



Research for Materials Development in Language Learning

Evidence for best practice

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The Effects of Language Materials on the Development of Intercultural Competence

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Describing the objectives of intercultural competence more precisely makes it evident that they are very demanding and more complex than those which usually guide the work done in classrooms.

(Byram, 1997, p. 64)

Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how language teachers can adapt materials for the development of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) for university students. First, it discusses the importance of materials for language teaching and learning. Second, a concept of ICC is presented, and the way it might be assessed in materials development. And finally an example of an adaptation of language materials is presented.

Before starting, it is important to mention that this chapter was the result of constant reflection on my studies as a PhD researcher in ELT. My interest in language research has been in the analysis of the possible links between language materials and the development of ICC.

We know that language materials nowadays can have an enormous social impact in terms of making learners aware of the value of communication in modern multicultural societies as well as in promoting the idea of mutual understanding, tolerance and respect towards difference in diverse multicultural scenarios.

I think that many people to a certain extent have experienced intercultural communicative incidents and perhaps they have not been aware that such incidents are related to intercultural communication. Here are just two communicative situations to exemplify how it might take place:

First situation: My new friend

Context

Place: A classroom in a university in England

Time: Around 9:50 a.m.

Participants: Two Iranian girls and a Latin guy (all of them students)

Age: The girls are between 20 and 25 years old. The guy is around 20 years.

Relationship: They are classmates.

The guy met one of the girls before in another class

Other relevant characteristics: The situation takes place on the fourth day after classes had commenced.

Description

There were two Iranian girls talking in a classroom before class started. Minutes later a Venezuelan guy entered and addressed them. As he knew one of them, his greeting was very friendly. This girl introduced her friend to him. Immediately, the guy gave her a kiss on her cheek. Unexpectedly, the girl left them and ran out.

Second situation: A beer

Context

Place: English pub in a city in the North of England

Time: Around 10:30 p.m. – Friday

Participants: A customer, a friend and myself

Gender and age: The customer is a man probably in his 30s. My friend, a man who is 36 and I am a man, aged 38.

Relationship: Two friends and a customer that we had never met before.

Other relevant characteristics: The customer was from England. My friend is from Spain and I am from Colombia.

Description

My friend and I were in a pub in the centre of the City. We were talking about salsa music in Spanish. The English guy, in the corner, was drinking a beer. He was very attentive to our conversation. Suddenly, he decided to join us and talk about music in Spanish. He could communicate in Spanish quite well. He said he could not resist talking to us, because we were talking about one of his passions, *salsa music*. My friend said that it was not a problem. We introduced ourselves and when it was my turn, I said I was Colombian. He interrupted me and shouted in Spanish 'Ah, Escobar, la mejor cocaína del mundo (Ah, Escobar, the best cocaine in the world)'. I didn't know what to say. My friend realized how uncomfortable I was. Immediately he decided to change the subject.

These two situations reveal that in any human interaction communicative incidents are not always related to language knowledge. Sometimes an 'extra' knowledge is missing which is required to deal appropriately with the situation. This 'extra' knowledge is intercultural and it is often manifested by a limited or lack of knowledge of culture, of cultural awareness and of social behaviours as well as attitudes towards people and cultures.

In the first situation, one might think that for one of the interlocutors there is a lack of knowledge about how people greet each other in some cultures, in this instance, Iranians. Most of the time, misinterpretations occur when there is lack of awareness of our own behaviours and we try to project them onto others. In the second situation, one might also say that one of the participants displays unexpected communicative behaviour manifested in a social misconception: Colombia is more than cocaine. Here the lack of awareness can lead to lack of repair. To sum up, the lack of cultural awareness might affect the individual's communicative performance.

Developing an ICC lessens to some extent misinterpretations among interlocutors. Intercultural competence demands, as Fantini (2000) states, an ability to deal with differences (whether they are ethnic, religious, racial, gender or class) in a positive manner in order to assure effectiveness in communication. In theory this definition looks easy to understand but in practical terms it becomes a little complex to deal with. What is true is that all efforts made with regard to helping learners become more aware of why they do things as they do them or why they react in some way in a communicative situation become a very good starting point of an inquiry process for the development of ICC.

According to Fennes and Hapgood (1997, p. 24), in communicative exchanges within multicultural groups it is very common to experience critical communicative incidents. Sometimes these incidents are due to lack of awareness of different sociocultural behaviours adopted by people when they communicate. Quappe and Cantatore (2003) claim that when we interact with people from other cultures, we see, interpret and evaluate things in different ways. What is considered an appropriate behaviour in one culture is frequently inappropriate in another. Misunderstandings then arise when one person uses their meanings to make sense of another's reality.

In language educational settings, we can say that teachers and students now experience new ways of intercultural exchanges, perhaps promoted by the expansion of information and communication technology (ICTs), or perhaps due to people's increased mobility around the world. Corbett (2008) asserts that this trend has influenced all spheres in societies and that is why intercultural language education is becoming increasingly visible in courses and classrooms around the world.

The new ways of approaching communication demands re-conceptualizations and constant re-assessment of our subject of study – language- and how we teach it. Nowadays, language is viewed in an entirely different way than it was some decades ago. As a result, language teaching methodologies have also changed and evolved.

We cannot think that language is a fixed and monolithic structure. According to Stern (1983, p. 122) educators still recognize 'good' or 'bad', 'right' or 'wrong' in language and give value judgements about languages: for example, *X is a beautiful language or language Y sounds ugly*. Maybe these thoughts are based on assumptions that *form* is the most important part in language description.

In contrast to this perspective, Aitchison (1998, p. 13) states that the interest in language studies should be 'in what is said, not what someone thinks ought to be said'. In other words, a person interested in the study of any language should be concerned in describing languages in all their aspects and not in prescribing rules of correctness.

Today, thanks to the contribution of social sciences the view of language is changing and it is currently viewed as 'an integral part of being human' (Aitchison, 1998, p. 11). This means that language is not only a tool people use to communicate with, but also it is a human faculty that allows individuals to interact and live together to create better places to live in. This perspective shows that language is a social construction and results from inter-subjective relationships in which people know and agree social norms.

The inter-subjective relationship implicitly presumes the concept of interaction which involves, as Rivers (1987, p. 4) asserts, 'not just the expression of one's own ideas but comprehension of those of others.' In this regard participants work out interpretation of meaning through interactions. In addition, Tannen (cited by Watanabe in Kiesling et al., 2005, p. 227) mentions that 'this meaning is never totally determinate but rather is a joint production in which interlocutors share frames'.

According to Goffman (cited by Watanabe in Kiesling et al., 2005, p. 228), 'people within a society also share frames, and these are defined as principles of organization which govern events – at least social ones- and our subjective involvement in them'. In this respect Watanabe (in Kiesling et al., 2005, p. 228) states that if two people from different cultures do not share the same expectations about how to interact, that is, perceive differently the unmarked or marked linguistic features, it is possible that differing interpretations of the situated meaning could occur. That is to say, that in any communicative event interlocutors are often figuring out what it is going on, and on the basis of the interpretation, they act accordingly.

Furthermore, in social interactions the dichotomy of active users (speakers) and passive users (listeners or hearers) does not function anymore since interlocutors are active negotiators that get into a dialogic relationship of sharing and producing meanings. Byram (1997, p. 3) states that 'the exchange of information is dependent upon understanding how what one says or writes will be perceived and interpreted in another cultural context: it depends on the ability to decentre and take up the perspective of the listener or reader'.

On the other hand, if language is viewed as social construction 'an inability to use it adequately can affect a man's status in society, and may even affect his personality' (Aitchison, 1998, p. 11). That is why it is crucial to recognize the importance of language as a means to construct social identity and also as a way to tie communities. In this regard, Elinor Ochs (cited in Kiesling et al., 2005, p. 78) claims that 'language is closely tied to social identity and this is seen as a cover term for a range of social personae, including social statuses, roles, positions,

relationships, and institutional and other relevant community identities one may attempt to claim or assign in the course of social life'.

Finally, Stern (1983, p. 124) mentions that we have 'to recognize and accept without value judgement, the existence of language varieties'. He highlights how some school traditions have tended to emphasize a 'single' correct standard form, to inculcate that standard, and to downgrade variations. This issue is of concern to materials developers since they have to consider whether language materials promote the idea of language standardization and force students to consider just one culture – the target culture – or allow them to be communicative intra/inter culturally, and to construct their social identity/identities.

From my perspective, there seems to be a gap between what theorists claim and what language policy-makers and some materials developers do. We accept the idea of language variations and the diversity of languages and cultures worldwide, but in practice, when defining policies or developing language materials there is an attempt to homogenize and standardize the use(s) of language(s).

In principle, materials developers have to consider variables, the social, cultural and educational variables which will determine the type of materials to be designed. Figure 6.1 illustrates some basic components to keep in mind when developing materials.

The *who*, *where*, *what for* and *why* refer to the context – social/cultural – where the material will be used. The *what* refers to the views of language – structural/functional/interactional- adopted for the materials development, and the *how* relates to the different perspectives of language learning assumed – behavioural/cognitive/dialogic.

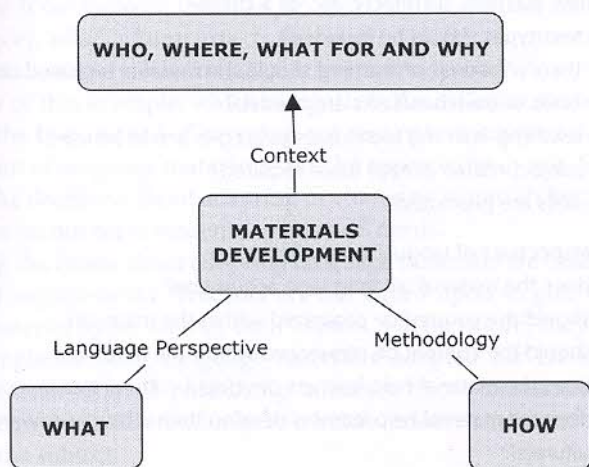


Figure 6.1 Components in materials development

Hutchinson and Waters (1998) have outlined some questions that could help materials developers understand what elements each component may include. Although most questions suggested are for instructional purposes – designing language courses – they could be adapted and improved to develop materials for ICC. The following questions could serve as a guideline for such a purpose:

1. Who, where, what for and why (Sociocultural context)

- Who are the learners/who is the material intended for?
- What is the material used for?
- Where is the material used?
- When is the material used?
- Why is the material used?

2. What (Views of language)

- What kind of language description is presented in the material? (form, function, meaning)
- What language points should be covered?
- What social aspects should be covered? (What types of social interactions are considered in the material?) (Who holds such interactions?)
- What cultural aspects should be promoted and taught in the material? (the ones of the small-c or the ones of the big-C)

N. B. The small-c and the big-C are understood here as Kramsch (1993) has defined them. The small-c refers to everyday customs and ways of life, mainstream ways of thinking held by mainstream citizens of well-defined nation-states. The big-C refers to the knowledge people acquire or possess about the literature, painters, architects, etc. of a culture.

- What text-types should be included?
- What theory/theories of learning should the material be based on?
- What kinds of exercises/tasks are needed?
- What teaching-learning techniques/strategies are to be used?
- What subject-matter area(s) is/are required?
- What skills are promoted?

3. How (Perspectives of language learning)

- How does the material aid language acquisition?
- How should the content be organized within the material?
- How should the content be sequenced within the material?
- How does the material help learners develop a cultural awareness?
- How does the material help learners develop their attitudes towards language(s) and culture(s)?
- How does the material help learners develop their communicative skills?
- How does the material help learners widen their cultural knowledge?
- How flexible does the material need to be?

Materials for language teaching and learning

In my experience as a language teacher I have taken the opportunity to informally ask my students about their impressions of the materials we used for language learning. They were all agreed that most did not fulfil their expectations. As a result, they did not feel comfortable using them since they did not address their needs and wants. These are some of the Colombian students' opinions:

1. 'Our textbook seems to be designed for other people.'
2. 'I want to know more about some other cultures but I can't learn it from my book.'
3. 'I don't like my textbook because I don't see myself there.'
4. 'I want to be a journalist but this book has nothing about it.'
5. 'This book makes me repeat and repeat. It is too mechanical.'
6. 'I want to find more demanding exercises. They do not make me think.'
7. 'This book is not dealing with real language.'
8. 'I don't see differences between cultures.'
9. 'All the activities are designed to learn the target language, what about my mother tongue?'
10. I am tired of seeing the same pictures which represent the same culture'

(Data collected from undergraduate Colombian students, 2007)

Most of these statements fall within the component groups for materials development previously referred to. For instance, statements 1, 3 and 4 relate to the first category, *who is the material intended for*. Statements 2, 7 and 8 correspond to the second category, *what cultural aspects are taught*. Finally, statements 5, 6, 9 and 10 match the third category, *how language is learnt or acquired*.

By means of this example, which categorizes the different students' opinions, we can see the importance of carrying out research to support decisions about whether a unit of language material would be appropriate or not. Some language teachers make decisions about adapting or changing materials because they realize that these do not meet students' wants and needs.

Generally, decisions about adopting language materials are made as a result of institutional requirements. Teachers are not called upon to give their opinions about the material to be used in their classes. Furthermore, they have to use it without complaint. Most language materials adopted for classroom use are designed by international publishing houses without necessarily having any input from current teachers who have a better understanding of the day to day teaching of the subject.

This problematic issue has an explanation and it has to do with the interests of publishing houses who attempt to cover the whole market. That is why there is a trend to adopt global materials which focus on learning language aspects such as

grammar. This means that teachers who want to focus on something different have to adapt the materials they are using.

Within my experience of almost 20 years as a teacher of languages, I am able to assert that most of the materials used in language classrooms are focused on grammatical issues and language functions. It does not appear to present a problem once students realize that by using those materials they are not entirely exposed to the target culture. In those cases where cultural topics are presented, they are often dealt with erroneously and keep alive the idea of stereotypes. For instance, many language books associate the Spanish culture with paella and bull-fights and the English culture with 'Big Ben' and fish and chips. Latin American culture is often characterized by presenting images of famous singers or traditional food. As an example, Colombia is associated with Shakira (a pop singer) and Mexico with 'tacos' and 'enchiladas'(food). We know that language and culture go beyond the idea of being represented by symbols or icons.

According to Lee, (cited in Levine et al., 1995) there are some contexts of multicultural education 'that often have come to mean something that is quite superficial: the dances, the dress, the dialect and the dinners. And they do so without focusing on what those expressions of culture mean: the values, the power relationships that shape the culture' (1995, pp. 9-10).

In this regard teachers may be aware that language learning materials are very important tools for students because they are a source of exposure to language and culture. By using them, students also shape their perceptions, construct and enlarge their knowledge and express their attitudes towards both the language and culture.

Without doubt, in formal learning scenarios, language materials constitute powerful tools that function as sociocultural mediators. As mediators, materials should bridge the gap between communities and make possible the different cultural encounters. Moll (1990, p. 9) defines mediation as the process of 'how knowledge is transferred to the child in a definite system - schooling'.

Therefore the major role of schooling, as Vygotsky (cited in Moll 1990, p. 11) claims is to create social contexts (zones of proximal development) where learners consciously master cultural tools. In this context, cultural tools are all the mechanisms used by learners that enable them to perform within the society.

Undoubtedly, language materials become influential artefacts which mediate transactions between different cultures. They can become the auxiliary means to promote mutual understandings between cultures as well as powerful tools to deal with cultural diversity.

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) and materials development

Many official documents have been published in the last two decades which display what the European Community has agreed concerning teaching

languages and intercultural dialogue, for example, the Common European Framework for Language Learning, Teaching and Assessment (CEF) (Council of Europe 2001) and the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue 'Living Together As Equals in Dignity' launched by The Council of Europe Ministers of Foreign Affairs at their 118th Ministerial Session in Strasbourg on 7 May 2008.

The Third Summit of the Heads of State and Government in 2005 identified 'intercultural dialogue as a means of promoting awareness, understanding, reconciliation and tolerance, as well as preventing conflicts and ensuring integration and the cohesion of the society' (White Paper, 2008, p. 4).

These documents mention that language teachers and communicators are mostly called upon to develop ICC. This is an enormous social responsibility we have to face as language teachers. Even if we are prepared to assume such a responsibility, we are still using in our language classrooms materials which promote hegemony and the standardization of languages and cultures.

We know that language materials might contribute to broaden students' perceptions about cultures and empower them to develop social behaviours such as tolerance and respect for diversity. Also our classrooms become fertile fields in which to undertake research about intercultural communication. In my role as a language teacher I have continually to deal with heterogeneous groups where differences are the constant in every single lesson. In this regard, I have not only to think about the content to be taught (linguistic or cultural) but also about how to teach and assess it.

At this point in the discussion we have to make the distinction between multicultural and intercultural. These concepts are not interchangeable. In the main, multicultural refers to different cultures, ethnic or religious groups that live within the same territory but are not necessarily in contact. While intercultural means the different cultures or social groups that live together in a territory and sustain relations in which they respect and tolerate each other's differences. Intercultural is a process of active acceptance to communicate and interact across cultural boundaries.

To understand what ICC means, it is necessary to think of a communicative situation in which people (from different cultures or backgrounds) interact and bring to the situation their knowledge, their awareness of similarities and differences, their attitudes and behaviours and their skills to negotiate meaning and establish effective interpersonal relationships. Likewise, Byram states that a 'successful communication might not be viewed as efficiency of information exchange. It is focused on establishing and maintaining relationships. In this sense, the efficacy of communication depends upon using language to demonstrate one's willingness to relate' (1997, p. 3).

In other words, ICC entails the ability to

- develop and maintain relationships
- communicate effectively and appropriately with minimal loss or distortion
- attain compliance and obtain cooperation with others.

With this idea in mind the assessment of ICC becomes a very complex task since this competence is not foreseen and measured by means of absolute indicators. ICC is observed through behaviours – individual/social- in context. As Byram (1997, p. 88) states 'ICC should be assessed holistically' because of this concept requires to put in relation skills, attitudes and knowledge which are implicated in every communicative situation.

According to Fennes and Hapgood (1997) there is no magic formula to develop intercultural learning in either classroom situations or anywhere else. The evaluation of a social or intercultural learning process is quite difficult due to changes in perception, awareness and attitudes which are hardly measurable.

Although ICC is not easy to assess for certification purposes, Byram (1997) and Fantini (2000) have proposed some dimensions in which it might be observed in any social interaction:

1. Knowledge: of different cultural practices and worldviews
2. Skills: for understanding and communicating with people across cultures
3. Proficiency: knowledge of language and its use
4. Awareness: of one's own cultural worldview
5. Attitudes: towards cultural differences

These dimensions are interrelated and are displayed when interlocutors bring to the situation their knowledge of the world, their skills to communicate effectively, their knowledge of the verbal and non-verbal patterns of communication, their awareness of the differences and similarities and their attitudes towards people who are perceived as different in respect of the cultural meanings, beliefs and behaviours they exhibit.

As one of the purposes of this chapter has to do with providing language teachers and materials developers with some criteria they might consider useful to assess ICC, Table 6.1 illustrates the five dimensions and the corresponding indicators that facilitate in some degree the observation of each dimension.

Table 6.1 Matrix to assess materials for the development of intercultural communicative competence

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)	
Dimensions	Descriptors
AWARENESS	Differences across languages
Does the material	Differences across cultures
promote a	How context affect/alter interactions with others
reflection	How learners view themselves within their own culture
on ...?	How learners view themselves within a different culture

(Continued)

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Dimensions	Descriptors
	How learners perceive different cultural identities (race, class, gender, age, ability)
	How contexts affect/alter interactions with others
	Respecting multiple and different viewpoints
	Social issues (weather changes, poverty, food crisis, etc)
ATTITUDE	Interact with members of the host culture
Does the material allow learners to ...?	Learn from hosts, their language
	Learn from hosts, their culture
	Value his own culture
	Value the host culture
	Express own opinions and views about different subjects
	Express their needs
	Express their wants
	Interact in a variety of ways, some quite different from those to which the learner might be accustomed
	Be flexible in communicating with those who are linguistically different
	Be flexible in communicating and interacting with those who are culturally different
SKILLS	Demonstrate flexibility when interacting with persons from different cultures
Does the material allow learners to ...?	Understand different models of behaviours within cultures
	Avoid making judgements to different cultures (food, dress, sexual orientation)
	Avoid sending offending messages to different cultures (food, dress, sexual orientation)
	contrast the host culture with their own
	Share opinions
	Use a variety of effective strategies when interacting with culturally different people
	Demonstrate the capacity to interact appropriately in a variety of situations
	Cite socio-political factors to shape the learner's own culture
	Cite socio-political factors to shape the learner's host culture
	Communicate effectively with people from various cultures in a range of social domains, considering age, gender, social status, and other factors
KNOWLEDGE	Cite a basic definition of culture
Does the material allow learners to ...?	Contrast aspects of the host language and culture with their own
	Know the essential norms and taboos (greetings, dress, behaviour, etc.) of their own culture.
	Know the essential norms and taboos (greetings, dress, behaviour, etc.) of the host culture
	Recognize signs of cultural stress
	Know some techniques to maximize their learning of the host language

(Continued)

Table 6.1 (Continued)

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)	
Dimensions	Descriptors
LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY	Know some techniques to maximize their learning of the host culture
	Describe their own behaviours in various domains (e.g. social interaction, time orientation, relation to the environment, etc.)
	Describe their host's behaviours in various domains (e.g. social interaction, time orientation, relation to the environment, etc.)
	Articulate the general history and some socio-political factors which have shaped their own culture
	Articulate the general history and some socio-political factors which have shaped the host culture
	Basic survival needs
Does the material contribute to achieve ...?	Minimum courtesy requirements
	Some practice of language features (structures and functions)
	Ability to communicate on concrete topics
	Ability to communicate using non-verbal language
	Ability to communicate ideas in different ways

Categories adapted from Fantini (2000)

Perhaps, some methods are more suitable to assess ICC than others. For instance, culture bump activities are likely to be good ways to get learners into situations where they have to perform social roles in intercultural encounters. In a cultural bump activity, students read a short account of a cultural incident (or culture bump) involving a situation where someone from another culture finds him/herself in a strange or uncomfortable situation when interacting with someone from a different culture. The account is followed by questions offering interpretations of the behaviour of the people involved (Byram et al., 2001, p. 117). By means of doing these activities interlocutors exhibit all the dimensions involved in ICC.

The following situation is an example of a culture bump activity. Here students can discuss what is going on and can give their own opinions about the situation.

Situation: A breakfast

Context

Place: London – Clapham Junction. A friend's flat.

Time: Around 9:30 a.m.

Participants: An English friend (solicitor) and me (language teacher).

Gender and age: My friend is probably in his 50s and I am nearing 40.

Relationship: We are friends but we do not meet very often.

Other relevant characteristics: I am visiting him for a weekend. His wife is my best friend.

Description

I was in his flat for a weekend in summer. It was a beautiful Saturday morning with plenty of sun. I woke up early that morning and decided to cook breakfast for him. I cooked an English breakfast and left it on the table to surprise him. When he got up he went to the kitchen and saw his breakfast ready. He was grateful for my efforts but he said he preferred a meal that was freshly prepared. He also said that he didn't like crunchy bacon. He just drank the orange juice and left everything on the table. I ended up eating alone.

Questions to discuss in pairs/groups

1. Do you think there was any problem in this situation? If so, what do you think it was?
2. How would you respond if you were in the same situation?
3. What suggestions about their future behaviour would you make to each of these characters?
4. Have you ever been in a situation like this? Describe it briefly.
5. How did you sort it out?

One example of an adaptation of activities for the development of intercultural communicative competence

The activities adapted in this example were taken from PRISMA. Spanish Course – Level intermediate- B2. The adaptation is intended for a group of university students and follows the Text Driven Approach. This approach was created by Tomlinson to answer the question about how a language can best be learnt and acquired in the classroom (Tomlinson, 2003, pp. 107–29).

The strength of this approach is that it helps writers 'to write principled and coherent materials quickly, effectively and consistently' and also 'to articulate and develop their own theories of language learning and language teaching at the same time' (Tomlinson 2003, p. 110)

The main underlying principle in this approach is that apprehension comes before comprehension (Kolb, 1984 in Tomlinson, 2003, p. 117.) Learners are encouraged to respond holistically, affectively and multi-dimensionally to a text before being helped to think more deeply about it, in order to learn something from it.

According to Tomlinson (2003), the Text-Driven Approach gives clues to language teachers and materials developers on how to develop activities likely to facilitate an effective, durable and enjoyable learning experience. Basically, the activities suggested in the Text-Driven Approach respond to the following process: first, engage learners; second, make them think; and finally, get them to talk and/or write.

Activities for engaging learners

Basically, the activities presented in this stage are designed to engage students with the text. Here learners are exposed to activities to experience the text by means of their senses, feelings, views and intuitions. Examples of these activities are:

Readiness Activities which trigger connections in the mind of the learner between their prior experience and what they will encounter in the text:

- Experiential Activities which are designed to help learners represent the text in their minds (activities which facilitate personal engagement).
- Intake Response Activities which come immediately after experiencing the text for the first time. They are intended to help the learners develop and articulate their initial personal responses to the text. The responses will be both cognitive and affective.

(see Tomlinson, 2003, p. 113 for more detailed discussion)

Example

Readiness activity

- a. Show the learners Figures 6.2–6.4. Tell them to form pairs to describe the Figures and to express their feelings towards them.
- b. Ask the learners if they have been to street markets and if so, tell them to describe their experience to their partner.
- c. Ask learners if they have street markets in their culture and if so, tell them to describe them briefly.



Figure 6.2 El Mercado del Quijote

Source: Elpais.com Yoperiodista. El Mercado del Quijote vuelve a las calles de Alcalá. LIDIA GUILLAMAS – Alcalá de Henares – 10/10/2008



Figure 6.3 Mercado Medieval – Sus Calles

Source: **Panoramio**. Download in November 2008 in <http://www.panoramio.com/photo/15220805>



Figure 6.4 Mercado de Pedra. El Casco Viejo de Vigo – Rincones y Calles – Vigo

Source: Vigo en fotos.com Download in November 2008 in: http://www.vigoenfotos.com/u_apedra_1.html

Experiential activities

- Tell the learners, 'I am going to read aloud a passage about 'street markets'.
- Tell learners to complete the passage individually and orally. You read and then stop to let them continue the story (Figure 6.5).

El Rastro en Madrid es un pintoresco y _____ mercadillo al aire libre que hay que visitar no solo por los objetos curiosos y _____ que se pueden comprar allí, sino por la amplitud de las calles y de puestos que lo componen.

EL RASTRO

El Rastro en Madrid es un pintoresco y bullicioso mercadillo al aire libre que hay que visitar no solo por los objetos curiosos y antiguos que se pueden comprar allí, sino por la amplitud de las calles y de puestos que lo componen.

Está situado en el corazón del viejo Madrid, en el castizo barrio de origen judío de Lavapiés. En este mercado con alma de zoco se pueden encontrar: antigüedades (cuadros de firma, sillas rococó, muebles de época, trastos viejos...), objetos de segunda mano (candelis antiguos, trajes goyescos, ropa...), componentes electrónicos, tebeos perdidos en el tiempo, boinas, pendientes, colgantes, carteras, productos artesanos... Pasas delante de un puesto varias veces y después de numerosos empujones y de algunos regateos, vuelves y te decides a comprar.

También es posible comer los típicos barquillos y, tras escuchar música tradicional madrileña procedente de un organillo, tomar el aperitivo con los amigos en una taberna, tasca o mesón genuinos.

Pero para disfrutar de este gratificante lugar donde muchos madrileños acuden las mañanas del domingo, conviene ir temprano: sobre las tres de la tarde muchos de los puestos empiezan a recoger.

Es una costumbre tan arraigada en los madrileños que no deberías perdértela.



Figure 6.5 EL RASTRO

Esta situado en el corazón del viejo Madrid, en el castizo barrio de origen _____. En este mercado con alma de zoco se pueden encontrar: antigüedades (cuadros de firma, silla rococó, _____, _____...), objetos de segunda mano (candelis antiguos, trajes _____, _____...), componentes electrónicos, tebeos perdidos en el tiempo, boinas, pendientes, colgantes, carteras, _____... Pasas delante de un puesto varias veces y después de numerosos _____ y de algunos _____, vuelves y te decides a comprar.

También es posible comer los típicos _____ y, tras escuchar _____ procedente de un organillo, tomar el aperitivo con los amigos en una taberna, tasca o mesón genuinos.

Pero para disfrutar de este gratificante lugar donde muchos madrileños acuden las mañanas del _____, conviene ir temprano: sobre las tres de la tarde muchos de los puestos empiezan a recoger.

Es una costumbre tan arraigada en los madrileños que no deberías perdértela.

Intake response activities

Tell learners to work in pairs to establish similarities or differences between this street market 'El Rastro' and the other ones they have been to before. You can use the following chart to make the comparison. Try to avoid value judgements (Figure 6.6).

STREET MARKETS	
EL RASTRO MADRILEÑO	ONE YOU HAVE GONE TO

Figure 6.6 Chart El Rastro

Activities to get students to think

In this stage, students work with the text and compare their initial hypotheses with the information given in the text. In this stage, Tomlinson (2003) has established the following activities

- Input Response Activities which take the learners back to the text to make discoveries about it. We can find:
 - Interpretation tasks: these involve the learners thinking more deeply about the text.
 - Awareness tasks: these provide opportunities for the learners to gain awareness from a focused study of the text.

Example

Input response activities

Tell learners to look in the text for the word(s) related to the following definitions:

1. _____ característico de Madrid
2. _____ adjetivo aplicado a un sentimiento o costumbre muy firme
3. _____ característico por ser propio o típico de un lugar
4. _____ objeto viejo o poco útil
5. _____ se aplica al lugar donde hay ruido confuso de gritos, voces y risas
6. _____ cómico
7. _____ utensilio para alumbrar, provisto de aceite y mecha

Awareness tasks

In this activity you have to introduce and define the cultural event to be dealt with in the unit. The Unit 1 – Prisma – introduces the concept of *regateo* (bargaining/haggling).

You can explain this concept to students like this: 'When you buy something in *El Rastro*, you can ask the seller for discount. Indeed, you can offer what you wish to pay for any item. The idea is to pay as little as you can for the item. This negotiation is called *regateo*.'

	CUSTOMER	SELLER
	25 euros	¿Cuánto me ofrece usted?
	También me parece a mí mucho más razonable este precio. Tenga. Muchas gracias. ¡Adiós!	Mire, aquí tenemos todas estas. ¿Cuál prefiere?
	Buenos días, quería un objeto que es de piel ... Creo que es marrón y sirve para beber vino.	¡Adiós!
	Sí, sí. Eso es: una bota de vino.	Conforme.
	¿Qué le parece entonces 30 euros?	Imposible. Dese cuenta que con ese precio tan económico nosotros no solo ganamos, sino que incluso perdemos dinero.
	Me gusta esta. ¿Cuánto cuesta?	¡Ah!, usted quiere una bota de vino.
	Me parece carísima. Tiene un precio totalmente desorbitado. ¿No podría hacerme algún descuento?	36 euros
		Buenos días, ¿qué quería?

Figure 6.7 REGATEO

Having the idea of what 'regateo' means, tell learners to:

- Look at the dialogue of regateo. With a partner put the following sentences in order to set up a dialogue between the customer and the seller (Figure 6.7).

Activities to get students to communicate

These activities are intended for students to produce the language. Tomlinson (2003) has identified some activities in which learners are able to produce and communicate what they have experienced and learnt.

- Development Activities which provide opportunities for meaningful language production based on the learner's representations of the text.

Example

Development activities

- Tell the learners to act out a short conversation between a customer and a seller in *El Rastro Madrileño*. Use the information given in the text if you want.



Customer Seller

- Role-play

Tell the students to devise a new role-play in which they act out a conversation of bargaining. Student A will be the customer and student B will be the seller.

At the end of the session ask the students if they felt comfortable with the role they assumed.

- Group discussion

Finally, tell the learners to discuss the following questions:

- What do you think about 'El regateo'?
- Do you have the same practice in your culture? If not, how would you feel if you were in a situation where you had to do it?
- Have you visited a country where people negotiate prices in that way?
- How was the experience?

How do these adapted activities contribute to the development of ICC?

The activities proposed in this adaptation provide information about the five dimensions of the ICC (knowledge, attitudes, awareness, skills and proficiency). In the first stage (activities for engaging learners) students start giving their point of view about some pictures. They have the opportunity to express their feelings and say whether they like the pictures or not. Afterwards, they can talk about their experiences of being in a street market and share their opinions with others. Finally, they can compare their experiences with the one presented in the text.

In this stage students are encouraged to display their *attitudes* towards the pictures and to be *aware* of the differences when comparing their experience with the one given in the text and the ones presented by the others. It is suggested that students avoid making value judgements. Additionally, when they hear the different experiences of their partners they can enlarge their cultural knowledge.

In the second stage (activities to get students to think), students read the text and work out its meaning. In this way they are not only dealing with the meaning of individual words but also learning to recognize speech patterns. Furthermore, they are able to organize the sequence of facts in a text. Here students are exposed to three dimensions of ICC. First, they develop the *skill* of guessing meanings; second, they acquire *knowledge* about a cultural behaviour (bargaining/haggling); and third, they develop the ability to sequence ideas in a message (*proficiency*).

The last stage (activities to get students to communicate) presents two activities that require students to communicate in the target language. First, they have to act out a situation (role play) and provide feedback regarding their performance. Then they have a group discussion where they have to answer some questions which

require them to connect previous experiences with new information acquired in class. With these two activities students can monitor and assess their own performance. They can also hear how the same situation differs from other people perceptions. By means of such activities students can enlarge their cultural knowledge.

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