate in the classroom writing down names of people they would admire and why on the sheets. Tell them that time is limited, and that they will have to move swiftly.
- When time is up, tell them to freeze, and the ones who are next to the papers will stay where they are. The rest will go to their places. Have the ones next to the papers report on them briefly.
- If you still have time, tell the students go back to the sheet where they wrote the name of the person they would choose to be the most admirable of them all. This way you get them organized in pairs or teams in which they can share their reasons.
- Option: You might have a couple of spare sheets for new categories. You could ask them, for example: After this activity, which other 'cultural heroes' would you add?
- Give the instructions for the presentations that will follow.

Instructions you can give:

1. Choose a historical (or a contemporary) person you find admirable to investigate about, and prepare a short biography about him or her to present it in first person.

2. Structure your presentation carefully: an opening that is original and capturing, and main points that taste like life. Avoid listing dates, publications, prizes, movies and all that: it is not a CV, and it makes you sound like Wikipedia! Instead, we want to hear about real life, adventures, emotions, funny and tragic experiences. You could conclude making a reflection about the person's life, still in 1st person.
3. You should be immersed in an activity during the delivery. At least one. Think of something related to the biography, even though something quite as simple as having a cup of coffee would also be fine. Learn to use movement, gestures and the items you have on stage as your "bodily outline" to help you through the presentation. You can also use images (PowerPoint) to create a scenery.
4. After the presentation you are going to be interviewed by the audience. You can't say you don't know, and you should not give monosyllabic answers. You ARE the one who knows, it's YOUR life, so feel free to improvise and to invent!
5. You are required to hand in a well-organized outline, and to change your outfit for the presentation: it will help you *be* the other.

Comments:

- In an ecological approach to language education, not only the flesh and blood interlocutors are counted as 'participants', but also 'the remembered and the imagined, the stylized and the projected' (Kramsch 2009b, 247).
- *Suggested music:*

  Beethoven, Symphony No. 3 In E Flat, Op. 55, "*Eroica*". Allegro con brio.
  Beethoven had originally dedicated the symphony to Napoleon Bonaparte, whom he admired as the embodiment of the ideals of the French Revolution. It is told that when Napoleon proclaimed himself Emperor of the French in May 1804, Beethoven went to the table where the completed score lay. He took hold of the title-page with the dedication and tore it up in rage.

10. Unusualtopia.

What it is about:

- In pairs or in teams, students work on imaginative 'laws' for *Unusualtopia*, and explain the rationale behind them.

- Imagining alternative social orders or cultural options.

Time needed:

- Four periods in total.
- *Lesson One* (45 min). Warm-up activity and pair work.
- *Following Lessons*. Two or three. During a 45 min period you would have time to cover three or four laws.
- Consider 4 to 5 min. per each pair for the presentations. 5 min for each interview and, afterwards, a couple of minutes for each vote.

Material needed:

- Music for the warm-up activity.
- Coloured chalk or markers for the warm-up activity, and background music.

What is practiced:

- Capacity to imagine other realities. Questioning things we are used to and take for granted.
- Pair work for a common goal.
- Organizing a convincing set of arguments as an effective whole.
- Maintaining consistency in ideas while improvising.
- Volunteers (10 needed) will practice functioning as moderators.

Description:

In this playful exercise of informal debate students are told that they form part of a community called *Unusualtopia* that has functioned smoothly for more than a hundred years. The community is characterized by unusual happiness, satisfaction and harmony. The members say they owe it to their laws, which are very simple: the set of 10 brief laws is all they need to guarantee the community's progress and the members' wellbeing. The students are given the complete set of laws. After that, they are told that they will have to explain the rationale behind the laws and their implications to the incredulous "outsiders", giving them detail about the general organization and the alternative solutions in *Unusualtopia*. This time, the rest of the group will play the role of the curious visitors. The *Unusualtopia* citizens will

strive to convince the audience about the relevance and the convenience of their laws. After each presentation, the speakers will answer questions, and the moderator will organize a vote to see whether the 'outsiders' would approve the law for their own community.

This is what you do:

Lesson One:

1. For a warm-up activity, tell the group that you will play a song called *'Utopia'*. Write the word on the board. Tell them to listen to it for a moment, and then, when they feel like, pass to the board to write or draw something that comes to their minds about *Utopia*. While they listen, you and prompt them starting by yourself. After the song you can look at the graffiti produced for a moment and comment on it. It can remain there as a decoration for the rest of the class.

   Suggested music:
   - Putumayo Presents (CD). "One World, Many Cultures" Track 8: Utopia by Gigi (Ethiopian Singer).
   - Alanis Morissette, as well, has a song called Utopia that could suit the activity well.

2. Now explain that they all form part of a community called *Unusualtopia* that has functioned perfectly well for more than a hundred years. The community is characterized by unusual happiness, satisfaction and harmony. The members say it is due to their laws, which are very simple: the set of 10 brief laws is all they need to guarantee the community's progress and the members' wellbeing. Tell students it is important they have the complete set of laws, so you will dictate the laws to them (a bit of dictation does not hurt). Now read the laws.

   THE LAWS (12 suggestions, choose your lot):

   - Women speak one language, men another.
   - All buildings are built underground.
   - There is no private transport.
   - Everyone earns the same salary.
   - There is neither police nor military force.
   - There are no doctors.
   - There are no teachers in school.
   - No one above the age of 18 can live with the same person/persons for more than five years.

- There is no formal religion: everyone practices gardening.
- Everyone writes down the dreams they have at night.
- A computer takes all governmental decisions.
- Everyone will practice at least one art.

3. In random pairs or teams, students are assigned one of the 10 *Unusualtopia* laws which they explain and defend in front of the audience. Each law is discussed in pairs. They will find that the laws are quite contrasting with what they are used to, and they will need to stretch their imagination to conceive alternative social organizations and solutions. It helps the students if the teacher asks questions like: "What are they trying to avoid with these laws?" "What are they promoting?" "Which are *their* solutions" (because they still have to solve the needs of the inhabitants of *Unusualtopia*: health care, education, communication, order, government etc.)? It's important to remind that they will have to take the complete set of laws into account to avoid contradictions.

4. Allow the rest of the time for each pair to start preparing a short presentation to explain the law. It's important to keep reminding them that their alternative solutions have to be harmonious and attractive for everyone. In *Unusualtopia* everyone gains! (There is no room for terrible penalties for breaking the laws or for any totalitarian measures!). They will elaborate an outline with the most important ideas for the presentation: opening, main points, conclusion.

The Following Lessons (from two to three classes).

1. Do a unity-building warm-up exercise. You can gather the group in a circle. Then, with mime, establish an imaginary object (a ball, a flower, a match box) and elicit what it is. Then pass the 'object' to someone else, who will now transform it to something else. Continue until everyone has participated, encouraging clear and imaginative choices (even if they didn't know the word in English). Towards the end, if a person cannot think of a new object, the group can make suggestions.

   Source: Gersie, Alida and King, Nancy (1990). *Storymaking in Education and Therapy*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

2. Explain that from now on, while the *Unusualtopia* members present the laws, the rest of the group will play the role of the curious and a bit incredulous 'visitors'

who want to find out about *Unusualtopia*. They would also like to see if they could apply the same laws in their society. While they listen to the presentations, they should think of questions to ask to understand more. After each presentation, they will have 5 min to ask questions and find out more about how the law is applied.

3. Tell that during the presentations you will need moderators to keep things orderly. The moderator introduces the speakers, states the law, and keeps everything under control during the questions & answers -session. Everyone's got to wait for the moderator to assign them turns to participate (raise hands, and the moderator records them in order). The participations (questions, answers and opinions) have to be brief and clear. The moderator makes sure the session will not get stuck in potentially weary arguments. Decide who are going to moderate during the class.
4. The students might have prepared PowerPoint presentations and of course they could use them, but only to illustrate their points. The purpose is to talk very directly, enthusiastically and convincingly to the audience. They will have to convince the audience about how beneficial the laws are from both the community's and individual's point of view, and explain how they have found alternative solutions to organize their society.
5. After the presentation, and with the help of the moderator, the *Unusualtopia* members will answer the questions and continue clearing the doubts of the 'visitors' for five minutes. Remind them that they will have to continue being consistent in their ideas, even if they are improvising.
6. After the session, the moderator organizes a vote to see how many would support the law.

Comments:

The dynamic has been adapted from Wallwork, Adrian (1997). *Discussions A–Z Intermediate.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

ART.

Art should not be set off so sharply from ordinary experience. Dewey (1932) has argued for the aesthetic value that common activities can have. Following his ideas, here 'art' is understood as an activity or an experience that has an aesthetic quality. When an experience occupies us aesthetically, what matters is the "pleasurable activity of the journey itself" (Dewey 1932 citing Coleridge). Children and teenagers participate in 'culture' by doing things. Through their activity they build bridges between forms and meanings, and if they engage in the process because of the pleasure it produces: then they are doing art.

11. Satori

What it is about:

- Making drawings and narratives.
- Exploring the symbolic value of short anecdotes.

Time needed:

- Two periods of 45 min, depending on the size of the group and on how much time will be dedicated to discussion.
- Each narration of a *satori* would take around 2 or 3 min. With comments, you could reserve about 5 min per student.

Material needed:

- A4 size sheets for the drawings. Colour pencils or crayons.

What is practiced:

- Listening.
- Visualizing a significant experience and expressing it through drawing and narrating.
- Writing: Organizing an outline for a capturing narrative.
- Presentation skills: practicing moving in front of the group in a relaxed manner. Being aware of one's movement, tone of voice, eye contact.

- Specific attention paid to the use of past tenses.

Description:

Even though '*Satori*' was thought out to be the first lesson after a vacation, it can be used as a reflexive interlude at any moment during an academic year. It helps if the teacher gives his/her '*satori*' first. In it you would describe one experience you had during the vacations/during your life that was like a small 'illumination' (that is the meaning of this Japanese word). Perhaps you felt more alive than ever, learned something, changed something, left something behind, did something you thought you wouldn't dare, overcame something, saw things from a new point of view. In a '*satori*' (like in a haiku) you could relate a simple image (of nature, an action, a word…) with a more complex and abstract idea. With music on the background, students will make a drawing of their "satori moments", and prepare a short outline on the other side. In about 15 to 20 min. the first volunteers should be ready to talk about their experiences. They are asked to walk in front of the others freely, showing the drawings and talking about them. Afterwards, each *satori* is commented on with the whole group, and the speakers might answer some questions.

This is what you do:

- In advance, prepare a drawing of your 'Satori moment'. It can be something quite simple and symbolic: again, in this context imagination matters more than drawing techniques! You can play soft background music to welcome the group. Tell them that today you are going to start sharing some satori moments. Ask if anyone knows what satori means. Or what language it is. You can tell them that satori is like a subtle 'illumination': something (probably) small or even commonplace happens but in the right moment, and something is changed. Now you can tell them your satori, showing the drawing, circulating in the classroom.
- Students need A4 size sheets to make drawings of their satori moments. Encourage them to use colour, symbols, and be expressive rather than precise in their drawings. When they are engaged with the task, write recommendations for an outline on the board. Tell them to make an outline on the other side of the paper for their narrations using only keywords. For example:
    - *Opening*: describe background, circumstances, your mood etc.
    - *Body*: describe what happened, what brought a change etc.
    - *Conclusion:* tell what was changed, what did you learn?

- While students work on their drawings you can circulate and observe them, commenting or asking questions. When drawings are ready (and you might have set a time limit), someone could volunteer to pass to share his or her *satori*. Another swift way to start passing is picking the drawings up, then have students take turns to pick one up without looking. There you have the *satori* that follows.

- An interesting way to give feedback about this type of task – and to involve the listeners more – is to ask: "What is the image that remains from the speech for you?" and "Why do you think that image/moment captured you more than others?" It is a bit like analysing dreams! In is fascinating for everyone to notice how everyone visualized the satori differently, noticed different things, and retrieved different meanings.

Instructions you can give:

1. Think of a moment during your vacations/your life when something "changed" in you. Perhaps you understood something, learned, grew a little, took a decision or had the courage to do something differently. Make a drawing about that moment.
2. On the other side of the sheet, write a short outline to expose your satori experience to the group. Structure it carefully. Remember: no "I'm going to talk about…" Be creative, original, funny or sensitive. Do something different this time. (Outline: opening, body, conclusion. Only keywords.)
3. Share your satori with the group walking freely and showing your drawing. You have your outline in front of you, but don't forget to look at your companions as well!
4. Receive the feedback and answer the questions if there are any.

Suggested music:

Arvo Pärt: *Spiegel im Spiegel*
Silentium (from *Tabula Rasa).*

12. The Musical Autobiography

What it is about:

- Presenting something about one's history and projections through a selection of pieces of music.

Time needed:

- Two or three periods of 45 min. depending on the size of the group.

Material needed:

- Each student will bring music from which excerpts will be played.

What is practiced:

- Speaking and listening.
- Getting to know and understand each other more.
- Experiencing how music tends to accompany us through our lives and how we construct meanings through it.

Description:

Each student selects from 3 to 5 pieces of music that they consider significant and representative of their personal histories – which, as they will notice, tend to be shared 'cultural' histories. They bring their music to class to play some samples; the group could also share songs. Each one will talk about their choices.

This is what you do:

- Assign your students a pre-task: they should think during various days about 3-5 (think of how much time would you like to dedicate to the activity) pieces of music that they would choose as representative either of their biographies (in more or less chronological order) or of their personalities or characters. A piece could also stand for what they hope, have faith in, or aspire for. Tell them to bring the musical examples to class.

- In class, you might like to do your musical biography first (or last, as you prefer). Your students would appreciate that. You could seat the group in a circle to 'soften' the environment. Agree about the order in which everyone will pass (volunteers, alphabetical, seating etc.). Set a recommended time for each speaker. Tell them that they can play short excerpts of their music as part of the presentation. If, instead of that, they would like to play only one and perhaps have everyone sing it (if they know or have the lyrics). Let the activity roll: teenagers love to talk about their music.
- In this activity, you can use the songs that students bring for warm-ups and integrations. Singing together is a most integrating thing to do!

Comments:

Vygotsky said that in each teenager we are also teaching the potential adult. This activity gives learners an opportunity to engage both as the teenagers they are, as the children they were, and the adults they would like to become.

13. The Photographic Walk

What it is about:

- In teams, students explore their part of a trail for a walk taking pictures.
- Practicing the art of noticing.

Time needed:

- *Lesson One* (45 min.): pre-task, getting the project set.
- *Lesson Two* (45 min.): making posters in class and presenting them.
- *Lesson Three* (45 min.): walking the trail together.
- Implies each team getting organized between Lessons One and Two to do their part of the walk. At the end, the whole group could do the walk together.

Material needed:

- A country trail or an interesting urban walk nearby and a map of it.

- Large sheets of paper. Markers.
- Each team needs a camera or a phone to take pictures with (will have to be printed).

What is practiced:

- Teamwork. Participating in a class project.
- Noticing our surroundings. Deciding what you think and like about them.
- Multimodal artwork.
- Recognizing how different people notice different things!
- Enjoying the neighbourhood.

Description:

For the *Photographic Walk* you need to have a trail, a country walk, or an interesting urban route nearby which could be divided into clear sections, and for which you can easily get a map, though you could also draw a simple map yourself. During the introductory lesson, attention will be drawn to the 'art of noticing'. Students, in trios, start preparing posters of their parts of the trail. Teams are given some 'streetwork' for the week. Each team will need to explore their part of the route, paying attention to its features and to anything they find special about it, and then bring pictures about it to class. They can also bring leaves, flowers, grass, feathers… or use drawings and write notes on the map in addition to the photos. The following class they will complete and illustrate their maps in class, and give short presentations about them. The activity would be ideally integrated by the whole class doing the walk together during the following class.

This is what you do:

Before class, plan a route for a walk that you could do with the whole group. Walking in a slow steady pace it should take you about half an hour. Photocopy the map, mark the trail on it, and chop it into sections so that each pair or trio will have a stretch. If you like, you could give each part a name representing something you would find on your way.

Lesson One:

- Warm-up. Play some energizing music (How about *I would walk 500 miles* by the Proclaimers?) Gather the class in a circle. After a little stretching or some movement (always recommended), get a ball of thread and tell that each one should think about

their way to school in the morning. What called their attention? What did they notice/think on the way? Start with yourself, hold the end of the thread and then toss the ball to someone else, who will state what he/she noticed. Continue tossing the ball until everyone participated. Then undo the exotic figure formed between you: the last one starts by saying what the *previous* one had noticed, and winds the yarn taking it back. Continue until the teacher receives the ball… and see how much everyone noticed the others had said on the way! (Well, if someone doesn't remember, others will help him out. In a big group someone always remembers.)

- Form the trios: Every third one in the circle steps to the centre. Now the ones in the centre choose a pair. After that, the remaining third will choose a team to join. Randomly, give each team a map, and have them find a place where to work.
- Explain that you are going to prepare for a walk in a neighbourhood, and during that walk, you are going to notice more things that you customarily would. You have divided the trail in parts, and each team will explore a part beforehand, and report on them. First they need to prepare a good enlarged map of their part on the big sheets of paper. Assign them a time to work on it.
- Circulate and talk which each team about their parts along the route and what they would expect to see.
- 'Streetwork' for the week: Tell the group that they will have to go to explore their part of the route before the following class. They should pay attention to the things that they like, find curious or special, something they think you would find in that part of the walk, and perhaps not in the other parts. In could have to do with nature, with the buildings, with the stores or the businesses, or the people. They are going to document they walk with photos, and making notes, drawings, they might also get to talk to someone and ask about something on their way. The following class they will complete and illustrate their maps in class, so they will have to print the images. They can also bring leaves, flowers, grass, small stones, feathers…

Lesson Two.

- Play the 'musical theme' of the activity again, and students will get in teams to continue working on their maps. Circulate while they work, encouraging them to be expressive and use drawings and written notes on the map in addition to the photos.

Grasses, leaves, flowers etc. can be taped in with posters as well. Assign a time for the elaboration of the maps.

- The posters are displayed and each team (meaning each member) will briefly say something about their part in the trail. They can also comment in general on their experience of doing the exercise.
- Tell students where you are going to gather for the walk following class.

Lesson Three.

- Gather in the spot you selected for starting the walk.
- Explain that each team by turns will lead the group helping them recognize the things that were included in the poster: at least three spots in each trek, so that everyone will speak.
- Integrate sharing impressions about the walk with a word or two, each one in the group. You can focus on the symbolic by asking everyone to choose an image that they would like to remember from the walk.

Comments:

- The activity could be particularly enjoyable in the beginning or the end of the term when the group is integrating and people are getting to know each other. Or you could combine it with an end-of-the-year picnic before summer vacations.
- Source. The idea has been adapted from:

  Linstromberg, Seth (1990). *The Recipe Book. Practical Ideas for the Language Classroom.* Longman Group UK Limited.

14. Cultural Bodies

What it is about:

- Students illustrate real-size cut-outs of their silhouettes.
- Exploring the symbolism of the body and its 'language'. Integrating different meanings that have been worked on.

Time needed:

- Two periods of 45 min. Ideally a double class.

Material needed:

- Plenty of space. Activity would function well in an open space: in a hall, a corridor, or outside.
- A big roll of paper for the whole group, or large sheets to tape them together (enough for full - size silhouettes of the bodies). Tape. Colours, and - it the environment permits it - paint.

What is practiced:

- Noticing how we bear cultural meanings in our 'body-minds' and giving them an artistic expression.
- Integrating a course and promoting unity in the group by highlighting everyone's uniqueness.

Description:

This activity has been used to integrate contents of larger units or courses. It could be used, for example, after *Ethnographic Project*, *A Lesson to Remember* or *Table Theatre* which move a lot of cultural information. It would also suit well after *My Name* in which both cultural and personal meanings are explored from the subjective point of view. Students are invited, in a relaxation, to reflect on 'meanings' that they experience as forming part of their 'selves', or their bodies. They can, of course, think of meanings or values they would like to include or integrate: new languages to learn, countries to visit, skills to learn, music to play, or visions of life and future as they imagine it. In this activity, they are invited to narrate and to illustrate their 'cultural bodies' as they wish to experience them. Students work in pairs to draw their silhouettes on large sheets of paper, illustrate them, and cut them out. The portraits can be placed on the classroom walls, or in a corridor, and to integrate everyone says something he or she learned or noticed during the process.

This is what you do:

1. *Warm-up (10 to 15 min).*

   In a place that is spacious enough, tell students that they are going to print their 'cultural bodies' on paper. Have everyone take as much paper as they need to be able to have their silhouettes drawn. They can tape the papers together if necessary. Tell them to find a place where they feel comfortable, and lie down on the papers. Play relaxing music, and suggest them to close their eyes, breathe deeply, and just feel their bodies for a while.

   Suggested music: Arvo Pärt: Sarah was 90 years old. (percussions and voices)
   Or The Beatitudes (choir).

   To help students get connected with the activity, you can circulate calmly in the classroom, with the music you have chosen, and have them go through the following relaxation exercise. At first, invite them to go through the different parts of their body, starting from their feet: "Just raise or tense them a little, feel how the tension increases for a moment, and then let them go, release the tension". Like this, scan the whole body: legs, hips, buttocks, stomach, chest, shoulders, arms, back, face, feeling the tension in each part, and then letting it go. Remind them of breathing softly while they relax more deeply. After this you can say: "Imagine how your body weighs more and more, as it is so full of experiences, things you have lived and learned, seen and heard, read and imagined or wished… You can feel or see many of these things moving within you, and wanting to be seen in different parts of your body. Those are things that form part of you, of you history, of your 'culture' [*or any aspects you want to emphasize in this integration*]. You might also see the seeds of the things that you would like to do: new things to learn, instruments to play, sports to practice, countries to visit, causes or groups to join languages to speak… All those seeds form part of your cultural body as well. Now let those images flow freely in you, and around you, let them flow downwards, towards the soil beneath you, toward the centre of the earth, and let them leave a print of themselves on the paper beneath you. [*Let some time pass*.] Now, it's time to come back to here and now, to your body, to this classroom, so softly gather all the ideas, memories, plans, and images that you want to keep, and bring them back to your body and to this moment. Breathe deeply, and softly open

your eyes, wake your body up with gentle movements. You can lie on your side for a moment, and when you are ready, sit down".

2. *Hands-on-work.* Students form pairs. In each pair, they are going to draw each other's figures on the papers. After that, perhaps with a background music inspiring more movement or action, tell them to grasp crayons, markers, coloured pencils of any materials you have at hand, and illustrate their cultural bodies. Obviously, they can also write on the bodies, and in any language. Set a time for this part of the process. (Plenty of it: around 45 min). When the illustrated silhouettes are ready, tell them to cut the figures out from the confines.

3. *Integration.*
    - Assign a place where the cultural bodies can be exhibited. Perhaps the classroom walls or a corridor nearby. Give them around 10 min to get organized and set an exposition of the cultural bodies of the whole group. Have the whole class circulate and look at each other's portraits.
    - Dedicate the last 5 to 10 of the time available to go through the exposition and have everyone say something, anything they like, about their cultural bodies or about what they learned, felt, thought or noticed during the process.

Comments:

"Our memories are not in past but live on as present realities in our bodies to be both experienced and observed." (Kramsch 2009, 247).

15. Dialogues

What it is about:

- Students analyse, practice and present given of chosen dialogues from plays.
- Textual interventions: discovering different possibilities

Time needed:

- Two or three periods of 45 min.

Material needed:

- Dialogues in photocopies.

What is practiced:

- Pair work.
- Analysis of short dialogues to find features that are relevant for acting.
- Acting. Use of the space. Use of the voice.
- Imagination: finding original resolutions.
- Intensive work with spoken language: diction, intonation, rhythm, pace, audibility, fluency, pronunciation.
- Giving constructive feedback about the dialogues presented by others.

Description:

"Dialogues" is an activity that gets the students in the mood for acting. The objective is to have them pay attention to some basic concepts of drama. In this exercise they use a given dialogue (an extract from a play) to reconstruct– or construct in case there was little information found – characters, contexts and relationships between characters.

Students present their dialogues in two rounds with different tasks. In the first one, before acting, they are going to talk about the characters, the context, and the relationship between the characters. Then they will act the memorized dialogue. Obviously their acting should be consistent with the analysis. The group and the teacher will give feedback on that, and parts of the dialogue can be repeated taking into account the suggestions given.

In the second round, the pairs will do their dialogues again, but this time they will have to extend them, taking the scenes to resolutions. The teacher will monitor the process encouraging them to arrive to surprising conclusions introducing new elements and new information. The extension is theirs, and they are free to do whatever they want. The characters can show sudden changes or reveal unsuspected truths!

This is what you do:

Lesson One.

1. To start the lesson, have everyone write their names on small pieces of paper. Someone gathers the names of the boys in a cap or a box; someone else the names of the girls. Then start handing out copies of short extracts from plays (for example, Wessels' (1987) *Drama* has nice ones. I will include some below) as you simultaneously form the pairs from the two bunches of papers.

2. Tell students to read the dialogue carefully, discuss it, and make notes about the following points:

    a. Who are the characters? Describe them with some detail.
    b. Which is the context? (Where? When? Why? Doing what?)
    c. What is their relationship like? (How do they feel/what do they think about each other? What is evident? What is not shown?).
    Circulate and clear doubts about vocabulary. Ask questions and give suggestions.

3. Now assign them a time for practicing the dialogue (perhaps 10 min.). They should learn it by heart, relating language to movements, attitudes, rhythm, silences, tone of voice. Remind them that their interpretation of the dialogue should be consistent with their analysis of it.

4. Each pair will present the dialogue, and afterwards comment on their 'analysis'. Collect feedback from the group. Did their acting reflect what they said about the characters and the context? What could they do differently? What was good? You can have them repeat something from the dialogue.

5. At the end you can tell them that in the following class they will continue working with the dialogues, and before it they could try to imagine how the situation continued…

Lesson Two.

1. For a warm-up, you could have the pairs do some stretching exercises. For example, holding each other's wrists, and stretching backwards; getting back to back, with arms interlocked, and softly taking turns to bend forward, carrying and stretching the other

on the back. Or, in turns, they could take turns to give each other a massage on the shoulders. Could take the length of a piece of music. I would probably use this one (takes about 3 min.):

Suggested music: Bach, J. S. Cello Suite 1 in G, BWV 1007. Prelude.

2. Now tell students to start working on a resolution for the dialogues they already know well. They will do their 'improved' dialogues again, but this time extending them. Set enough classroom time (around 15 to 20 min.) to work on this, and monitor the process encouraging them to arrive to surprising conclusions. They can introduce new elements (new characters even, using volunteering classmates) and provide information. You might like to warn them about being stuck to the same dynamic (for example an argument, or a static power balance, or a stereotypical situation). The extension is theirs, and they are free to do whatever they want! The characters can show sudden changes or reveal unsuspected truths! It would be a good idea to write the extended part, and memorize it.

3. Sit back and enjoy the act-outs. Gather feedback from the group.

DIALOGUES:

a. From David Campton's *Us and Them*:

A1 Here?
B1 Here.
A1 It's a good place.
B1 Yes, it's a good place.
A2 Better than any other place we've seen.
B2 It's a good place all right.
A1 To pause at.
B1 To stay at.
A2 To make our own.
B2 For ever and ever.
A1 This is our place.
B1 Ours.
A2 Ours.
B2 We took long enough to find it.
A3 It was a long journey.
B3 But it was worth every mile we tramped.
B1 Look at it.
A2 Just look.
B2 Look here.
A3 Look there.
B3 Look.
A1 Look.

b. Scene 2 of *Lovers and other Strangers* by Renée Taylor and Joseph Bologna:

He, *sits*: You want to know why you're so confused? Because you forgot who I am and who you are. I'm the man and you're just the woman, and the man is the boss. You said so yourself when we got married.

She: I was just humouring you. I said, 'If it was so important to you, I would let you be the boss'.

He: What do you mean, 'Let me be the boss'? I am the boss.

She: Don't be juvenile. There is no boss.

He: I am the boss and you know it.

She: There is no boss and that's final. I don't want to hear another word about it. We are equals. *Sits on bed.*

He, *his frustration is building.* Oh, we're equal, huh? *Standing up on bed.*

She: Yes! We're equal.

He: All right, let's just see how equal we are. *Pulls her up.* Come on, equal. Let's do a couple of rounds.

She: Cut it out, you big jerk! *He dazzles her with his footwork. She punches him in stomach and tries to run away from him. He catches her. He grabs he arms and holds them behind her back. She can't move. She struggles to get free, but he is too strong for her.* Let me go.

He: you're my equal Why don't you let yourself go?

She: Stop it.

He: who's the boss?

c. From Act I of *Thieves* by Herb Gardner:

Sally: Can I ask you a question?

Martin: Yes.

Sally: Who are you?

Martin: Martin.

Sally, *thoughtfully*: Martin, Martin…

Martin: Martin Cramer.

Sally: Martin Cramer. Right. *After a moment*: And where do I know you from?

Martin: I'm your husband. You know me from marriage.

Sally, *nodding*: Right, right…

Martin, *opening his eyes*: Sally, the forgetting game. I hate it. You have no idea how much I hate it. **Sally**: OK, OK, I—

Martin, *sitting up at edge of bed*: Sally, at least once a week now you wake me up in the middle of the night and ask me who I am. I hate it.

Sally: You used to think that it was charming.

d.From Act III of *Play It Again, Sam* by Woody Allen:

Allan: Gee, I can't believe it. This bright, beautiful woman is in love with me. Of course she's in love with me. Why shouldn't she be? I'm bright, amusing… sensitive face… fantastic body. Dick'll understand. Hell, we're two civilized guys. In the course of our social encounters a little romance has developed. It's a very natural thing to happen amongst sophisticated people.

Dick, *appearing in dream light:* You sent for me?

Allan: Yes.

Dick: Good.

Allan: Drink?

Dick: Quite.

Allan: Scotch?

Dick: Fine.

Allan: Neat?

Dick: Please.

Allan: Soda?

Dick: A dash.

Allan: Linda and I are in love.

Dick: It's just as well. I've come from my doctor. He gives me two months to live.

e. From Scene 10 of *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams:

Stanley: Yep. Just me and you, Blanche. Unless you got somebody hid under the bed. What've got on those fine feathers for?

Blanche: Oh, that's right. You left before my wire came.

Stanley: You got a wire?

Blanche: I received a telegram from an old admirer of mine.

Stanley: Anything good?

Blanche: I think so. An invitation.

Stanley: What to? A fireman's ball?

Blanche, *throwing back her head:* A cruise of the Caribbean on a yacht!

Stanley: Well, well. What do you know?

Blanche: I have never been so surprised in my life.

Stanley: I guess not.

Blanche: It came like a bolt from the blue!

Stanley: Who did you say it was from?

Blanche: An old beau of mine.

f. From Peter Shaffer's *The Private Ear*:

Note: this extract is longer and could be split in the middle, having two pairs instead one to act it out. In the extension part, pair one could show what had happened before (perhaps another scene), and pair one would take the dialogue to a resolution. The two pairs could do the analysis as a team.

Bob: I'm sorry. (*He switches off the gramophone*.)

Doreen: That's all right.

Bob: No, no, it isn't. It isn't at all. (*Long pause*) Actually, you see, I've brought you here under false pretences. I should have asked you. You see, I didn't really tell you everything about myself. That was wrong of me. Please forgive me.

Doreen: What d'you mean?

Bob: Well, you see, actually I'm engaged.

Doreen: Engaged?

Bob: Yes. To be married.

Doreen: (*Really surprised): You* are?

Bob: (*Defiantly*): Yes. Yes. So I shouldn't have asked you here. I'm sorry. (*She stares at him. He is not looking at her. On a sudden impulse he picks up the photograph of the girl left by Ted.)*

Doreen: Is that her?

Bob: Yes.

Doreen: Can I see? *(He passes it to her.)* She looks lovely.

Bob: Yes, she is, very. That's really raven black, her hair. It's got tints of blue in it. You can't really judge from a photo.

Doreen: What's her name?

Bob: Er… Lavinia. It's rather an unusual name, isn't it? Lavinia. I think it's rather distinguished.

Doreen: Yes, it is.

Bob: Like her. She's distinguished. She's got a way with her. Style, you know. It's what they used to call carriage. *(She gives him a startled look.)* So you see…well – no harm done, I suppose.

Doreen: *(Dully)* No, of course not.

Part two:

Bob: Here's your coat. *(He helps her with it. She is hardly listening to him.*) I wonder why I thought an ocelot was a bird. I wasn't thinking of an ostrich. It was those pictures you see of ladies in Edwardian photos with long, traily feathers in their hats. Is there such a thing as an osprey?

Doreen: I wouldn't know. *(With a smile)* It's not really ocelot, you know. It's lamb dyed. And it's not really cold enough for fur coats anyway, is it, yet? I was showing off.

Bob: I'm glad you did.

(They go to the door.)

Doreen: Well, it's been lovely.

Bob: For me, too.

Doreen: I enjoyed the music, really.

Bob: Good.

Doreen: Perhaps we'll meet again. At a concert or somewhere.

Bob: Yes. Perhaps we will.

Doreen: I'm glad about your girl. She looks lovely.

Bob: She is.

(They avoid each other's look.)

Doreen: Well, good night.

Bob: Good night.

Comments:

It is fine if the same dialogues are used several times in a group. Repeating the same dialogue is illustrative of how many different meanings and interpretations one text can yield. Actually, having them all do the same one would be an interesting option. The extract **a.** from David Campton's *Us and Them* is extraordinarily prolific in producing an array of situations (ranging from children playing in the backyard to astronauts

weeping at the sight of planet Earth far away, or souls wandering in afterlife and finally finding Paradise…) The stage directions have been deleted, so as an exercise you could have each pair work out on their own stage directions (how each line should be said and with what movements and facial expressions).

Source:

Wessels, Charlyn (1987). *Drama.* Resource Books for Teachers. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

16. *Art Attack*

What it is about:

- In pairs, students give demonstrations about how to make something concrete, useful or attractive in front of the class. They can involve the whole group, or at least part of it, in the process.
- Valuing self-made objects and materials.

Time needed:

- Reserve 10 – 20 min. per pair for the presentations.

Material needed:

- A good table.
- Students will bring materials for their demonstrations.

What is practiced:

- Appreciating things made by hand.
- Experimenting with the effect of manual activities (how they help you relax and concentrate).
- Leadership: interacting and having the group follow your instructions.
- Coming up with original ideas for gifts, decoration, useful objects.
- Pair work. Coordinating a presentation.
- Presentation skills: synchronising speaking with movement.

Description:

In this speech students will demonstrate as realistically as possible an artistic process. They might prepare additional visual material, which is fine because it makes the presentation easier to follow and more attractive, but it should not replace the *real* thing, the step-by-step presentation. The challenge of the speech consists in speaking freely and spontaneously while you are immersed in doing something with your hands and showing material, taking the audience into account at each moment (Can they see? Did they understand?). That's why they have to come prepared with a few 'extra ideas' (information, related topics, anecdotes, a joke, recommendations…) even though they can also improvise, as long as they won't remain completely silent. At least at some point of the demonstration, if not all the time, the speakers should involve the audience or at least some 'assistants' in the process. If the material used is neither too elaborated nor expensive, the presenters could have everyone follow the steps with them.

This is what you do:

- *Lesson One*: Introduction. Option: You can choose an original *Art Attack* – episode (ABC from the 90's) from YouTube and watch it with you class. Each part takes around 9 min. and includes three art ideas. You could have a look at the following link and perhaps show one or two ideas:

  Of http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQeFzP1HMSU (accessed on 14 May 2013)

- Tell students to think of something they would like to represent artistically, and write the word down on a piece of paper. Someone picks the papers up.
- Form teams of 3 or 4. You could try getting even teams by having them identify with a colour, or a shape, an element (soil, air, fire, metal, wood), and thus make sure the team members have something in common.
- Explain that you are going to play a piece of music that will take around 5 min. During that time each team is going to make an artistic representation (a sculpture, a design on the floor like in the *Art Attack* –episode above, or a performance with their own bodies and voices. No drawing this time.) about the

word they pick up with anything available in the classroom (including themselves). Tell them that they can't reveal what the word/topic is!

- Let it run. After the time is up, circulate and look at the works of art, and try to guess what the topic was. If the group responds well to the activity, do it again, with new teams (e.g. lake, river, sea, waterfall…) and repeat the procedure.
- At the end (reserve 10 min.) explain the purpose of and the requirement for their own *Art Attack* presentations. Obviously, they can find ideas sand inspiration in the internet.

Instructions you can give:

1. Choose an artistic process to demonstrate during a 5 to 10 min. presentation.
2. Demonstrate all the steps, even if some of them are more "virtual" than others. In some projects you should prepare the steps beforehand, together with the 'finished product'. Showing a finished piggy bank or a '*piñata'* and just explaining how it was made won't do...
3. Think of ways of involving the audience: can you have everyone follow the steps with you (bringing the material to them if its simple)? Or will they form pairs or teams (as long as it is practical)? Or would you rather have some assistants or volunteers help you with the steps?
4. Avoid long awkward silences. Some feel more at ease improvising than others: Include a list of 'extra ideas' in your outline as a safety blanket. In addition to clear and easy-to-follow steps, give interesting detail, or share an anecdote.
5. No origami, paper planes or paper boats, please, or anything potentially messy or risky. Presenting an orderly table during and after the demonstration is part of the job. Bring a protection (a table cloth) for the desk.
6. In terms of language, pay attention to linking. Find ways to move from step to step. (Not only "and then", "and the next thing"...) Make sure to check specific vocabulary beforehand: the group will learn from you in the presentation.
7. Hand in an outline with key words only. Title, material used, opening, steps, conclusion *and* extra ideas.

Comments:

- The activity suits intermediate learners well. *Art Attack* implies planning and rehearsing the demonstration at home and finally concreting it in front of the

group. It does imply a good amount of investment in terms of preparation, looking up specific vocabulary and learning it in context, and the linguistic content that has been practiced while giving a concrete demonstration (with all the interaction you can have) will remain more easily. Doing it in pairs, though, makes most learners feel more supported.

- A warning note: usually the origami and other paper folding presentations are not very successful. They are easy for the speaker, but hard to follow, and quite often there is little to say. Also, students should be warned about any "explosive" ideas in their demonstrations, for example of using balloons with water (not a good idea), and in general, about the importance of order and cleanliness as part of the delivery.

17. Dream Paths

What it is about:

- Students listen to a frame story, write and draw.
- Teamwork and presentations based on narratives.
- Giving meanings to symbols. Exploring subjectivity.

Time needed:

- *Lesson One* and *Two* (45 min each): narration and individual work.
- *Lesson Three* and *Four:* teamwork, presentations.

Material needed:

- A4 size sheets, coloured pencils.
- Background music.

What is practiced:

- Listening.

- Writing, together with drawing to enhance images and ideas.
- Speaking: team work and class discussion.
- Presentation skills.
- Discovering how many different meanings a word or an image can arouse.

Description:

With suggestive music in the background, and guided by a frame story, students write about and draw four objects they encounter on their way during a dream-like trip. They will discuss their descriptions in teams and prepare short presentations to reveal the hidden meanings behind the symbols these objects represent. At the end of the activity each learner will have a little illustrated storybook about his or her dream path.

This is what you do:

Lesson One and Two.

1. Provide a short relaxation: yawning, breathing more deeply, stretching, soft movements etc. Explain the dynamic briefly. Background music starts. (Suggestion: calm, abstract, perhaps a bit mysterious music. The music should be evocative but not create too clear images or strong emotions. For example soft piano music such as Satie's *Gnossiennes* has proved to work well).

2. Narrate the four chapters of the frame story. Adapt them freely: it is important you feel comfortable about them. Each one takes about 5 min plus 10 -15 min for individual work. A pause after the first two is recommended. You will need two 45 periods in total.

Lesson Three.

1. Form the teams: Houses, Vessels, Walls, and the Water team. You can check if you could form the teams on the base of which chapters each one liked the most, but if the distribution is very uneven, then have them say house, vessel, wall and water in turns. Teams find a place where to work, not too close to each other. Each team will concentrate on one chapter only, sharing their texts and drawings

about the symbol they were assigned. What does it mean/represent/symbolize? What could it reveal?

2. Tell students that they have the rest of the class to prepare a presentation of 5 to 10 min. about their symbol. Encourage students to be creative: they could share individual stories, show their drawings, prepare posters, build models, bring objects (similar to their 'vessels'), do act-outs (for example, how each one crossed the wall), interact with the audience finding out about what they imagined, wrote and drew. Remind them that it is important to give a structure to their presentations: an opening, clear main points and a conclusion focused on the symbolic meanings of the objects. Everyone in the team will have to speak; not only the one left in the front.

Lesson Four:

1. To create the right mood, start playing the background music again. After a short physical warm-up (for example each one moving freely with the music; or having each team form a 'wall' standing one behind the other, giving each other a massage on the back, and then change direction) start with the team presentations. Everyone in the team should participate somehow. Tell them that it is also an opportunity to practice presentation skills: the importance of visual contact, projecting the voice in a way that is audible and pleasant to listen to, being aware of what happens with our bodies while in front of the audience etc.
2. After each presentation, gather feedback and comments from the group. One 45 min period is enough if the presentations are kept within the time limits, but if your schedule allows it and the discussion flows, you could dedicate more time to each presentation. Students usually find it fascinating how much variety the activity produces, and – at a deeper level – how many unifying ideas you can reveal behind the differences.

THE FRAME STORY:

The House.

It is very early in the morning. It is still dark. You wake up and you know it is time to go. You are strangely alert and calm at the same time. You have prepared for this moment carefully. There is a mission you will have to complete before dusk. So up you go, dress up, and grasp the backpack you have already prepared. The map is there: it is the most important thing. It took you ages to get hold of it! You will also need a notebook, and a pen or a pencil, some colours, a bottle of water and a few sandwiches to help you through the day.

So you leave the house, and head towards where the path begins. There you find that it is even darker in the woods. It is fresh and humid because of the morning dew. Smell the air, feel it. Listen to the sounds around you! And continue walking briskly now that you are still full of energy. You can hear a far-away owl, then the earliest birds, and feel the first sunrays, filtered through the branches, caressing your skin. You should be close to the deepest part of the forest by now. But strangely enough, you see there is more and more light in front of you. As if there was an opening in the middle of the forest. And that is what you find! A clearing with bright colours, full of light. What surprises you the most is that there is a house in the middle of this field. It is not on the map, and you had never heard of it. Now approach and observe the house carefully:

What colour is it?

What material is it made of? (Wood or log house/hut, stone house, bricks, any other material?)

Is it an old house or a modern one? A simple house or a luxurious one?

How big is it?

Are the windows open or are they closed? Any curtains? Are they opened or closed?

Look at the surroundings of the house. Is there a garden? Does someone take care of it?

Can you find any signs of the people who might live in this house? What can you see?

Now go to the front door. Is it open? If it is open, will you go in? If you decide to enter the house explore it. Is there anyone inside? Find out about the house. How do you feel about exploring it?

How many rooms are there?

Is the house furnished?

Is it orderly or abandoned?

What kind of furniture and objects does it have?

Are there any paintings, images, portraits, photographs?

What else calls your attention about the house?

Do you think there is a connection between you and this house?

When you have finished exploring, find a corner where you can sit and make your notes about the house. Draw a sketch about it: a view from the outside, or a detail from the inside. Write a paragraph describing what you saw and how you felt.

The Vessel.

You know it is time to leave the house. Think of a suitable way of saying goodbye to it. Now you are outside, right in front of the house. It is still well before noon, and you are facing East. That is where the Misty Mountains are. You continue walking unhurriedly, enjoying yourself, and contemplating the view in front of you. You know there is no way around the mountains, and the slopes are very steep. Soon enough you find yourself at the foot of the mountains where the trail should begin. Evidently it has grown wild since long ago: it is full of bush. But still you will have to make it to the other side of the mountain. So you start looking around you, walk a little, until you find in the middle of the rocks a hint of what might have been another path. You decide to take it. And up you go, dragging yourself upwards in the midst of the thorny branches, struggling to find safe spots to step on. Many of the stones on your way roll down the slope. You are short of breath, but continue clearing the way up, losing all sense of time. And finally: exhausted, you notice you are on the top! You could not really tell how long it took. Anyhow, you feel you have deserved a pause, so you look for a comfortable place where to sit and catch your breath while you admire the view opening in all directions around you. It is overwhelming! All the hues of different blues, and browns, and greens… and somewhere over there, you destination. For a moment it feels as if you were all alone in the universe. Perhaps you can see the house… Or is it still there? After you have eaten and had some water, you head to the other side of the mountain. There is a clear path there. Down you go, carefully, fixing your eyes on the ground. When you are about halfway down you notice something in the middle of the path. It is an object of some sort: like a vessel, or a container. How strange: who would have left it there, and why? Approach the object. Now, observe it closely.

What material is it made of? Can you recognize the material? (Wood, tin, gold, silver, clay, plastic, stone…)

What form does it have? (A box, a basket, a chest, a cup, a jar, a book, a bottle, a can, a vase, a jar, a bowl)

What colour is? Is it ornamented?

How big is it? Could you carry it?

Is it something valuable or something commonplace?

Does it hold something inside? Can you see it? If it is closed, can/should you open it?

How does it feel like to touch the object? (Cold/warm/smooth/soft/coarse/slimy etc).

Why do you think it is there? Should you keep it? Does it belong to you now?

Before you continue, you will sit down and draw a sketch of the vessel or the container or of its content. Write a paragraph describing it and how you felt about it. What did you decide to do with it or with the content?

The Wall.

Soon enough the mountain is left behind. Now you are getting close to the hardest part of your trial: you can smell the sour odour in the air. The famous, or the infamous Wetlands are right in front of you. You look at vast marshes quiet calmly; you have prepared for this. No one is known to have crossed them ever. Some have attempted. And you know what to do, and there is no time to waste. You have to take the first step. So look for a dry spot, a solid looking stone or a tree trunk… And you hop. Another step. A dry looking grassy spot. You have barely made a couple of meters now, you think… How many are left? Then you look down ... and slip! Your heart bounces, and you are already short of breath. You almost fell! And you know it: if you look at those hypnotizing boiling eyes the Wetlands are full of, you will be lost. There is no one there to help you out. Only you. And now you remember all you learned, how much you trained. Your mind and body are only one. Another tree trunk, and now you fix your eyes at the other side, you stop worrying so much about whether it is safe or not, and just… flow. Suddenly you feel more confident than ever, and jump so fast from one spot to another that there are no interruptions, as if you were flying. You close your eyes: are you flying? Now, overjoyed, you know you are walking on solid ground again: you have made it, it is over! You lie down, breathe deeply, and only rest. It's a good moment for a lunch break. The rest of the journey will be smooth sailing compared to what you have been through by now.

You get up, and continue facing West, letting the sun guide you. It is dry barren land, and the path is wide and clear. You just let yourself drift toward the destination. There is a shadow in front of you. What is it? Behind the trees there is a wall. A wall! In the middle of nowhere! It was not on the map! Now approach the wall and observe it carefully. Look to the right, then to the left: it seems endless. Look up: it is so high it won´t be easy at all to get to the other side. And you will have to get to the other side…

What material is the wall made of? (Stones, plants, wood, bricks, tiles, any other materials?)

Is it formed by nature, or manmade?

If you touch it, what does it feel like?

How thick do you think it is?

Who do you think build it? Why? To separate what? Why?

Can you find something that could help you get to the other side?

How does the wall make you feel?

How are you going to make it to the other side?

Make a drawing of the wall and write a paragraph describing it and how you crossed it.

Water.

Now you are on the other side. You don't have much strength left. Have the last sip of water from your bottle, and continue walking towards the sunset. Your time is almost up: it is nearly dusk. With your tired senses you perceive changes. Something is changing. What is it? Is it the atmosphere, the vegetation, or is it you? There is a soft hill in front of you, and you know from the top of it you will see your destination. And up you go, with your last strengths: and from there…you have a view of a place with water. But what kind of a place is it? What are you facing? An ocean? A lake? A river? A pond? A waterfall? Approach the water and have a closer look at it.

What does the water look like? (transparent, clear, shiny, inviting, murky, turbid, muddy or dirty)
What colour is it?
Is it fresh or salt water? Would like to touch it or taste it?
Can you see the bottom? How deep is it?
What can you see in the water? Is there any life?
What else can you see around you?
How do you feel about this place and the water?

This is the end of your journey. You have arrived. Was it worth it? Was all the trouble worth this final destination? Are you satisfied, or are you disappointed? Or perhaps the journey is not over yet… Do you think it could or it should continue?
Now find a place where to draw a sketch of this place with water, and then write the final part of your story. Describe the place, the water, and how you felt about it. Then it is up to you to decide how the story ends. Will you stay here, or will you cross the water? Why did you have to arrive to this place? Do you know it? Is there something else you should find out? What is the final scene like?
Now conclude the story.

At the end the students give their story a name. If they want to, they can finish writing or illustrating it at home.

Comments:

Suggested music: Erik Satie: *Trois Gnossiennes*
Gymnopedie

Interesting to know:

- The idea for this dynamic was based on a pair work activity found in *Headway Pre-Intermediate* by John and Liz Soars, Oxford University Press. They, in turn, had adapted it from a psychoanalytical exercise in which the interpretations given to each of the symbols were the following:

    - *House*: our self in relation to others.
    - *Vessel:* love and romance.
    - *Wall:* obstacles in life and how we deal with them.
    - *Water:* life, how we feel about future.

  Any other meanings and ideas the students come up with are perfectly as valid!

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