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Design of an
Intercultural Exchange Project

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To Célia Barros Santiago

Introduction

This Intercultural exchange project is designed for enriched secondary 4, Québec cycle 2, English as Second language (ESL) students. The primary objective of this unit of five classes is to help students develop the program-defined core competencies: C1, C2, and C3. Throughout the unit's tasks and activities, students will be asked to interact orally in English with peers from another English-speaking culture of the world (C1). Furthermore, they will be asked to reinvest understanding of texts under the form of authentic culture-specific materials (C2), and finally, to write and produce texts, under the guise of video blogs (C3), that they will share with their foreign peers. In addition to responding to the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement Supérieur's (MEES) core competency requirements, students will have the opportunity to develop critical cultural awareness. This process will allow students to "expand the view of communicative competence used in language teaching (...) to explicitly recognise the intercultural use to which second languages are put and the range of skills, knowledge and attitudes associated with this (Baker, 2015, p. 131).

The cooperating classes will be a secondary 4 enriched ESL class from Quebec, Canada, and a regular year 12 high-school class from Auckland, New-Zealand. The levels have been chosen to match students by age and educational outcomes. By partaking in this four-class unit, students will develop into more cultured individuals through their participation in tasks that focus on aesthetic (traditional dances, documentaries) and sociological (history, customs) aspects of culture. The central theme pertaining to the project was chosen with two scopes in mind. The first is linked to having students learn about their own indigenous populations, whether it is the Maori people of New Zealand or the Blackfoot nation in Canada. The second scope is to learn

about the other class' indigenous population through the execution of the intercultural exchange project and its tasks and lessons. This thematic approach allows for an integration of the MELS (2001) view of culture as a relationship. In this optic, the students learn about their own indigenous population first (with oneself) before sharing it with the cooperating class (with others), and finally learn about the others' indigenous population (with the world). Moreover, the project will use synchronous and asynchronous forms of communication through three types of information and communication technologies (ICTs): Youtube video blogs, Zoom live conferencing, and email. By working in dyads with their foreign partner, students will be asked to produce a total of three podcasts, one per lesson from lesson two through four. Consequently, the unit also covers media literacy, which is an important Broad area of learning (BAL). Finally, the project's design equally encompasses several cross-curricular competencies (CCCs) such as: uses ICTs, cooperates with others, communicates appropriately, uses information, and uses creativity.

Descriptive overview of lessons

The following section will describe in detail the composition of the intercultural exchange project. As such, the unit will comprise four tasks which each encompass a whole lesson with the fourth task encompassing two lessons. Similarly, lessons will be presented consecutively, at the rate of one per week. Hence, the project will be structured with an introduction (task 1), two main tasks (task 2 and 3), and a conclusion (task 4).

Lesson/Task	Topics & Material needed	Description
Task #1 Introduction To the project	Topics: - Introduction of the intercultural exchange	The first lesson of the project has three purposes. The first is to introduce the two participating classes to each

<p>Time: 1 period (60 min)</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Acquaint students from participating classes with each other 2) Create dyads of students from each class. 3) Introduce the theme (<i>indigenous culture</i>) 4) Give time to set up Youtube channel account 5) Give dyads time to create an outline for their first podcast 	<p>project (10 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Icebreaker activity (15 min) - Formation of dyads (5 min) - Introduction of the ICT (Youtube Studio) (10 min) - Student creation of Youtube Studio account (5 min) - Dyads cooperate to create an outline of their first podcast (15 min) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computers or tablets (with internet access) for each student - Projector/smartboard - The link to the following website: http://infomory.com/famous/famous-maori-people/ - The link to the following website: https://native-americans.com/category/native-american-chiefs-leaders-quotes/famous-blackfoot-blackfeet-leaders/ - The link to the following website: 	<p>other via Zoom live conferencing. As shown by Levy (2007), this form of synchronous communication allows for both of the classes to merge together. The second purpose is to have students pick a moniker for the duration of the project.</p> <p>Canadian participants are asked to visit http://infomory.com/famous/famous-maori-people/</p> <p>New Zealander participants are asked to visit https://native-americans.com/category/native-american-chiefs-leaders-quotes/famous-blackfoot-blackfeet-leaders/</p> <p>The choosing of their indigenous names allows students to become invested in the project’s theme. Following this, partner dyads are formed composed of one student from each participating class, thus allowing for what Skopinskaja (2009) calls the <i>intercultural competence</i> in which two participants from a different culture effectively work together. The final purpose of this class is to introduce students to the main ICT they will be using for the project, Youtube Studio. This ICT will allow them to cooperatively create video blogs which, according to Lee (2011) “permits students to</p>
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	Youtube Studio	reflect on their ideas [...] while also increasing their participation and motivation (p.88-89).
<p style="text-align: center;">Task #2 Immersion into indigenous culture</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Time: 1 period (60 min)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Have students acquainted with their native indigenous culture. 2) Have students share what they have learned about their own indigenous culture with their dyad partner. 3) Have students validate what they have learned from their partner by watching a short documentary. 	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First synchronous collaboration between dyads by using Youtube live streaming (5-10 min setup) - Initiation to one's own indigenous culture (20 min) - Dyad negotiation of meaning about the Maori people of New Zealand and the Blackfoot nation of Canada (<i>Similarities, differences, key cultural aspects, 15 min</i>) - Validation of what they have learned from each other by watching the other partner's video (15 min) <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computers or tablets (with internet access) for each student - Projector/smartboard 	<p>Students will immediately start this lesson by starting to record a live podcast using Youtube Studio, with their dyad partner. As such, from this moment on until the end of task #4, students will operate in this fashion by starting a live recording of the whole lesson and their interaction as a dyad. The choice to have dyads collaborate this way is explained by Campbell (2003) as being a collaborative discussion space that is "useful for facilitating project-based language learning" (p.3)</p> <p>Once the podcast has started recording, each partner will watch individually the short video pertaining to some of their own native indigenous populations. As such,</p> <p>Canadian students will watch: https://youtu.be/icE-xPDDD KM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">And</p> <p>New Zealand students will watch: https://youtu.be/CCkXsvWvS W0</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Link to access the following video: Blackfoot nation culture https://youtu.be/icE-xPDDD KM - Link to access the following video: Maori culture and customs https://youtu.be/CCKXsvWvS W0 	<p>The videos both have a runtime of 11 minutes, therefore students will have finished at the same time for the podcast to remain synchronous. After having viewed the videos, students will get a few minutes to talk about their own indigenous people to their dyad partner. After having exchanged this information, partners will now watch the other person’s video to validate what they have learned. After having viewed both videos, partners will now negotiate meaning and come to a consensus about the information they have previously shared. Finally, dyads will conclude the recording of this first podcast by sharing their opinion about their own and their partner’s indigenous culture in light of what they have learned from the documentaries.</p> <p>This lesson encompasses O’Dowd and Waire’s (2009) three main categories of tasks. Hence, the presence of the information exchange task, where students talk about their own indigenous people. Followed by the comparison and analysis task in which partners compare and critically analyze aspects of each one’s culture. Finally, there is the presence of the collaborative task in which “students work together to</p>
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		produce a joint product” (Zha et al., 2006) as they finalize the recording of their first of 4 podcasts.
<p style="text-align: center;">Task #3 Production of an authentic cultural video blog</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Time: 1 period (60 min)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Have students further immerse themselves into their own and their dyad partner’s indigenous culture 2) Have dyads produce their second collaborative live-streaming video blog 3) Have students pick a cultural aspect which they will focus on for their final collaborative video blog production 	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surface and deep exposition to Maori culture. <i>(25 min including length of documentary)</i> - Surface and deep exposition to Blackfoot culture. <i>(15 minutes including length of video)</i> - Focus on one aspect of each culture <i>(food, traditions, rituals, customs)</i> to produce an outline to the final podcast which will become an authentic cultural text as part of Youtube’s library of videos. <i>(20 minutes)</i> <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computers or tablets (with internet access) for each student - Projector/smartboard - Link to the virtual reality documentary: <i>Finding Haka</i> 	<p>As in the previous lesson, dyads start by getting into a lobby on Youtube Studio and starting the recording of their podcast.</p> <p>The first part of the lesson involves both partners watching the virtual reality (VR) documentary Finding Haka. During the video, students can click and drag the screen in the video to view a 360 degree perspective of the surroundings, further immersing them into the task. As Ferreira-Lopes et al., (2018) state, the inclusion of another type of digital tool, VR in this case, serves to “foster students’ intercultural interaction” (p.8). Following the viewing, partners critically discuss cultural aspects presented in the documentary by using a set of predetermined questions provided by the teachers.</p> <p>In the second part, dyads now view the second documentary on the Pow-wow tradition of the Blackfoot nation. They then answer the same set of questions that were provided for the previous viewing. As Gómez Rodríguez (2015) suggests, using this documentary also allows for</p>

	<p>https://youtu.be/X2bA9-cow2Q</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Link to the Pow-wow documentary https://youtu.be/10E9Pfln87k 	<p>an exploration of deep culture, as it “embraces invisible meanings associated with a region, a group of people, or subcultures” (p.168).</p> <p>For the last part of this lesson, dyads will brainstorm and come to a consensus about an aspect of indigenous culture they wish to explore for their upcoming last video podcast. They will be given the remaining time in class, and additional time at home to prepare material that will be useful to the conception of their authentic collaborative cultural text.</p>
<p>Task #4 Finalizing and presenting of each dyad’s authentic cultural video blog</p> <p>Time: 2 periods of 60 minutes each (60 min)</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have students conclude the unit’s project by finishing their third live stream podcast. - Have students develop their choice of authentic cultural aspect into a final podcast. 	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploring aspects of deep culture related to indigenous nations. - Focusing on one aspect of indigenous culture (<i>customs, dances, traditions, foods, hunting, etc.</i>) to collaboratively create authentic cultural material. - Critical analysis of other dyad’s final podcast after the collective montage viewing. 	<p>This final task is divided in two periods to allow students to finalize their project while also having time to construct a final collective montage of all the pairs’ podcasts.</p> <p>During the first period, dyads will finalize the creation of their final podcast by brainstorming, outlining, and recording a 3-minute capsule that will be later mounted into a final montage including all the other dyads’ capsules. Using live recording and post-production compilation allows for what O’Dowd (2017) calls a combination of synchronous and asynchronous tools that render the impact of the lesson more effective.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By the first period's end, have all dyads complete their final video. - <i>(Teachers' role)</i> Compile all final videos into one montage to present during the next period. - Use the entire second period to present the montage of each dyad's final 3-minute podcast <i>(assuming 20 dyads at 3 min each = a 60 min period)</i> 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computers or tablets (with internet access) for each student - Projector/smartboard 	<p>After the first period, both participating teachers collaborate to create a montage of all the dyads final capsules. To this regard, Ferreira-Lopes et al., (2018) advocates that teachers should fully collaborate during all tasks of the project to ease its implementation.</p> <p>During the whole second period, students will watch the 60 minute montage of their collective capsules, after which they will be assigned homework in the form of a reflection to write about their experience and what they have learned from it. To this effect, the overall evaluation of the project will be formative, rather than summative (Lussier, 2007), and the only summative parts pertaining to the grammatical forms used by students to express themselves during the span of the project.</p>
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Justification of pedagogical design; discussing its strengths

Much of the justification for choosing this particular pedagogical design is incorporated in the previous section under the “description” column for each task. Furthermore, references to relevant research are also displayed in that segment. Beyond the information provided in the previous section, this project is aimed at developing cultural awareness in learners as well as

promoting intercultural communicative competence by having students first learn about their own native indigenous culture before negotiating the meaning with their dyad partner from another culture. In addition, the project is designed to present to the learners both surface and deep aspects of indigenous culture as exemplified by their viewing of authentic cultural material such as video capsules and documentaries about customs, traditions, and beliefs of the Maori and Blackfoot indigenous populations. The design of this project negates some of the pitfalls related to telecollaboration by adopting a variety of tasks that build-up on each other and in order of complexity as the project unfolds (Ferreira-Lopes et al., 2018). In terms of its structure, the project is designed in accordance with some of Ware's (2013) guidelines for achieving effective intercultural communication. As such, each dyad is composed of same-aged peers in one-to-one partnership. Additionally, in-class time between 45 to 60 minutes was devoted to the project once each week (p.317). The project particularly avoids stereotypes of culture because it focuses on the indigenous cultures of New Zealand and Canada, thus although the communication between dyad partners is done in English 'lingua franca', the focus is not on the language, rather it is on a cultural aspect that is unrelated, since it is attached to populations that natively use English, as well as different languages.

Another strength pertaining to this project comes from its use of several authentic materials, as presented by Dema & Moeller (2012), which come under the forms of: cultural capsules (dyad's final podcast), celebrations of festivals (Pow-wow video), as well as the other documentary videos used throughout the project. Moreover, dyad partners are asked to use synchronous and asynchronous methods of communication in order to collaborate (live conferencing, email, Zoom conferencing and podcasts). Additionally, the project also

incorporates the use of virtual reality to immerse students in the authentic material they are presented with, as exemplified in the documentary *Finding Haka*. While watching the documentary, students can use their mouse or their finger (if on a tablet) to change the perspective of the camera from 360 degrees and observe the New Zealand habitat of the Maori tribes as if they were there. Finally, The project is designed to take into account the cultural perspective of Québec's Educational Program (QEP). To this effect, aesthetic, sociological, and sociolinguistic aspects are covered throughout the execution of the project's tasks. For example, aesthetic aspects of culture are conveyed through the documentary on the history of the Pow-wow. Subsequently, sociological aspects of culture are depicted through the history, geographical features, and customs of the Maori people in the *Finding Haka* documentary. Finally, the sociolinguistic aspects of culture will be covered through the dyad's collaboration as both students from Québec and New Zealand will learn from each other aspects pertaining, but not limited to: social conventions related to greetings, paralinguistic skills related to gestures and facial expressions (made possible by the use of live video podcasting), as well as language code related to the different accents and expressions differentiating Québec and New Zealand variants of English.

Potential challenges; discussing weaknesses inherent to the design

While the project presents several strong points, the constraints brought upon by the nature of telecollaboration and the limits of ICTs present the collaborative teachers with a few challenges that need not be overlooked. Chiefly among these challenges is the time-zone difference between eastern Canada and New Zealand that Peiser (2015) presents as a structural

or logistical challenge. Consequently, the workaround is to find a time slot for the synchronous aspects of the project that need both classes to be at school and be able to dedicate time to the project. This would not be a problem for the asynchronous aspects of the projects as the participating classes could work individually. While much of the project is to be undertaken in the classroom, there are instances where students are asked to work from home. In those instances, O'Dowd (2017) identifies potential pitfalls as instances in which students may have limited access to the necessary technology to accomplish the task at home. Although unlikely, some students may not have internet access at home in order to access Youtube Studio and contribute to their share of the work to be done. In addition, since the project uses three types of ICTs (Youtube Studio video blogging, Zoom live conferencing, as well as email) there is a likely potential for unexpected technical problems to arise that may cause "too much focus on logistics at the expense of pedagogical considerations" (Peiser, 2015, p. 365). Finally, due to their young age, it is expected that participants will not all have the appropriate netiquette to efficiently partake in the exchange project. To this matter, Celia Aparecida Barros Santiago (2012) argues for the development of netiquette expectations that help students to proactively ensure positive online cultural exchanges.

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Appendices

Blackfoot nation culture

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Finding Haka (*Virtual reality, during the video use your mouse to hold-click and drag the camera around the world in the video*)

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Maori culture and customs

<https://youtu.be/CCkXsvWvSW0>

Pow-wow documentary

<https://youtu.be/l0E9Pfln87k>

