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en mi práctica de la enseñanza del inglés:
Turisteando por México

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**ESPECIALIZACIÓN EN ENSEÑANZA Y APRENDIZAJE DE INGLÉS
COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA, MODALIDAD EN LÍNEA**

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Cultural awareness and intercultural competence in my English Teaching: *Sightseeing around Mexico*

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INTRODUCTION

The present paper portrays a detailed lesson plan and its outcomes once it was put into practice. The lesson was designed for a second-grade class in a public school in Mexico City. Hence, the main aims and expected learning outcomes were taken from the official curriculum and adapted it to the current situation of the learners due to the pandemic.

Lately, as most learners, this class has needed to develop other skills for more autonomous learning. Their process needs to be guided differently than in face-to-face lessons because they do not have the teacher next to them to provide help or immediate feedback. Here, technology has proven useful for there are copious online learning resources that, if well-chosen, can take the learner to a higher level of understanding with systematic input and constant practice.

In Mexico, the national curriculum for English learning is instructed by the guidelines of Programa Nacional de Inglés (PRONI), which was designed under the Communicative Approach and contextualized through a series of social practices of the language. For this project, it was considered that students were working with the social practices of *Register information of a geography topic with graphic support* and *Understand and register information about locations in the community*. And the context given was *Sightseeing around Mexico*.

One adaptation to the approach in use was to blend it with the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Approach, not only for the purposes of the project that seek to emphasize the cultural aspect of the language in the lesson given, but also because CLIL enhances learning by combining all skills and integrating content with that of other subjects in the syllabus, and uses English as a mere means of communication. For a class that lacks exposure to the language outside the classroom, it becomes more relevant to take advantage of the few opportunities to present language at its best, and through content it is easier to achieve so.

Here, the paper gives light to copious details of how the lesson was designed, delivered, assessed, and, afterwards, reflected upon by the teacher. The content was organized into five chapters:

1. Philosophy and Theory
2. Methodology and Practice
3. Assessment
4. Experience Report
5. Conclusions

At the same time, each chapter includes some sub-chapters to help the reader picture the lesson given as a whole. Plus, some attached links to evidences allow the reader to visualize what has been done and described in this paper.

It needs to be said that all in all, long-distance learning has proven a successful challenge for this class. And despite the limitations of time, technology and the proposed approaches have been found to be of great help with the learners as, so far, they have been able to express more confidently and link their previous knowledge to new findings during the tasks. Today, students seem to be more at ease with the use of technology and more confident to participate in remote learning, especially the shy ones. They demonstrated they can work better if they are given the opportunity to work with differentiated instruction in online activities, as the more proficient learners have gained knowledge through further practice. The specifics are described below.

1. PHILOSOPHY AND THEORY

1.1 Teaching Identity and Philosophy

At the beginning of the specialization, one of my first reflections was that I follow an eclectic approach to teaching. To begin with, I have expanded my research and knowledge on methods and approaches so as to notice there are no right/wrong methodologies, and what can succeed in a class may fail for another despite how archaic or new one approach may seem.

A second breakthrough was how differently I see the language my learners need to learn, the purpose of acquiring a L2 and the use they will give to it. Here, I can recall a couple of reflections along the specialization, where the input given drew attention to mirror our practice and think how often we teach genuine English in our lessons, meaning the actual use of the language in a daily basis rather than in controlled activities people do never use the language for.

All in all, I have not only enriched my knowledge on these subjects, but I also discovered approaches can be adapted to fit the learners' needs and add variety to the learning process, which is precisely what our Mexican context needs along with the development of our communicative skills; here, allowing more pair-work activities as well as more varied and flexible interaction patterns in the class would give preference to certain grouping, especially when evidence on records indicates achievement. Just as Jacobs & Hall point out (2002): Random grouping is quick and easy and conveys the idea that one can work with anyone.

Another important factor influencing learning is what the learner already knows. Ascertain this and teach him accordingly (Ausubel, 1968 in Novak, 2011). Hence, in my particular context, I have become aware that identifying key issues that are weak in a class, I must adjust the level of instruction to my students' needs to suit the class readiness accordingly.

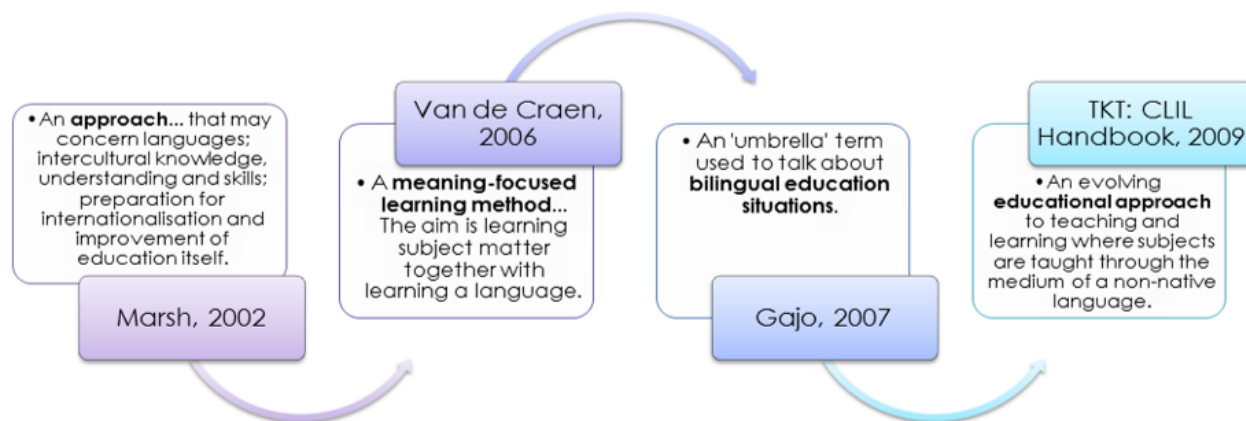
Regarding the integration of culture into the classroom, I am quite positive language is part of culture and it comes with learning a language in spite of the approach or syllabus to

follow in a course, as culture is imbedded in everything we do in life. Hence, even if it is neglected in the classroom, it will be eventually acquired.

1.2 Theoretical foundations

The present paper aims to present the planning of a coming lesson on the context of sightseeing around Mexico with a class of second graders in a public school in Mexico City. The content of the lesson is included in the syllabus of the course and has been adapted into a blended framework using both the Communicative Approach and the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Approach.

CLIL can be understood as an approach where encyclopedic knowledge and knowledge about the world is addressed using the language as a means to learn about curricular subjects. In Bentley's words (2010), CLIL is defined as follows:



From *TKT CLIL Module* by Kay Bentley, (2010). p. 5. Cambridge University Press

In the presented lesson plan, the four main components are *content*, *communication*, *cognition*, and *culture*. Content addresses some geographical tourism spots in Mexico, and is cross-curricular linked with social sciences and history. As communication aims for students to contribute with information they may know about the given content and enrich their findings. On the other hand, cognition allows learners to do prior research and develop basic

interpersonal communicative skills while interacting with others, such as: reasoning, creative-thinking and evaluating their own findings. Finally, for cultural purposes, the class will be given the opportunity to identify places and items from their own culture and briefly compare them to different ones around the world.

Also, English language (L2) is the means students will use to present their findings to the class, using the functions of identifying the sights in their city / country & suggesting things to do there with the grammatical exponent of the modal *CAN* for making suggestions. The following chart illustrates how content can be connected with different areas of study, as it commonly happens in real life.

SUBJECT	Most learners should know...	be able to...	be aware...
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mexico is their country ✓ CDMX is the city they live in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify some places, food & traits about Mexico and CDMX. ✓ Do some research and exemplify 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mexico has some similarities and some differences with other places around the world.
Social Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ about people's interests in nature and life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop an interest in the world. 	
History today	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mexico is an important touristic spot in the world today 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Link today's life in Mexico and compare it to other places around the world. 	

1.3 CLIL & Communication components

Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Geography: Tourism ⇒ Social science: life in Mexico
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ What are the most common places to visit in Mexico? ⇒ Where have you been to in Mexico? ⇒ What places would you like to visit? ⇒ Where would you suggest going? Why?
Cognition	Compare & contrast the places; classify them into categories about weather,

	food...
Culture-awareness Tasks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and exemplify some places in Mexico and in CDMX. 2. Label them and give a trait it has. 3. Suggest some places to go 4. Classify them into categories such as weather, food, location... 5. Rank order them in a top 5 6. Compare and contrast them to other places around the world
Language	Grammatical exponent: the modal CAN for suggestions e.g. <i>You can visit Xochimilco, You can eat sopes and huaraches...</i>
Follow up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Contributions in the interactive <i>padlet</i> online ⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPDdkZCq-ns (Mexico City: That beautiful beast ONLY images 6:43 min) ⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8HTyJPXVug (TOP 10 beautiful places to visit in Mexico – Mexico travel video, SPOKEN 8:31 min) ⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcmrbNRK-jY (200 days – A trip around the world travel film 23 min.) ⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioYqFtr2D0Q (We call this home – 3 years around the world travel, music & IMAGES ONLY 3:47 min.)

1.4 Other theories about Second Language Acquisition and Integrated Learning

For young learners who have little exposure to learn a foreign language it is quite common to resort to L1 during their first attempts or when they do not have the sufficient lexical knowledge to express their ideas using L2. In Krashen's words (1981), first language influence may be an indicator of low acquisition, or the result of the performer attempting to produce before having acquired enough of the target language. [...] Note that it is possible for performers to use the first language and the Monitor to perform without any acquired competence in the second language.

Krashen (1982) also talks about the impact of input within the classroom as it has been widely argued that real proficiency is achieved only by living in an English speaking country, for him, the classroom is of benefit when it is the major source of comprehensible input¹. However, this may only occur up to an intermediate level.

However, one challenge that providing comprehensible input can arise is the lack of authenticity in terms of classroom materials as well as in when assessing the students' performance. Brown and Lee (2015), state that authenticity almost always means the integration of two or more skills, thus the evaluator must mind the validity of what is to be assessed. Also, that an authentic task in any assessment implies that the test taker (or classroom student) must engage in actual performance of the specified linguistic objective. This assertion was always considered in the designing of the all the activities in the lesson presented here.

2. METHODOLOGY AND PRACTICE

2.1 Lesson Planning: Identification Cell

Teacher author	Susana Vázquez Martínez
Proficiency level	A1 - primary school second graders
Context	Sightseeing around Mexico
Approach	Blended <i>Communicative</i> & <i>CLIL</i> (Content and Language Integrated Learning)
Main aim	By the end of the lesson, learners will have been provided with the opportunity to exchange information about places, people, food and other traits from their city; compare and contrast it to other places in the world, as well as to give suggestions about where to visit, what to eat, etc. in Mexico.

¹ The value of second language classes lies not only in the grammar instruction, but in the simpler “teacher talk”, the comprehensible input. It can be an efficient place to achieve at least the intermediate levels rapidly, as long as the focus of the class is on providing input for acquisition. (Krashen, 1982)

Subsidiary aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Learners will be given chances to develop some cognitive skills such as identifying, comparing and contrasting, as well as evaluating and giving opinions. ⇒ Learners will be given chances to develop the learning skills of cooperating with others, doing research and handling data to prepare the project. ⇒ Learners will be given chances to raise awareness of the richness of their city and country and the differences it has with other places around the world.
Integrated Skills	Reading, Writing, Listening & Speaking (<i>at word & sentence level</i>)
Language: main grammar point	Grammatical exponent: modal <i>CAN</i>
Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ giving suggestions ✓ comparing & contrasting ✓ Classifying categories
Subsidiary systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Lexis about sightseeing ⇒ Grammar notions of modal <i>WOULD</i>, comparatives, present perfect
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ technological devices: PC, laptop, webcam ⇒ Internet access ⇒ Google Meet platform ⇒ youtube.com ⇒ Padlet.com ⇒ Google Classroom platform
Links to Online Content	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. https://www.kayak.com/c/escape/virtual-guides/mexico-city/ 2. https://www.youvisit.com/tour/mexicocity/80648 3. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH4uierF0Lc 4. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUMXv0VEtoc 5. https://padlet.com/susanavazquezm/c6ei1ql8ikxqsds 6. https://padlet.com/susanavazquezm/vr3fvxzysr4siwti 7. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioYqFtr2D0Q 8. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPDdkZCq-ns 9. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8HTyJPXVug 10. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcmrbNRK-jY 11. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioYqFtr2D0Q
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2.2 Timetable fit

This is one of a series of lessons students have had and will still have on the social practices *Register information of a geography topic with graphic support* and *Understand and register information about locations in the community*. These social practices are part of the official curriculum at public schools in Mexico City and are presented in this paper as a three-session lesson.

Prior to the presented activities, learners have had some lexis lessons about maps and particular traits of some countries such as languages, currency, flags, food, weather, etc. So far they can identify and categorize vocabulary into themes; most of them know the letters in the alphabet and can read and write some words in English. They can answer simple questions with key terminology; however, they cannot express themselves using L2 straightforward, but they are fully aware that English is a different language from their own.

Rather recently, they have been exposed to written expressions and shown evidence of basic reading skills. Most of the activities before were supported by audio and visual material with little emphasis on graphic written materials as the focus of the official curriculum is communicative and pays little attention to developing writing skills until following grades.

2.3 Class profile

This is 2nd grade class of 28 learners, in a public primary school in Mexico City; there are 17 boys and 11 girls aged between 6–7 years old. On a regular basis, they are supposed to have three hours of English lessons a week or about 100 hours in a whole school year; however, due to the current sanitary emergency in the country, the official regulations, and the school working policy, the main resource for their learning is the TV program aired once a week plus a forty-minute virtual lesson they have with their classmates every week. Additionally, suggested activities are programmed on a virtual platform they can access to find some follow-up long-distance practice.

So far, students display better understanding at listening than the other skills, i.e. they may know and understand several words at the level of pronunciation, but are still unable to recognize them in written form. This class was working towards literacy consolidation when the pandemic forced to distance learning; unfortunately, not all students have fully mastered literacy skills and even when they can identify most letters in the English alphabet, they are not able to read or write anything beyond word level unless they are guided.

Most of the learners were in the same class last year, and despite being used to having some English input in their family contexts, school is the only occasion they have to be exposed to L2 and have not developed further than A1 (giving to the description of learner level by the Common European Framework of Reference, CEFR), as they still need a lot of help to be able to communicate and reply in basic English but show good evidence of understanding texts and audios graded for their level, and even some authentic audio and visual materials.

Here, the top aspects identified in the class are that they show a good attitude towards the language, eagerness to work and participate online and they make a great effort to speak English; although they tend to confirm the information in L1, probably because they are usually exposed to an English translation method, both from TV and from their relatives who support their learning at home. So far, students have openly expressed their fondness on play-like activities such as interactive online games, short videos and songs as well as interactive worksheets where they have demonstrated far-reaching understanding of the language; while most parents have asked to maintain the online practice solely to free websites where no registration or app-downloading are required as not everyone has much technological awareness or a device with enough room to store more applications than the necessary.

Previous surveys have revealed some balance between two learning remote preferences: interactive online practical activities and the weekly virtual session over the TV program assignment. About their linguistic needs, most of them can clearly express themselves in L1. As for L2, evidence has shown that (at their level) 6 children are more proficient at using the language and can communicate more efficiently than the rest; 12 others are able to understand and give proper responses when helped with prompts; whereas

the 10 children left tend to remain more passive or do not even participate in school activities at all.

There are seven students who rarely attend face-to-face lessons, and have been absent for most online activities. They have been detected with some family shortcomings, which place them at high risk of becoming school dropouts. Thus, the teachers and the special attention program at school are pursuing these cases to prevent abandonment and to offer closer and more personal guidance. Concerning affective needs and similarly to other classes, there are some special cases that are in need of help in the group either because they have had ill or deceased relatives at home, or because the current pandemic has jeopardized their family wellbeing. All in all, the entire class (and school population) is considered to need sympathy and support along the school year.

2.4 Rationale

Over the last thirty years globalization has changed the way we think and talk about language and culture in foreign language learning. With the mobility of goods and people across the globe, the immediate and constantly available connection with distant cultures, the global media, and the spread of electronic social networks, the triad: communication, language, and culture has changed meaning (Kramersch, 2015).

When integrating skills, Jeremy Harmer (2011) explains that speaking is often worked as preparation and stimulus, thus teachers often ask students to discuss a topic as a way of activating their schemata or engaging them in a topic that they are going to read or hear about. Mainly, this is what this lesson intends to do from the start.

Harmer (2011) also highlights that speaking sessions allow students to investigate their thoughts and feelings about a topic. Frequently, he adds, speaking is part of a longer planning sequence. Here, *sightseeing around Mexico* was planned for the class to combine and enrich what they know about their country and compare it with other places around the world, and in order to achieve so, the topic is presented as a series of lessons where cultural content is privileged in an integrated skills approach.

In this lesson, students are working towards a cooperative integrated task². First, an image is presented as a visual input with some eliciting questions as a lead-in. The video material was selected to provide input either for visual support or for context setting at first, and it seeks to enhance students' listening comprehension and their eagerness to participate, so they can contribute with their own examples of places they have heard of, they have been to, or they would like to visit.

Then, some preparation time is allowed with additional content so that, as stated above, the visual stimulus activates their background knowledge, following what Brown & Lee (2015) suggest: Culture is highly important in the learning of a second or foreign language... the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate them without losing the significance of either language or culture.

As for the language preparation stage, the exponent modal *CAN* is introduced to exemplify suggestions. On this, Bentley (2010) acknowledges that CLIL gives learners opportunities to develop linguistic abilities during lessons, and this includes acquisition of vocabulary and grammar. However, the focus of a CLIL lesson is on understanding subject content, not on grammatical structures. This was considered of particular importance for the development of this project, as it matches the purpose of the institutional program: PRONI (Programa Nacional de Inglés, 2011) at public schools in Mexico and the emphasis this module gives on culture.

The production stage was thought for the class to cooperate with others and benefit from this interaction, especially for shy or lower proficient learners who can be cued and aided by listening or reading their peers before giving their own contributions. The presentation of an interactive wall would allow learners to process and use their knowledge in written and spoken form at their level. As Bentley encourages (2010), in CLIL, teachers need to provide activities:

- ✓ for communicating subject content orally
- ✓ for developing listening and reading strategies

² Almost any speaking activity is bound to involve listening, but sometimes when students are involved in some kind of cooperative writing they will be speaking, listening, writing and reading almost simultaneously (Harmer, 2011).

- ✓ for supporting written or physical production

Finally, the feedback seeks to propose a formative or performance assessment type (Bentley, 2010), where students can give their views on the development of the whole lesson, and the teacher can both praise students on their achievements and draw their attention to a more accurate use of the language at this level; whereas the follow-up activities pave the way for extending students' understanding on language and culture within the topic.

Being an A1 level class of young learners, the context and activities have been chosen in terms of attractiveness, meaningfulness, personalisation and learners' needs. Provided that the content of these lessons is actually both in the textbook and the readers book, it has made the lessons more effective and meaningful to use some of the language they can find in the books and take the class to more challenging tasks by presenting some authentic videos where they can see and hear familiar information and link it with new data, thus offering a good opportunity to promote personalization, transference of skills and integration of new and pre-existing knowledge.

The material for the lessons was carefully chosen at the level and familiarity of the class so that they can build some self-confidence and use it with their own ideas. Besides, it was always considered that learners are working online and even when they may have some support from their parents, most relatives do not have any English knowledge, hence, these websites seem to be more friendly to use and offer free access, which is preferred over downloadable applications or sites where registration is required.

There were no special tasks included for anybody as it was always planned to monitor activities and provide additional help where necessary. Besides, differentiation and scaffolding is given throughout the lesson and activities, following the learners' pace and wait time as needed.

2.5 Lesson Plan: Introduction to the Lesson

Lesson stages	Teacher's activities	Students' activities	Session number
Activation before the lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teacher greets students and activates previous knowledge by eliciting content from the preceding lesson: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Students (Ss) greet back and comment what they can recall. 	1-3
Setting the aims of the lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teacher states the main aims of the lesson and asks Ss to restate in their words or provide an example. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Students listen to the teacher and paraphrase or exemplify the purpose of the lesson. 	1-3
During the lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teacher guides learners through activities promoting the development of learning skills and allowing autonomy in their performance, through each stage of the lesson: <i>lead-in, preparation, production, feedback and follow-up activities</i>. ➤ Teacher may aid learners with cues and model sentences for them to express in L2 at their level. ➤ Teacher takes students to reflect on their performance and evaluates according to the lesson aims. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Ss receive input provided and respond according to instructions and to their understanding within the context using their own experience on the topic. ⇒ Ss may ask any doubt and comment with personal contributions. ⇒ If needed, Ss use samples from their peers to feel more confident before participating. ⇒ Ss give their own views about their own performance and the development of the activities in the lesson. 	1-3

2.6 Communicative Skills Development: Given Sessions

READING, WRITING, LISTENING & SPEAKING (<i>integrated skills at word / phrase level</i>)					
MAIN AIM	By the end of the lesson, learners will have been provided with the opportunity to exchange information about places, people, food and other traits from their city; compare and contrast it to other places in the world, as well as to give suggestions about where to visit, what to eat, etc. in Mexico.				
SUBSIDIARY AIM	Learners will be given chances to develop the learning skills of cooperating with others, doing research and handling data to prepare the project.				
SPEAKING AIM	To produce words and chunks of English language in response to the given visual input and context.				
STAGE	TEACHER'S ACTIVITIES	STUDENTS' ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	SESSION #	EVALUATION
<p><u>LEAD IN</u></p> <p>To set the context and generate interest.</p> <p>(Harmer, 2011) 8' Lockstep</p>	<p>⇒ T shows the introductory image of the site and asks Ss if they know the place in the photo:</p> <p>-<i>What's in the picture?</i></p> <p>-<i>Name some places in the photo.</i></p> <p>-<i>What's the name of the city? Is it New York? Acapulco?</i></p> <p>-<i>In which country is it? Canada? USA? Argentina?</i></p>	<p>⇒ Students watch the image and reply to the questions about the visual input</p>	<p>⇒ Google meet platform (all the session)</p> <p>⇒ https://www.kayak.com/c/escape/virtual-guides/mexico-city/</p>	1	<p>⇒ Students' responses according to the aims. Expected replies: <i>Mexico City, Tlatelolco, La Villa, Mexico...</i></p>
<p><u>CONTENT PREPARATION</u></p> <p>To help learners</p>	<p>➤ T asks Ss if it is possible to go touring during the pandemic, and whether they have been</p>	<p>⇒ Students reply depending on their personal experience: <i>yes, no, correct,</i></p>	<p>⇒ Students oral responses</p>	1	<p>⇒ Here, students will probably combine L1 & L2, and of course, the use of L2 will be encouraged by</p>

<p>get mentally equipped with sufficient ideas for the main task</p> <p>&</p> <p>To help Ss develop an interest in the world</p> <p>(Brown & Lee, 2015)</p> <p>20'</p> <p>SS-SS & Lockstep</p>	<p>somewhere in the city or outside:</p> <p><i>-During the pandemic, do you visit places? Is it recommended to go on vacation?</i></p> <p><i>-Have you been somewhere? Where?</i></p> <p><i>-Name some of the places you see in the photo.</i></p> <p><i>-What's the name of the city? Is it Acapulco? New York?</i></p> <p>➤ T shows a website for them to see some places in 360° and have Ss comment on it:</p> <p><i>-Have you been there? Where have you been?</i></p> <p><i>-Do you recommend visiting? What can people see there?</i></p> <p>⇒ T goes back to</p>	<p><i>incorrect...</i></p> <p>⇒ Some answers are expected using both L1 & L2 (although L2 is usually encouraged).</p> <p>⇒ Ss name some places they have visited: Cancun, Acapulco, CDMX city center...</p> <p>⇒ Ss identify Mexico City, and the country</p>	<p>⇒ https://www.youvisit.com/tour/mexico-city/80648</p>		<p>paraphrasing or exemplifying their contributions.</p> <p>⇒ Ss are expected to identify and name some of the places both from the pictures & in the videos.</p>
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	<p>the previous website (kayak), has Ss explore it, and give some more examples of what people can do around the city.</p>	<p>⇒ Ss watch the helicopter video in the site, identify and name some of the places they know around the city.</p>	<p>⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH4uierF0Lc</p>		
<p><u>WRAP-UP</u></p> <p><u>PLENARY</u></p> <p>To help Ss think about content & language seen during the lesson</p> <p>(Bentley, 2010)</p> <p>12'</p> <p>Lockstep</p>	<p>➤ T challenges Ss to name their favorite place to visit plus activities to do there: <i>My favorite place is Mexico City, You can go on a bus tour, You can eat corn with mayonnaise...</i></p>	<p>⇒ Ss take the challenge and talk about their favorite places to visit or contribute to their peers' examples.</p>	<p>Ss' oral responses</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>⇒ Group and individual assessment through Ss' oral production</p>

READING, WRITING, LISTENING & SPEAKING (*integrated skills at word / phrase level*)

MAIN AIM: By the end of the lesson, learners will have been provided with the opportunity to exchange information about places, people, food and other traits from their city; compare and contrast it to other places in the world, as well as to give suggestions about where to visit, what to eat, etc. in Mexico.

SUBSIDIARY AIM: Learners will be given chances to raise awareness of the richness of their city and country and the differences it has with other places around the world.

STAGE	TEACHER'S ACTIVITIES	STUDENTS' ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	SESSION #	EVALUATION
<p>LEAD IN</p> <p>To activate learners' schemata</p> <p>(Harmer, 2011) 3' Lockstep</p>	<p>⇒ T asks Ss if they can say what last session was about:</p> <p>-<i>Can you tell me what we talked about last class?</i></p> <p>-<i>Do you remember an example?</i></p>	<p>⇒ Students comment what they can recall from the previous class</p>	<p>⇒ Google meet platform (all the session)</p>	2	<p>⇒ Students' responses according to the aims. Expected replies: <i>Mexico City, Tlatelolco... visiting the city</i></p>
READING AIM	To grasp some specific information and general ideas or patterns to use them as a model.				
LISTENING AIM	To understand chunks of language of a familiar context and be able to reproduce fragments orally.				
<p>LANGUAGE & TASK PREPARATION</p> <p>To equip learners with useful language to use during the main task and give a model.</p> <p>&</p>	<p>➤ T gives a couple of examples and encourages Ss to write theirs plus some new suggestions in the chat-box:</p> <p>-<i>Now, please, open the chat-box and write some of your examples.</i></p> <p>-<i>You can give new suggestions of places to visit</i></p>	<p>⇒ Ss see the examples and follow writing their own contributions.</p> <p>⇒ Still, they keep commenting in spoken form.</p> <p>⇒ Ss choose places and activities to suggest using the expression: <i>You CAN ...:</i></p>	<p>⇒ chat box from the Google meet platform</p>	2	<p>⇒ Here, students will probably combine L1 & L2, and of course, the use of L2 will be encouraged by paraphrasing or exemplifying their contributions.</p> <p>⇒ Expected written posts: <i>Michoacán, Coyoacán, Mexico, City Center, you can visit Tlatelolco</i></p>

<p>To raise learner's awareness on the subskill of cooperating with others while participating</p> <p>(Brown & Lee, 2015) 8' Ind. & Lockstep</p>	<p><i>and things to do.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ T provides immediate feedback on Ss' comments. ➤ T shows a video about visiting Mexico City and has Ss listen and name familiar places or activities to do around the city. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Ss watch and listen to the video. ⇒ Ss comment whenever they identify a place or activity they hear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUMXv0VEtoc 		<p><i>and see Plaza de las Tres Culturas...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Ss are expected to hear, identify and name some of the places both from the pictures & audio in the video. Expected answers: La casa azul, Coyoacán, Bellas Artes, Zócalo...
<p>READING AIM</p>	<p>To get specific information and grasp general ideas and patterns to use as a model.</p>				
<p>WRITING AIM</p>	<p>To express suggestions in written form following a model and expand it to freer choices.</p>				
<p>SPEAKING AIM</p>	<p>To produce words and chunks of English language in response to the given input and context.</p>				
<p><u>PRODUCTION STAGE</u></p> <p>To give the learners the opportunity collaborate on the padlet interactive wall where they can post some</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ T will now display and share the link to an interactive padlet for Ss to suggest places and activities to do in Mexico. ➤ T tells Ss they 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Ss will open the virtual padlet on their browsers and post their suggestions and photos on it. ⇒ Ss can comment and react to their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Students' posts and written comments on the virtual padlet: <p>https://padlet.com/susanavazquezm/c6ei1ql8ikkxqsds</p>	<p>2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Ss are supposed to attempt some suggestions following the given examples, taking advantage of the ones their peers provide on the interactive wall and T' guidance.

<p>photos / comments about places they suggest visiting</p> <p>(Bentley, 2010) 18' Ind. & SS-SS</p>	<p>can upload their photos, comment and contribute to their peers' posts.</p> <p>➤ T tells Ss they can also post as many times as they want writing at least one suggestion for each post, at their level. They will present their contributions to the class in spoken form after posting.</p>	<p>peers' posts.</p> <p>⇒ Ss can upload their photos, comment and contribute to their peers' posts</p> <p>⇒ After posting, Ss will present their contributions to the class in spoken form.</p>	<p>https://padlet.com/susanavazquezm/vr3fvxzysr4si wti</p>		
<p><u>FEEDBACK</u></p> <p>a) Content</p> <p>To give learners the opportunity to report on their conversations.</p> <p>(Bentley, 2010) 5' Lockstep</p>	<p>➤ T will ask Ss about the task and give feedback on the learners' performance: <i>Was the task interesting or boring? Did each of you collaborate with the others? Is</i></p>	<p>⇒ Ss listen to the T and reply to the questions giving their views on the task.</p>	<p>⇒ Ss' own thoughts</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>⇒ Ss are expected to give their reflections on their performance.</p> <p>⇒ Did they..?</p> <p>⇒ Did they not...?</p>

	<p><i>Mexico a good place to visit?</i></p> <p><i>Can you say something particular about Mexico?</i></p>				
<p>b) Language</p> <p>To share instances of successful language use, and to target areas for remedial correction.</p> <p>(Bentley, 2010) 6' Lockstep</p>	<p>➤ T will draw Ss' attention to the notes on the online chat about language use (if given). Make them reflect on what we use the language for and help them correct what they cannot do themselves.</p>	<p>⇒ Ss will listen to their T and reflect on their performance.</p> <p>⇒ Ss can make comments to show their reflections, some self-corrections or improve some examples from the task in oral form.</p>	<p>⇒ Teacher & Ss' own reflections</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Ss are expected to demonstrate understanding by commenting and improving some sample suggestions if there are.</p>

READING, WRITING, LISTENING & SPEAKING (*integrated skills at word / phrase level*)

MAIN AIM: By the end of the lesson, learners will have been provided with the opportunity to exchange information about places, people, food and other traits from their city; compare and contrast it to other places in the world, as well as to give suggestions about where to visit, what to eat, etc. in Mexico.

SUBSIDIARY AIM: Learners will be given chances to develop some cognitive skills such as identifying, comparing and contrasting, as well as evaluating and giving opinions.

SPEAKING AIM: To produce words and chunks of English language in response to the given visual input and context.

STAGE	TEACHER'S ACTIVITIES	STUDENTS' ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	SESSION #	EVALUATION
<p><u>LEAD IN</u></p> <p>To activate learners' schemata</p> <p>(Harmer, 2011)</p> <p>5'</p> <p>Lockstep</p>	<p>⇒ T asks Ss if they can say what the last two sessions were about:</p> <p>-Can you tell me what we talked about last class?</p> <p>And the one before that?</p> <p>-Do you remember an example?</p>	<p>⇒ Students comment what they can recall from the previous lessons</p>	<p>⇒ Google meet platform (all the session)</p>	3	<p>⇒ Students' responses according to the aims. Expected replies: <i>In Mexico City, you can visit Tlatelolco and Garibaldi; You can eat tacos and enchiladas...</i></p>
<p><u>FOLLOW-UP</u></p> <p><u>PLENARY</u></p> <p>To exemplify the use of extension materials to aid consolidation</p> <p>(Bentley, 2010)</p> <p>15'</p> <p>Ss - Ss & Lockstep</p>	<p>➤ T will ask learners if they think there are any similarities or differences when visiting other places around the world e.g. USA, Canada, Argentina...</p> <p>➤ T cues by asking: <i>what about</i></p>	<p>⇒ Students think and can say what they know or have heard about travelling around the world.</p> <p>⇒ Ss may identify that people speak Spanish in Argentina but</p>	<p>⇒ Google meet platform (all the session)</p>	3	<p>⇒ Students' responses according to the aims. Expected replies: <i>In Mexico and Argentina people speak Spanish; in USA & Canada they speak English...</i></p>

	<p><i>language, food, climate, activities to do...</i></p> <p>➤ T shows a video and asks Ss to comment if they find Mexico has some similarities or differences with other places around the world.</p> <p><i>What & how? Is Mexico identical or different to other places in the world?</i></p>	<p>English in USA & Canada.</p> <p>⇒ Ss watch the video and spot similarities and differences with what they see and their country.</p> <p>⇒ Ss reply to the questions about the visual input.</p>	<p>⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioYqFtr2D0Q</p>		<p>⇒ Ss oral responses</p>
<p><u>FOLLOW-UP</u></p> <p><u>extension suggested activities</u></p> <p>To provide extension materials to aid consolidation</p> <p>(Bentley, 2010)</p> <p>15'</p> <p>Lockstep</p>	<p>➤ T shows and provides learners with extension suggested materials they can use to extend their knowledge of travelling around the world and see how things are similar or</p>	<p>⇒ Ss have a brief look at the materials and, comment on them.</p>	<p>⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPDdkZCq-ns (Mexico City: That beautiful beast ONLY images 6:43 min)</p> <p>⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8HTyJPXVug (TOP 10 beautiful places to visit in Mexico – Mexico travel</p>	3	<p>⇒ Ss' comments on the materials</p>

	<p>different from what they know.</p> <p>➤ T reminds Ss all content seen throughout the lesson will be found at their space on Google Classroom and asks to paraphrase so.</p>	<p>⇒ Ss will explain where to find all the resources seen in class: Google Classroom for the follow-up activities & for later self-exploration.</p>	<p>video, SPOKEN 8:31 min)</p> <p>⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcmrbNRK-jY (200 days – A trip around the world travel film 23 min.)</p> <p>⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioYqFtr2D0Q (We call this home – 3 years around the world travel, music & IMAGES ONLY 3:47 min.)</p>		
<p><u>WRAP-UP</u></p> <p><u>PLENARY</u></p> <p>To help Ss think about content & language seen during the lesson</p> <p>(Bentley, 2010)</p> <p>5'</p> <p>Lockstep</p>	<p>➤ T challenges Ss to name some similarities and differences Mexico has with other countries: language, food...</p>	<p>⇒ Ss take the challenge and talk about their favorite places to visit or contribute to their peers' examples.</p>	<p>Ss' oral responses</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>⇒ Group and individual assessment through Ss' oral production</p>

3. ASSESSMENT

3.1 Assessing integrated-skills within the classroom

To support the assessment design in the given lesson, let us analyse what the literature says about it. For instance, Bentley (2010) claims that assessment should focus on subject content, communication skills, cognitive skills, practical skills, and learning to learn. She also argues that to be able to assess effectively, teachers need to put learners at the center of the process and to find out what standards are achievable when they study subject content in a non-native language. Thus it is necessary to build a strong class profile so as to have a clear image of the learners' needs to make decisions and plan accordingly.

On that, Scott Thornbury (2017) says that the separation into discrete skills overlooks the fact that most communication is interactive, involving both reception and production, and often in equal measure. Practicing productive skills apart from receptive skills, and vice versa, presents a distorted view of how language is really used. An integrated skills approach, where several skills are combined in one lesson, attempts to redress this artificial separation.

Besides, content-based instruction allows for the natural integration of sound-language teaching practices such as alternative means of assessment, apprenticeship learning, cooperative learning, integrated-skills instruction, project work, scaffolding, strategy training, and the use of graphic organizers. [...] In classrooms where a commitment has been made to content learning as well as language learning, project work is particularly effective because it represents a natural extension of what is already taking place in class (Stoller, 2002).

In Mexican public schools, the national curriculum has well defined what the expected learning outcomes are for each social practice. Thus, bearing in mind the approach in use and the learners' needs and age, the assessment tool is usually a project or a task where students can develop, use and demonstrate their achievements towards the expected learning outcomes whereas to give a numeric representation of such achievements, some rubrics of can-do statements are used. This particularly helps when informing students and parents about individual performance and may motivate the class to do better in future assignments.

3.2 Designing the assessment rubric

When it comes to assess students, there are several factors to be considered such as the expectations by the end of the school term or a certain period of time, the learners, the approach in use and the reasons for doing so. The approach presented here is a content and integrated-skills one combined with the Communicative Approach. Thus, assessment takes place permanently as teachers focus on the progress of the students' learning achievements. It is an ongoing process throughout the school year that accounts for almost everything that happens in the classroom that provides information about the learners' performance.

However, even when most activities are assessed, a selection is classified to be more formal, such as the actual presentation of a project or specific achievements during the development of such project. Hence, the formal assessment in the given lesson falls directly in the oral presentation of the project and the rubric was designed to weigh such performance. Yet, all the other activities and stages in the lesson were planned to take learners to achieve the aims and be able to perform well in their written and oral presentations.

Other relevant elements during the design of the assessment rubric were the fact of making it valid, practical and reliable in terms of the purpose and application. Seeking for validity, the can-do statements needed to be clear so as to make sure the instrument or activity used actually tested what it was intended to test and did not fall under testing more categories than the indicated one for each item. Whereas reliability was thought to be achieved once the instructions and procedure along the lesson were consistent with the familiarity of any other regular lesson, thus students' responses and reactions to questions, instructions and tasks remain steady independently of the content and degree of difficulty of the tasks.

Regarding practicality, the designed rubric serves several purposes. First, it provides information about the learners' achievement during the lesson; second, as each can-do statement is given numeric weigh, it helps inform the school according to the institutional policy of evaluating the learning process though a number. Finally, both students and their families can have a clearer idea of the equivalence of the numeric representation and the level of proficiency achieved by the learner (see appendix 1, p. 37).

4. EXPERIENCE REPORT

Due to having planned very thoroughly considering learners' needs and level, evidence showed there were more successful areas than unsuccessful ones in this lesson.

4.1 Lesson planning & resources

Firstly, learners showed enough evidence of having met the main aim and the stage objectives of the lesson, since they were able to exchange information about the social practice: *Sightseeing around Mexico* and they supported their presentations with the chunks of functions provided, just as expected. To achieve this, the lesson was designed for students to be exposed to familiar input, allowing some preparation time for content and language before they could actually give their own output.

Looking back at the lesson plan, it can be said that the anticipated instructions and tasks together with the evaluation system for the class were accurate and that allowed the class to keep focus on the task for the aims to be accomplished; besides, as stated in the rationale, the input provided visual and aural relevant aid for learners to produce the language at their level. However, I realize now that I did not manage the thinking and process time as learners needed, which means it took longer and the lesson which had been planned for only two sessions lasted three.

One last good point on this area was that even when the TV program is a compulsory resource, according to official school policies, students have shown they take significant input from it as they can exemplify and produce oral and written chunks using the information from it, hence, it works. Besides, the given lesson provided far more external and authentic input and it may be the reason learners needed a bit longer to process the information and respond to it as it was authentic material, i.e. the input provided was originally designed for a non-classroom audience, and most certainly not this young audience either. All in all, it served its purpose and proved effective in terms of familiarity and interest to the learners.

4.2 Class delivery

Reflecting back on the sessions and as stated before, the original time set for the stages of the lesson needed to be extended and adapted according to the learners' pace. It took only the first session to realize that the plan needed adjusting for the coming sessions. In general terms, the delivery was successful mainly because of the previous preparation and some key elements that were closely watched such as teaching as every other given lesson, and providing the necessary aid for the learners' level and age. Here, the interaction pattern has proven effective as well as the design of the task so all students can collaborate and even benefit from their peers' contributions if in still in doubt at the moment of individual participations.

The students' use of English at their level excelled during the sessions showing they were eager to participate as the tasks and materials seemed attractive and motivating. However, as their teacher, I must admit my use of English was not the best model for the class. At a different moment in my practice I was observed that my use of the language in was seemed not to be graded for my students' level, and it was suggested that I scaffold it for young learners to understand better and benefit from their teacher's speaking.

Today, after seeing my own performance recorded, I have realized my accent may be too tailored now that it does not provide learners with authentic input. One reflection here would be to moderate my pronunciation so that it is understandable but still a good model in terms of accuracy. Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) note that good pronunciation provides valuable confidence for speaker, however, good pronunciation is not "native-like" pronunciation. They add that if a learner tries to speak exactly like a native speaker he will soon be disappointed because this is not a realistic aim of learning pronunciation. The objective should be to gain a "listener-friendly" pronunciation.

...being able to speak English involves certain subskills such as vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatics. However, the most important of these skills is pronunciation. With acceptable pronunciation, a speaker's speech can be understandable despite having other mistakes; with bad pronunciation, his/her speech would be very difficult to understand, despite being accurate I other areas.

Fraser, 2000 (in Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016: 967)

Thus, even for teachers and learners of a foreign language, pronunciation should not be neglected in the use of English nor in the content lesson within the classroom. Penny Ur (2009) supports this emphasizing that the aim of pronunciation improvement is not to achieve a perfect imitation of a native accent, but simply to get the learner to pronounce accurately enough to be easily and comfortably comprehensible to other (competent) speakers.

4.3 Action points

For future lessons, there are some points I would need to consider for the benefit of my learners.

- ✓ Since the official policies establish the TV program as the main learning resource, I can additionally supplement it with more authentic materials for the virtual session so that students can favor from the input received and the exposure in the session.
- ✓ I should keep in mind that students may need longer to think and produce than the time I had originally assigned for tasks.
- ✓ Within the lessons, some authentic materials should be included both as input and as output enhancers. Here, some pronunciation features can take place as well as the consideration for a proper use of English by the teacher.
- ✓ Regarding talking time, tasks must encourage longer students' talking and allow less teacher' talking time. Especially, as distance learning has inverted this aspect because learners have needed lots of motivation and encouragement to actively participate.
- ✓ At some point, my students would most probably face the need to take standardized tests to measure their proficiency. Then, despite being learners of English as a foreign language, they should be exposed to test-like activities, which include what has been listed above: authentic materials, accurate pronunciation, plus more formal tasks to prevent the washback negative effect of formal testing.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Language teachers, who have to teach both the standard language and its variations in discourse, cannot help but teach culture, even in its stereotypical forms. The challenge is how to seize the moment to move the students from the security of the stereotype to its exhilarating but risky variations, and how to engage them with the differences in world-views indexed by these variations.

Kramersch, 2015: 414

Teaching a language has the peculiarity that it entails not only acquiring the language, but also most of the things we do with that language such as interacting with others in different contexts and dealing with cultural features depending on who and what for one is addressing to while using such language.

The lesson portrayed in this paper sought to put into practice a blended version of the Communicative Approach and the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) for a class of young learners to develop learning skills within a particular context. Evidence (see appendix 2, p. 38) has shown that a thorough planning that considers learners' needs, age, context, plus organizes lessons and stages following a natural taxonomy of learning (input-process-output, or receptive skills – productive skills) can more easily lead the class to meet the main aims and expected learning outcomes of the national curriculum.

To develop such a detailed lesson plan and apply it takes far more than a personal teaching perspective or philosophy, it demands that the teacher knows about proven theories and approaches and has sufficient experience to choose what would best match their learners' needs and adapt it to their specific context. Now, I can acknowledge this is not an overnight challenge but a developmental process that takes time, experience, teaching practice, stability, adjusting, and maturity, at least.

It definitely cannot be a one-year-experience that is repeated over and over for as long as one has been teaching, because just as learners, teachers also go through a process in order to build a solid teaching philosophy that allows them to take their learners to achieve the main goal of teaching a language: becoming competent users of that language, at their level. Here, John C. Dana's common quote fits well: *He who dares to teach must never cease to learn.*

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APPENDIX 1

Assessment: Can-do-rubric for integrated-skills activities

LEVEL (The learner...)	BEGINNING (needs help) WORTH 0-1 point	APPROACHING (demonstrates knowledge) WORTH 2 points	MEETING (meets learning aims) WORTH 3 points	OUTSTANDING (meets learning aims successfully) WORTH 4 points
The learner can...	pick out a word or expression from written or spoken texts.	deduce meaning of unknown words from context.	identify the main ideas in written and spoken texts at word/phrase level.	present and understand written and spoken suggestions at this level.
	recognize a few memorized words and phrases always in context and needs help to use them.	recognize some familiar words and phrases in context and use them if encouraged.	recognize most familiar words and phrases either isolated or in context and use them with some confidence.	recognize all familiar words and phrases either isolated or in context and use them confidently.
	not understand information even with visual aids (video / script)	understand information always needing visual aids (video / script)	understand information sometimes needing visual aids (video / script).	understand information without visual aids (video / script).
	not show evidence of understanding even if aided and does not respond to input.	demonstrate understanding instructions and can answer yes/no questions and isolated words.	demonstrate some understanding and give brief responses while interacting with others.	demonstrate understanding of information by using it and give good responses while interacting with others.

APPENDIX 2

Links to sample evidences:

Padlet production & dissertation video, plus Colloquium ppt

<https://padlet.com/susanavazquezm/vr3fvxzysr4siwti>



<https://padlet.com/susanavazquezm/c6ei1ql8ikkxqsds>

Dissertation Videos:

https://youtu.be/Qoz_M1vQsV0

<https://youtu.be/fkpGhFLHmSq>

Colloquium Presentation ppt

<https://padlet.com/susanavazquezm/n61lq3tbt6mhl0i>

