A Handbook for the Teaching and Learning of Sociocultural Content with a CLIL Approach

MAJOR PAPER

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To my parents, who never stop trusting me.
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Abstract:

In a world where wars and ethnic and religious conflicts are abundant, peace and cultural understanding should become topics to be embraced by educational systems.

This major paper presents a handbook for the teaching and learning of sociocultural content with a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach, aimed at evaluating the importance of learning about the society and culture of Canada and Cuba, in order to behave appropriately in the process of communication and develop understanding and respect for the foreign culture and pride towards the students´ own culture.

The development of this material was attained inductively applying the following methods: historical- logical, inductive- deductive, transit from the abstract to the concrete, the systemic approach, the analytic-synthetic, participant observation, survey to the students, document analysis, and analysis of the students´ outcomes, teacher´s diary, pedagogical test, teacher reflections and interview to teachers.

Key words: Sociocultural content, teaching and learning.
Résumé:

Dans un monde où la guerre et les conflits ethniques et religieux sont abondants, la paix et la compréhension culturelle devront devenir sujets pour être considéré par les systèmes pédagogiques.

Cette recherche présente un manuel pour l'enseignement et apprentissage des contenus socioculturels avec une approche CLIL. Son objectif principal est évaluer l’importance d’apprendre sur la société et culture du Canada et Cuba, afin de se comporter correctement dans le processus de communication et de développer la compréhension et le respect pour les cultures étrangères et la fierté pour la culture autochtone des étudiants.


Paroles importantes : Contenus socioculturelles, enseignement et apprentissage.
I. Introduction

Nowadays English has acquired a huge importance worldwide. It has been considered the universal language, not only because of the number of speakers who use it as their mother tongue, but also because it is used all over the world as second and official language. It has become the most spoken language in most of the activities around the globe, being used in commerce, literature, business, in the scientific field, as a lingua franca, etc. In this XXI century, speaking English opens thousand doors, provides understanding among peoples, and constitutes a source of knowledge about people’s history, culture, beliefs, traditions, etc.

The previous reasons state why the learning of foreign languages, especially English, plays a very important role in Cuban education. Our Educational System persists in the formation of citizens who can creatively and actively take part in the social progress, what makes the learning of English a need for increasing the general-integral culture of Cubans aimed at improving the life quality of the members of our society.

The teaching of English in Cuba starts in third grade in primary school and goes through secondary, high school and higher education. There are also language schools for adults, where they can develop language skills in English, French, German, Portuguese and other languages.

The focus of the teaching of English in Cuba has been on communicative competence, which does not only deal with functional language proficiency, but also with the ability to construct and reconstruct new knowledge. Therefore the dimensions of communicative competence to be considered are the linguistic, the sociolinguistic, the discursive, the strategic, and the sociocultural competence.

In the case of sociocultural competence, it is extended well beyond linguistic forms, dealing with the social rules of language use, requiring an understanding of the social context in which language is used, the roles of participants, the information they share, and the function of interaction.
For prospective teachers of English, sociocultural contents play a very important role in their formation in order to guarantee the reinforcement of the educative work in our schools. It is not only important that prospective teachers learn how to enhance the students’ level of ability in English, but also to help the students strengthen their moral and patriotic values.

The Universidad Central “Marta Abreu” de Las Villas (UCLV) offers a non-university teacher education crash course for prospective teachers of English for a period of two years, after which these prospective teachers should have gained a minimum preparation in English, language teaching methodology, pedagogy and psychology, history of Cuba and Spanish, in order to start teaching English in secondary school and to have the necessary general background knowledge to pass the entrance university test to enroll the university foreign language teacher education program.

Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries is one of the subjects that prospective teachers receive, which is taught in English during the two semesters of the second year. This subject is aimed at acknowledging the relevance of studying the culture and society of the English speaking countries in order to achieve a successful communication. The subject deals with the most relevant features related to culture, geography, customs, social norms, celebrations and symbols of the English-speaking countries, following a professional pedagogic approach. It also encourages learning to appreciate our culture, respecting cultural diversity and valuing in a critical way the foreign sociocultural content by recognizing what is ethically correct on the basis of the model of the Cuban society.

Several participant observations have evidenced that prospective teachers from the non-university teacher education crash course at UCLV have a low level of ability in English, which affects the teaching-learning process of the subject Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries. In addition, the existing teaching learning materials are designed for third-year students of the university course, which makes necessary the adaptation of the didactic materials and texts for non-university students. Looking for a solution for this situation, a bibliographic revision was conducted which allowed the authoress to
come across some of the current trends in communicative language teaching (CLT).

One of the developments of CLT has been Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) or Content-based instruction (Marsh, 2002; Van de Craen, 2006; Gajo, 2007; Richards J.C., 2006). According to Richards J.C.(op. cit., page 28), this approach on the following assumptions about language learning: “People learn a language more successfully when they use the language as means of acquiring information, rather than as an end itself; content provides a coherent framework that can be used to link and develop all of the language skills”.

This approach can be an alternative in addressing the difficult situation of a class who must take in English a content subject like Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries, with insufficient skill development in this foreign language by scaffolding them in a variety of ways (Bentley K., 2014, page 69). However, as far as the authoress could revise in previous research in our university there hasn’t been any experience in applying this approach systematically and consciously in the English teacher education programs.

This problematic situation led the authoress to formulate the following scientific problem: How can we provide a minimum sociocultural preparation to prospective teachers of English from a non-university teacher education crash course?

In order to solve this problem our research will focus on the following object: The teaching and learning of the sociocultural dimension of English as a foreign language in prospective teachers of English from a non-university teacher education crash course.

Field of research: Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) as a method to teach and learn about the sociocultural dimension of English as a foreign language in the non-university teacher education crash course, at UCLV.

Aim: To adapt the existing materials for the teaching of Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries, for prospective teachers of English in the
two-year non-university teacher education course at UCLV, following ideas and suggestions from CLIL.

In order to guide the research process the following **scientific questions** were formulated:

1- What theoretical and methodological foundations support the preparation of prospective teachers of English from a non-university teacher education crash course in the sociocultural dimension of English as a foreign language?

2- What are the needs of the second-year students teachers from the non-university teacher education crash course with respect to the sociocultural dimension of English as a foreign language, at UCLV?

3- What works well and what doesn’t work so well when teaching sociocultural contents to the target students?

4- What adaptations need to be done in the existing sociocultural teaching materials, in order to match the level of ability and the interests of the second-year students from the non-university teacher education crash course, at UCLV?

In order to answer these scientific questions the following **scientific tasks** were designed:

1- Establish the theoretical and methodological foundations that support the preparation of prospective teachers of English from a non-university teacher education crash course in the sociocultural dimension of English as a foreign language.

2- Assess the needs of the second-year students teachers from the non-university teacher education crash course with respect to the sociocultural dimension of English as a foreign language, at UCLV.

3- Determine what works well and what doesn’t work so well when teaching sociocultural contents to the target students.

4- Determine the adaptations that need to be done in the existing sociocultural materials in order to match the level of ability and the interests of the second-year students from the non-university teacher education crash course, at UCLV.
The subjects of this research were the 19 second-year students from the non-university teacher education crash course, at UCLV, during the 2016-2017 school year.

These were students who were preparing themselves to start teaching English in secondary school after finishing the two-year crash course and who were candidates to start the university foreign language teacher education program after completing the one-year experience teaching at their municipalities.

Based on a dialectic and materialistic position and in direct agreement with the object under study and the field of action, the researcher decided to follow a qualitative paradigm in which the following particular methods and techniques were applied with the objective of corroborating the problem and evaluating the students’ situation regarding the sociocultural dimension of English as a foreign language.

From the theoretical level:

- **Historical- logical:** It was useful to study the different methodological trends and approaches in the teaching-learning process of the foreign languages through history, as well as the main conceptions about the sociocultural competence in order to apply them in the context the authoress is developing the present research.

- **Analytic- synthetic:** This method was used when studying the problematic situation as well as different sources containing information about the teaching and learning process of the sociocultural dimension of English as a foreign language in prospective teachers of English from a non-university teacher education crash course, it was also used when processing the data obtained from the application of the preliminary proposal.

- **Inductive- deductive:** It allowed the authoress to determine the activities and procedures from the preliminary proposal that really worked; it also helped the authoress to come up with a final proposal that suits the needs of the second year students from the non-university teacher education crash course at UCLV.
Transit from the abstract to the concrete: It let the authoress synthetize the numerous abstractions that surged along the research process.

Systemic approach: It led the authoress organize the entire process of research.

From the empirical level:

- Participant observation: This method permitted the authoress collect information about the students´ progress with respect to their level of ability in English and their interest towards the sociocultural dimension of English.
- Survey to the students: This method was applied with the objective of collecting information concerning the students´ perceptions about the subject Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries.
- Document analysis: This method was used for analyzing the different bibliographical sources consulted during the whole research process, as well as for consulting the different materials for teaching the subject.
- Analysis of the students´ outcomes: It let the authoress collect information about the real students´ situation concerning the subject Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries.
- Teacher´s diary: It was used during the application of the preliminary proposal of adaptation to the existing didactic materials for the teaching of the subject Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries, with the purpose of extracting some learning with relation to what works and what doesn’t work when teaching sociocultural contents in the study group.
- Pedagogical test: It was used with the objective of obtaining information about the students´ level of ability in English.
- Teacher reflections: This method was useful when extracting some learning with relation to what works and what doesn’t work when teaching sociocultural contents to prospective teachers of English.
- Interview to teachers: This method led the authoress collect useful information with respect to the students´ level of ability in English.

From the mathematical and statistical level:
Percentage analysis: It allowed the processing of the information obtained by means of the application of different research tools.

This paper is structured in six parts: introduction, main part, conclusion, recommendations, bibliography and appendixes.
II. Main Part

2.1- The teaching and learning of the sociocultural dimension of English as a foreign language

The Cuban pedagogical tradition has always acknowledged the importance of learning foreign languages. Through history, outstanding Cuban personalities such as Felix Varela, Jose de la Luz y Caballero, Jose Marti and Fidel Castro, have referred to it. That is why it is not rare that Cuba has been an experimental laboratory for teaching approaches, methods and techniques.

According to Louro (1994:5 in García, S., 2010), at the beginning of the twentieth century the method used in the country was the grammar translation, which was followed by the Natural, the Psychological and the Reading methods. The Direct method also exerted its influence; Louro (1994:5, in García, S., 2010) states that the first ELT Cuban textbook was developed by a follower of this method, Leonardo Sorsano Jorrín.

In the 1940s and 1950s audiolingual courses started to be used, but in the sixties, following Louro's report, the audiovisual boom reached the country. Also, Situational approaches followed, but in the 70’s, a period of reaction against all the previous methods started, and with that reaction surged Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which rapidly replaced all previous approaches and methods.

The aim of CLT is to achieve communicative competence in the students, a term that was first proposed by Dell Hymes, who considered that “…the study of language must concern itself with describing and analyzing the ability of the native speakers to use language for communication in real situations (communicative competence) rather than limiting itself to describing the potential ability of the ideal speaker/listener to produce grammatically correct sentences (linguistic competence). Speakers of a language, in particular communities, are able to communicate with each other in a manner which is not only correct but also appropriate to the sociocultural context. This ability involves a shared knowledge of the linguistic code as well as of the sociocultural rules, norms and values which guide the conduct and interpretation of speech and other channels of communication in a community” (Johnstone B. and W. Marcellino, 2010, Page 5).
Communicative competence has been defined by Crystal (1996) as a person’s awareness of the rules governing the appropriate use of language in social situations. According to Crystal (1996) communicative competence includes knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, as well as of the rules of speaking (how to begin and end conversations, what topics may be talked about in different types of speech events, etc.). It also includes how to use and respond to different types of speech acts, and how to use language appropriately.

Sociocultural competence is defined by De la Paz (2012, page 21) as “A psychological configuration that self-regulates in the individual the efficient adaptation of verbal and non-verbal behavior during communication, according to the demands of the specific social and cultural context of the speech act.” Sociocultural competence extends beyond linguistic forms and is an interdisciplinary field of inquiry having to do with the social rules of language use. Sociocultural competence requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used, the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction. (Celce-Murcia M. 2001, page 18)

Canale (1983) states that “utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participants, purposes of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction. Appropriateness of utterance refers to both appropriateness of meaning and appropriateness of form”.

Summing up, sociocultural competence is a psychological configuration which involves all spheres of a person’s personality, which allows the person to regulate their verbal and non-verbal behavior in a particular sociocultural context. For a person to behave appropriately in a given sociocultural context they need to be aware of the following aspects:

- The norms or conventions of interaction
- The purposes of the interaction
- The role of the participants
- The social context in which the language is used
- The information that participants share

In Cuban context, especially when teaching sociocultural contents to prospective teachers, a monocultural or ethnocentric treatment of the subject is not recommendable, since it is not educationally sound. Widening
our prospective teachers’ cultural horizons is essential to safeguard our values in these times of globalization. Our National Hero’s thought “Patria es Humanidad” acquires a huge validity nowadays, a time when promoting and defending our culture is as necessary as knowing about the traditions, customs, geography and life of the rest of the world, which makes a multicultural model a proper approach on the teaching of sociocultural contents to prospective teachers of English (Camacho A. 2002).

2.2- Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) as a method to teach and learn about the sociocultural dimension of English as a foreign language in the non-university teacher education crash course, at UCLV.

Preparing prospective teachers of English from a non-university teacher education crash course in the sociocultural dimension of English as a foreign language at UCLV is a huge challenge because the students are in the second year of their teaching education course, their level of ability in English is still below the intermediate level and the syllabus and the materials that have been designed for this purpose focus basically on topical contents. For this reason, this syllabus and materials are being taught in the third and fourth year of the regular course.

Teaching a course on the sociocultural dimension of language to the second year students in the crash course may be paralleled to content-based instruction. According to (Celce- Murcia, 2001:61) “Content-based instruction (CBI) comes in many different guises. However, all variants share one characteristic – language is not presented directly, but is introduced via the content of other subjects. In school settings, this content is typically the regular subjects in the curriculum such as science, geography, and mathematics. Learners acquire the target language in the course of doing other things. The approach draws strongly on the experiential view of learning, that is, that active engagement in communicating in the language is the most effective means of acquiring it.”
In the case of the context in which this research is being done, the objective is not to introduce language through content; however, the Sociocultural Panorama course should make a contribution to the development of communication skills besides the very specific objectives of teaching the topical content. This situation exerts in the teachers the need to find ways of planning and delivering their classes targeting both objectives: those related to the sociocultural dimension of language and those dealing with the development of communication skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing).

There are interesting developments of CBI in the literature. For example Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) which is defined by Bentley Kay (2014:5) as “an approach or method which integrates the teaching of content from the curriculum with the teaching of a non-native language.” According to this author, CLIL offers benefits such as the following:

- It helps to improve learners´ production of language of curricular subjects;
- It improves learners´ performance in both curricular subjects and the target language;
- It helps to increase the students´ confidence in the target language and in the L1;
- It encourages stronger links with values of community and citizenship;

CLIL materials need to show curriculum subjects presented in a non-native language very clearly.

There are many differences between materials written for general English lessons, and those which are especially for subject-specific purposes such as CLIL or English for specific purposes (ESP):

- CLIL materials are selected because of the subject content, the language needed to support the subject is then considered.
- Materials can be translated from the L1 curriculum, taken from native speaker coursebooks, downloaded from the Internet or made by teachers.
- Material for CLIL lessons will often have a greater variety of language, however, because more complicated ideas and processes need to be explained.

- While general English materials often deal with general themes, such as families, sports or great inventions, CLIL materials usually focus on more specific topics, according to the subject they are selected for.

According to Harmer J. (2012:234), materials for CLIL can be taken from a wide variety of sources, and can be adapted by reordering or rewriting the rubrics for making them easier to understand; by adding our own CLIL-based tasks or by rewriting the texts we are using and provide illustrations or visual organizer backup. Teachers can also remove unnecessary detail or paraphrase the text using words the students are likely to know.

Many CLIL activities are similar to those in ELT coursebooks and subjects textbooks, but there are also activities which are common in CLIL such as classification tasks, word/sentence/text/table completion, information transfer, feature identification, freeze games, poster presentations and loop or domino games.

According to Bentley K. (2014: 57) “In CLIL we need to provide activities

- For communicating subject content orally
- For developing listening and reading strategies
- For supporting written or physical production”

Activities need to be linked and sequenced so they are progressively challenging. We need to know the purpose and focus of activities so that learners can develop subject-specific skills as well as lower order and higher order thinking skills.

CLIL classrooms are places where learners can develop speaking and writing skills as well as become knowledgeable about subjects from the curriculum. CLIL classrooms should provide opportunities for interaction between teacher and learners as well as learners and other learners. Teachers need to think about the language they use and think about how to help develop the spoken and written language of their learners. (Bentley, Kay, 2014: 64)
According to Harmer, Jeremy (2012) in the CLIL classroom, as one of their main roles, teachers should help the students learn the language that applies to the content they are learning.

One of the main teacher roles in the CLIL classroom is to help the students learn the language that applies to the content they are learning.

- We need to highlight and model subject-specific vocabulary, and collocations.
- We need to highlight and model subject-specific sentences.
- We can model the language that the students need to know by saying it clearly and isolating the elements that they need to concentrate on.
- We can write sentences on the board which the students then have to complete.

In CLIL classrooms, as well as in general English classrooms, it is necessary for the teacher to take some steps to support learners in order to make them understand new contents and develop new skills, which is called scaffolding learning. Scaffolding can be provided in the four macro-skills of language and in all curricular subjects in order to help learners form ideas and learn language.

In the case of the second-year students of the non-university teacher education crash course, and in the particular the subject Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries, this concept acquires a huge importance, due to the fact that these students are learning a great amount of new content and new language, which does not match with the real level of ability they have. This situation makes indispensable the search for different ways of scaffolding learning in order to make the students feel successful when doing tasks.

According to Bentley K. (2014: 69) there are many different ways of scaffolding students’ learning; for example, one way is being careful when considering the language we use, but we can also scaffold learning by creating interest towards the activity, using visuals, and realia or model texts. When assigning an activity, teachers must be careful with the procedure they follow; it is important to demonstrate tasks, breaking down the task into small steps and providing support before, during and after the task, as well as providing constructive feedback to the students.
One of the most successful ways of scaffolding students is by creating interest towards the activity, which is why motivation plays a determinant role in the process of supporting the students in order to make them understand new contents and develop new skills. According to the ideas of Rogers C. (1957), there are three attitudinal qualities that a teacher should have to assist the learning process: empathy, authenticity and acceptance. These and the election of the right motivational strategy can assure a better understanding of the content and a more pleasant learning from the student’s part.

In the case of the second-year students from the non-university teacher education crash-course at UCLV the authoress considers that the motivational strategies that better suit their characteristics are:

- Demonstrating and talking about your own enthusiasm for the course material, and how it affects you personally
- Developing a personal relationship with your students
- Creating a pleasant and supportive atmosphere in the classroom
- Promoting an integrative and open-minded disposition towards the L2 and its speakers, and towards foreigners in general
- Increasing the students’ expectancy of success in particular tasks and in learning in general.
- Making learning more stimulating and enjoyable by breaking the monotony of classroom events
- Making learning stimulating and enjoyable for the learner by increasing the attractiveness of the tasks
- Allowing learners to maintain a positive social image while engaged in the learning tasks
- Increasing learner satisfaction

(Dörnyei Z., 2001)
2.3- Methodological research design and the results obtained

This research was conceived to be carried out in three phases:

Phase 1: Needs assessment

Phase 2: Intervention

Phase 3: Improvement of the teaching materials

Phase 1 took place during the first semester of 2016-2017. Since the beginning of the school year the authoress of the present research did her practicum at UCLV in the faculty of Secondary Teaching Education, with a group of 24 students that conform the second year of the non-university teacher education crash-course and the subjects of this research. This period of time helped the authoress to gain experience in the subject Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries, developing a relationship with the student teachers and get to know them.

During this stage the authoress applied several methods in order to diagnose the needs of the second year students of the non-university teaching education crash course regarding Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries, in terms of two categories, which constituted the basis for learning about the society and cultures of the English speaking countries:

- Interest in learning about this topic
- Level of ability in English

Interest in learning about this topic

Participant observation (Appendix 1) was the first method applied, and it is important to point out that it did not constitute isolated observations but a systematic period that took the whole first semester of the school year. Through this method it could be verified that although the students felt motivated towards most of the contents present in the subject, their level of ability affected their understanding of the different contents during the lessons. In addition, the students did not feel comfortable with the ways this subject was being taught;
they stated that they felt there was much complexity of contents for their level of ability in English.

In order to have a general idea of the students’ opinions about the subject Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries, a survey (Appendix 2) the students were asked to complete a survey. This method let the authoress to know that most of the students (93%) consider Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking Countries important for their future, particularly for increasing their educational level. However, they did not see the relevance of the subject for their future profession. Only three students thought that this subject could be very useful for enhancing their English through the contents they learn during the school year. Three students considered they could use this knowledge about the English-speaking countries for answering their student’s doubts and for being a better teacher.

Most of the students recognize the need to learn about the culture and lifestyles of the peoples in other parts of the world, but they seem to be more interested in the developed countries (100%), but not in the third world nations (73%). Although it is a minority, there are students that are interested in a basic knowledge, but not in the depth of contents that the subject deals with.

**Level of ability in English**

The survey (Appendix 2) evidenced that the majority of the students placed themselves in an intermediate category. It is important to point out that none of the students considered themselves in the lowest category, but three of them considered they were well prepared for receiving this subject. Students stated that although some of them had a good level of ability, the content of the subject was the one difficult for them. Other students considered that their level of ability was not enough for understanding the subject while the rest stated that they had no problem understanding the subject.

During this analysis, the authoress of this research considered that it was also necessary to apply an in depth interview to the Integrated English Practice teacher and to the Writing in Use teacher (Appendix 4) in order to collect information concerning the students’ level of ability in English. This interview
took place in the Foreign Language department with the two teachers together. As the result of this exchange with these specialists, each student was given a category according to the European Common Framework. According to this criterion, the majority of the study group is considered basic user of the language, taking into account only the productive skills (speaking and writing) and only 6 students out of 19 are considered independent users of the language.

About the Students´ book of Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries, the majority of the study group stated that they have read it, except for two of them, and four students stated that they had had little contact with this document. Although seven students considered that the book matches their level of ability in English, seven of them thought the book matches relatively their level, and only one thinks that it does not match it at all.

Most of the students´ suggestions for improving the teaching of the subject were related to the use of the English laboratory and the use of more teaching aids, although there were students who suggested other kinds of activities, more according with their level of ability in English.

The analysis of the information gathered allowed the authoress to synthesize the following regularities:

About the students´ interests:

- The 93% of the students consider Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries important for their future.

- The majority of the study group (12 out of 15) shows more interest in learning about the culture and society of First World English-speaking countries than about Third World nations.

- The students show interest in acquiring basic sociocultural knowledge rather than the depth of contents that the subject deals with.

About the students´ level of ability in English:

- 71% of the students (14) are considered Basic Users of the language according to the European Common Framework (A1 or A2)
26% of the students (5) are considered Independent Users of the language according to the European Common Framework (B1 or B2)

These regularities became the basis for the authoress to start Phase 2 of the empirical research.

Phase 2: Intervention

Phase 2 took place during the second semester of 2016-2017, from February to the beginning of May. This lapse of time coincided with the teaching of Unit 3, dealing with Canada, with a total of 20 hours allotted.

During this phase the authoress followed the cycles of action research; namely, diagnosing, planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Hernández Sampieri (2010, page 511) lists the following cycles of action research:

- Detectar el problema de investigación, clarificarlo y diagnosticarlo (ya sea un problema social, la necesidad de un cambio, una mejora, etcétera).
- Formulación de un plan o programa para resolver el problema e introducir el cambio.
- Implementar el plan o programa y evaluar resultados.
- Retroalimentación, la cual conduce a un nuevo diagnóstico y a una nueva espiral de reflexión y acción.

Cycle 1 (Identifying the problem) has been described thoroughly in Phase 1 above.

Cycle 2 (Planning) initially consisted in designing basic exercise guides for helping the students understand the subject, and at the same time consulting the Head of the Subject Staff in order to obtain some advice with respect to the kinds of activities that could be planned for these students. These exercise guides were characterized by:

- Containing very simple exercises mainly with the objective of systematizing the given content,
- Including predominantly multiple selection, phrase completing and question-answer exercise types, to be done in class.
Cycle 3 (Acting) consisted in the application of the exercise guides in the classroom. During this process the authoress realized that although these new changes were helping the students’ learning, it was necessary to improve what was being done. The exercises were suddenly changing considering the reflections that arose from this cycle and the suggestions given by the students in several group discussions that the authoress started to stimulate at the end of each lesson. The students recognized that these guides were helping them:

- “Nos ha facilitado el aprendizaje porque son más prácticas y menos mecánicas.”
- “Así nos llegan mejor los contenidos porque es más sencillo ya que es mucho para aprenderse en inglés y para nosotros llega a ser muy intenso.”

One of the decisions that came from the students´ suggestions was to make electronic presentations with the different contents:

- “En el laboratorio sería mejor si aprovecháramos el contenido visual para motivarnos, como en power points.”

Cycle 4 (Observing and reflecting) was carried out along with the cycle of acting. At the end of each lesson, the authoress started to stimulate group discussions in order to obtain feedback from the students. The data collected was kept in a teacher’s diary for the purpose of improving the quality of the materials and of teaching in general.

When observing and reflecting the authoress realized that what needed to be improved were the ways of providing scaffolding to the students during the lessons. Their suggestions played a determinant role at this point:

- “El desempeño del profesor a la hora de impartir la clase es muy importante para nosotros.”
- “Me gustaría que además del folleto tuviéramos más medios de enseñanza de la asignatura.”

The students suggested that the authoress should exploit the benefits of the language laboratories:
“Sería bueno que las clases en el laboratorio fueran más interesantes, con vídeos, audiciones, mapas, materiales deportivos y culturales sobre esos países.”

**Phase 3: Improvement of the teaching materials**

**Canada topics**

**Topic 1:** The Nation and its symbols (13 texts)

Decisions made:

1. To abridge some of the texts and to present the abridged texts illustrated with visuals.
2. To leave out some of the texts for this topic.
3. To design tasks to encourage the processing of the information given in the texts and communicating orally with the rest in English.
4. To add vocabulary exercises.
5. To establish comparisons between Canada symbols and Cuban symbols.

**Topic 2:** Geography of Canada (6 texts)

Decisions made:

1. Abridging the texts.
2. Replacing very complex texts with graphs.
3. Conceiving information-sharing activities about the five texts dealing with the most important cities.
4. Substituting the texts dealing with the most important cities by a graph including cities and the correspondent province and location in the map.

**Topic 3:** Social, Economic and political structures (5 texts)

Decisions made:

1. Making the texts less dense and less abstract for the students.
2. Including a glossary in English and Spanish.
3. Drawing a diagram summarizing the information in the text.
4. Adding pictures.
5. Including curiosities about Canada.

**Topic 4: The Canadian customs and social norms (13 texts)**

Decisions made:

1. Leaving out business
2. Unifying diet and eating
3. Planning an assessment that may be objectively rated at the end of each topic

2.4- A Handbook for the Teaching and Learning of Sociocultural Content with a CLIL Approach for student teachers from the non-university teacher education crash course.

A. **Objective:** To encourage the student-teachers to evaluate the importance of learning about the society and culture of Canada and Cuba, in order to behave appropriately in the process of communication and to develop understanding and respect for the foreign culture and pride towards the students´ own culture.

B. **Characterization of the CLIL teaching materials**

1. It is grounded on the CLIL approach and has a task-based orientation
   - With respect to the CLIL approach, it integrates a focus on thematic content as well as a focus on the development of language skills. In addition, it draws on CLIL experiences concerning the provision of scaffolding in order to maximize student learning. Concerning ways of scaffolding student learning, this proposal includes: creating interest towards the activity, providing visual organizers, providing a glossary at the end of each unit; demonstrating tasks, breaking tasks down into small steps; providing support before, during and after the task, as well as giving constructive feedback to the students.
   - Concerning task-based orientation: a task is defined as “…a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than on form” (Nunan D., 1989: 10). In the proposal, tasks are provided for processing information from
reading materials, for interacting orally and for writing, which encourages active learning on the part of the students and integration of skills.

2- The proposal makes a contribution to the comprehensive education of the students, which covers these areas:

- **Learning to do:** It promotes the development of language skills.
- **Learning to know:** It encourages the development of learning skills and self-regulation skills through reflective tasks and self-assessment tools.
- **Learning to live together with others:** This contribution is at the heart of the proposal, since learning about the society and culture of the foreign language that the students are studying may promote intercultural communication, peace and understanding. Additionally, in the classroom different learning formats are encouraged: plenary work, pair work, small-group work.
- **Learning to be:** This proposal may contribute to the development of positive personality traits and attitudes such as respect, understanding, appropriateness when interacting with L2 speakers and pride for the students´ own culture.
  (Mijares Nuñez L., 2016, page 29)

3- It has a systemic character. This proposal of teaching materials are a didactic system, structured in four units which have their own objectives and content deriving from the general objectives of the subject Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries. This didactic system has been built taking into account the assessment of learning needs that was carried out during this research by the authoress.

4- It uses motivational strategies such as:

- Promoting an integrative and open-minded disposition towards the L2 and its speakers, and towards foreigners in general.
- Increasing the students´ expectancy of success in particular tasks and in learning in general.
- Making learning more stimulating and enjoyable by breaking the monotony of classroom events.
- Making learning stimulating and enjoyable for the learner by increasing the attractiveness of the tasks.
- Allowing learners to maintain a positive social image while engaged in the learning tasks.
- Increasing learner satisfaction

(Dörnyei Z., 2007, pages 137-144)

C. Rationale of the proposal (philosophical, psychological, pedagogical, linguistic and methodological)

From the philosophical point of view the proposal is grounded on dialectic and historical materialism. This fundamental is the basis for the psychological, pedagogical, linguistic and methodological conception of the proposal.

Particularly, this philosophical outlook accounts for the theory of knowledge (gnoseological theory) that guided the process of research. Drawing on Lenin’s contribution to this theory, the research process observed the stages through which knowledge is built; namely, from the observation of reality we reason out what we are observing, then we conceive a tool to transform reality and act to do so (“de la contemplación viva al pensamiento abstracto y de ahí a lo concreto pensado para volver a la práctica y transformarla”).

In line with this philosophy the process of research conducted by the authoress established a contradiction that generated the need to do the research, integrated theory and practice, the theoretical and the empirical, the historical and the logical, objective and subjective ways of processing data, the abstract and the concrete, analysis and synthesis and induction and deduction.

From the point of view of the philosophy of education, our proposal intends to make a contribution to the goal of education in Cuba; namely, the comprehensive education of the new generations, which includes learning to do, learning to know, learning to live together with others and learning to be.

From the psychological point of view, this research assumes a historical-cultural view of personality. In this sense, man is the unity of biological, psychological and social factors. When teaching, teachers must take into account that the learners’ personality systemically includes psychological
formations that operate as configurations, such as the cognitive-instrumental, the affective-motivational, and personality resources that allow the person to function flexibly and reflectively, with initiative, perseverance and autonomy (González Maura V., 2001). In this configuration motivation plays a paramount role. This aspect has been expanded in detail further along.

This fundamental also includes the theory of learning behind the teaching materials that were designed: learning occurs as a result of the students participating in solving tasks (activity) and as a result of interacting and collaborating with the teacher or their peers (communication). In other words, learning occurs as a result of mediation. This theory stresses the importance of students’ diagnosis as the starting point for conceiving the teaching-learning process and as a systematic process of collecting data which may allow the teacher to redirect his/her teaching strategies. The idea of mediation demands that the teacher should locate his/her teaching at the Zone of Proximal Development, a term that was coined by Lev Vygotsky, meaning “the sweet spot where instruction is most beneficial for each student- just beyond his or her current level of independent capability.” (Liu A., 2012, page 2)

Pedagogically, the proposal is substantiated on a learner-centered pedagogy which highlights the role of the teaching-learning process as a process of socialization. This implies treating students as human beings, taking into account their needs and encouraging them to have voice in the classroom. This is done in the proposal through the reflective tasks that are included at the end of each unit.

Linguistically and methodologically, the teaching materials reflect a communicative view of language, which according to Richards includes the following principles:

- The goal of language learning is communicative competence
- Learners learn a language through using it to communicate
- Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities
- Fluency and accuracy are both important dimensions of communication
- Communication involves the integration of different language skills
- Learning is a gradual process that involves trial and error (Richards J. C., 2001, Page 5)

Also the notion of communicative competence has been embraced, which includes dimensions such as, the discursive, the strategic, sociolinguistics and the sociocultural competence. This notion is crucial in determining program and class objectives and content.

D. An example of a unit from the CLIL handbook for the teaching and learning of Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries.

Unit 1: Canada, the Nation and its symbols

Objective: The students will explain the importance of national symbols for Canadians and for Cubans with the purpose of fostering respect and understanding towards the foreign symbols and respect and pride towards the national symbols.

A. Overall features of Canada

Task 1 (Appendix 5: Text 1)

Read the following text and determine whether:
---- It describes Canada geographically.
---- It explains some general features about its composition.

Task 2 (Appendix 5 Text 1)
Read again and tick the elements that you find in the text:
___ Number of inhabitants
___ Location of the country
___ How the country is composed
___ Natural resources
___ Data about its border common border with the United States

Task 3 (Appendix 5 Text 1)
Read and complete the following phrases:
- Canada extends from …
- Canada is the world’s second...
- Its common border with the United States is …

**Task 4 (Appendix 5 Text 1)**
Read once more and find in the text:
- A gerund
- The English equivalent of *al Norte de*
- A synonym of biggest
- An antonym of shortest
- A verb in third person singular of simple present

**Task 5**
Work with your partner and try to complete a list of at least five other things you know about Canada. Be ready to present your list in front of the class.

B. The most distinctive symbols of the nation

**Task 6**

Brainstorming:

In pairs, make a list of words in English that you need to talk about your national symbols. Then, share your answers with another pair.

**Task 7 (Appendix 5 Text 2)**

Your teacher will make a presentation about Canada symbols. Listen to her and take notes. Use this chart to summarize your notes.

About the National Flag:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Its colors</th>
<th>Name of the leaf in it</th>
<th>Meaning of these dates:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>February 15, 1965 and August 1860</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Task 8 (Appendix 5 Text 3)**

About the National Coat of Arms:

- When did it become official?
- What model was followed to design it?
- How is it formally known?

**Task 9 (Appendix 5 Text 4)**

Read the lyrics of Canada’s National Anthem and:

a) List the values that it embeds
b) List some words that express some of those values. Write them down on this chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Task 10**

Do some research to find answers to these two questions:

a) Why is the beaver the Canadian national animal?
b) Why is the maple the Canadian national tree?

**Task 11**

Work in pairs and discuss:

a) What are the proper names of the main Cuban national symbols?
b) What other Cuban national symbols do you know of?

**C. Canada Landmarks**

**Task 12 (Appendix 5 Text 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14)**

1. Work in pairs and look up the meaning of the word *landmark* in the dictionary
2. Read about Canada Landmarks and make a list.
3. Discuss with your partner: Do we have distinctive landmarks in Cuba? Explain

Reflect on your learning

- What strategies did you use to solve the tasks that you were given during this unit?
- What strengths as a language learner did you identify about yourself during this unit?
- What suggestions do you have for the teacher concerning teaching and your learning preferences?

Self-evaluation

Evaluate yourself in a scale from 1(-) to 5 (+): How well have you attained the objectives from this unit?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can explain the importance of national symbols for Canadians and for Cubans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can understand the vocabulary from this unit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can solve all the tasks from this unit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can write coherently about the topics in this unit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unit glossary:

- Anthem: Himno
- Beaver: Castor
- Coat of Arms: Escudo de armas
- Falls: Cataratas
- Flag: Bandera
- Maple leaf: Hoja de arce
Appendix 5 includes the rest of the activities for Unit 2: Geography of Canada, Unit 3: Social, economic and political structures and Unit 4: Canadian customs and social norms.
Appendix 6 includes all the texts with visuals for the four units.
Appendix 7 includes a series of curiosities about Canada.
III. Conclusions

1. The preparation of prospective teachers of English from a non-university teacher education crash course, in the sociocultural dimension of English as a foreign language has been supported theoretically within a concept of communicative competence which includes sociocultural competence. This concept suits the needs of the comprehensive education of prospective teachers with the adoption of a multicultural and multiethnic model of the sociocultural dimension of language.

2. Methodologically, the proposal is supported on Content and Language Integrated Learning, as a viable approach for the teaching-learning process of sociocultural content.

3. Sociocultural contents are a must in preparing prospective teachers of English as a foreign language, given the fact that they may contribute to achieving intercultural communication and love for their own culture.

4. The needs assessment conducted revealed gaps in the students´ mastery of the foreign language, and a diversity of interests concerning this topic. It also untapped students´ opinions addressing the need to adapt the existing teaching materials to make them more attainable and enjoyable by incorporating more visual support.

5. The construction of the proposal went through three phases: needs assessment, intervention and improvement of the teaching materials, which allowed the authoress to verify in practice what works well and what doesn’t work so well, and in this way, to arrive inductively at the construction of the definitive research result: a handbook for the teaching and learning of sociocultural content with a CLIL approach.

6. The proposal is in line with current developments of foreign language teaching worldwide; namely, content –and- language-integrated learning, the task-based approach, intercultural communication, comprehensive education, learner autonomy and humanistic pedagogical approaches.
IV. Suggestions

As a continuation of the present research the authoress recommends that the following tasks be carried out:

1. To conclude the unit about the United Kingdom following this proposal as a model.
2. To apply comprehensively this material and to prove its effectiveness.
3. To improve the proposal using TICs resources such as a website.
1- Bibliography:


https://www.google.com.co/?gws_rd=cr,ssl&ei=YXTBWNNe0KaSjjwT7jIBQ#q=perception+definition (Consulted on March, 9th, 2017)


Lenin V. Materialismo y empiriocriticismo

Lui, A. (2012), Teaching in the Zone: An introduction to working within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) to drive an early childhood instruction. Children’s Progress.


Appendixes

Appendix 1

Participant observation:

Objective: To collect information about the students’ progress with respect to their level of ability in English and their interest towards the sociocultural dimension of English.

Observation subject: students

Aspects to observe:

1- Students’ level of ability in the English language
2- Interest towards the different topics
Appendix 2
Survey passed to the students and the results obtained

Objective: To collect information concerning the students’ opinions about the subject Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries.

Estimado estudiante:

Como parte del trabajo de diploma de su profesora se realiza la presente investigación en aras de mejorar el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de la asignatura Panorama Sociocultural de los Pueblos de Habla Inglesa. Su colaboración resulta valiosa para facilitar el desarrollo de esta investigación.

Por favor responda las siguientes preguntas con la mayor sinceridad posible.

1- ¿Consideras que la asignatura Panorama Sociocultural de los Pueblos de Habla Inglesa resulta necesaria para tu desempeño profesional en la escuela? Argumente con tres razones.

2- ¿Cómo consideras el nivel de desarrollo de tus habilidades idiomáticas para recibir esta asignatura en inglés? Marque en la siguiente escala, donde 1 significa muy poco preparado y 5 muy preparado. Por favor explique su selección.

3- Expresa tu interés acerca de los siguientes temas de la asignatura. Marque una de las opciones que se le ofrecen, según corresponda con su interés.
   a) Los países de habla inglesa
      ---- No me interesa        ---- Me interesa
      ---- Me interesa poco     ---- Me interesa mucho
   b) El Reino Unido: sus símbolos, geografía; estructura económica, política y social; sus costumbres, normas sociales y fechas significativas
c) Canadá: sus símbolos, geografía; estructura económica, política y social; sus costumbres, normas sociales y fechas significativas

--- No me interesa    --- Me interesa
--- Me interesa poco   --- Me interesa mucho

d) Barbados: sus símbolos, geografía; estructura económica, política y social; sus costumbres, normas sociales y fechas significativas

--- No me interesa    --- Me interesa
--- Me interesa poco   --- Me interesa mucho

e) Nigeria: sus símbolos, geografía; estructura económica, política y social; sus costumbres, normas sociales y fechas significativas

--- No me interesa    --- Me interesa
--- Me interesa poco   --- Me interesa mucho

f) India: sus símbolos, geografía; estructura económica, política y social; sus costumbres, normas sociales y fechas significativas

--- No me interesa    --- Me interesa
--- Me interesa poco   --- Me interesa mucho

g) Australia: sus símbolos, geografía; estructura económica, política y social; sus costumbres, normas sociales y fechas significativas

--- No me interesa    --- Me interesa
--- Me interesa poco   --- Me interesa mucho

Comente sus respuestas si lo considera necesario.

4- Sobre el folleto Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking Countries (Students’ book):
a) ¿Lo has leído?

- --- Si
- --- Muy poco
- --- No

b) ¿Lo consideras asequible a tu nivel?

- --- Si
- --- Relativamente asequible
- --- No

5. Con respecto a las clases de la asignatura Panorama Sociocultural de los Pueblos de Habla Inglesa, ¿Qué sugerencias harías con vistas a mejorar su calidad y facilitar el aprendizaje?

Muchas gracias por su participación.

Summary of the results of the survey applied

Number of students surveyed: 15

1. About the importance of Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries for English teachers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reasons why the students think the subject is important:

- For answering my future students´ doubts (2)
- For reinforcing the English language through the contents I learn in this subject (3)
- For being a better teacher (1)
- For increasing my educational level (8)

Remarks: Most of the students consider the subject Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking Countries important for their future. The students state some reasons where they explain their opinions, but the majority only sees its importance for increasing their educational level, but not for their future profession. Only three students think that this subject could be very useful for
reinforcing the English language through the contents they learn during the school year. Only three students consider they could use this knowledge about the English-speaking countries for answering their student’s doubts and being a better teacher.

2. About the students’ considerations concerning their level of ability in the English language:

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 2
- 7
- 3
- 3

Reasons why the students place themselves in the different categories:

- My level of ability is quite good, but the content is difficult for me (2)
- I do not have much problems in understanding the language (4)
- My level of ability is not enough for understanding the content (2)
- I do not have an excellent level of ability in the English language, but I can understand everything (1)

Remarks: In general the students place themselves in most of the categories, except by the category number one, which is the lowest, but the majority of the study group consider themselves in an intermediate status. They state that although some of them have a good level of ability, the content of the subject is the one difficult for them. Other students consider that their level of ability is not enough for understanding the subject while the rest state that they have no problem understanding the subject.

3. About the students’ interest towards the different contents taught in the subject Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temas</th>
<th>No me Interesa</th>
<th>Me interesa poco</th>
<th>Me interesa</th>
<th>Me interesa mucho</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Países de habla inglesa</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reino Unido</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadá</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reasons why the students are interest in knowing about the subject’s contents:

- It is necessary to learn about the culture and lifestyles of the people in other parts of the world (1)
- I am very interested in the language, but not about the details of these countries (1)

Remarks: It is important to point out that most of the students recognize the need to learn about the culture and lifestyles of the peoples in other parts of the world, but they seem to be more interested in the developed countries, but not in the third world nations. Although it is a minority, there are students that are interested in a basic knowledge, but not in the depth of contents that the subject deals with.

4- About the Students´ book of Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries:

a) Whether they have read it:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Si</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Muy poco</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) Whether they consider the book matches with their level of ability in English:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Si</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Relativamente</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5- Students´ suggestions in order to improve the lessons of Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries:
- More lessons in the language labs in order to make them more interesting and instructive (2)
- More effort from the teacher when teaching (1)
- More teaching aids (5)
- Locating these countries and cities in a map (1)
- A higher number of hours for this subject (1)
- To bear in mind that there are students with a lower level who need another kind of activities to understand the content (1)
- More practice lessons
Appendix 3
Analysis of the students’ outcomes

Aim: To collect information about the real students’ situation concerning the subject Sociocultural Panorama of the English-speaking countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Apellidos y nombres</th>
<th>Nota TCP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aguila Reyes Beatriz</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Alvarez Robaina Milena</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Barnés Reyes Diana</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bello Medina Leidy</td>
<td>BAJA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Betancourt Pedraza Claudia</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bravo Cortés Alejandro</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Cobas Santos Yeleny</td>
<td>BAJA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
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<td>100</td>
</tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Delgado Hermida Eliany</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ferrer Castro Yaimel Lazaro</td>
<td>LICENCIA</td>
</tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>García Machado Dayana</td>
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</tr>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Jacomino Rojas Frank</td>
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</tr>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>BAJA</td>
</tr>
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<td>14</td>
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</tr>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Placencia González Lesyani Teresa</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Ramírez Pumarada Leidy Laura</td>
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<td>Rey Santos Cedia</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Rodríguez Castro Soolange Noelis</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Rondon Jimenez Hilda Claudia</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Veliz Quintero Nahomy de la Caridad</td>
<td>88</td>
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</table>
### Appendix 4

**Interview to teachers**

Objective: To collect information regarding the students´ level of ability in English

Teachers interviewed:

- Lic. Paula Camacho Delgado (PILI)
- Lic. Martha Veitia (Writing)

Students´ evaluation according to the European Common Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Apellidos y nombres</th>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Writing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Writing</td>
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<td>A2 (Basic User)</td>
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Appendix 5

Unit 1: Canada, the Nation and its symbols

Objective: The students will explain the importance of national symbols for Canadians and for Cubans with the purpose of fostering respect, understanding and pride towards the foreign and the national symbols.

D. Overall features of Canada

Task 1 (Text 1)

Read the following text and determine whether:

---- It describes Canada geographically.
---- It explains some general features about its composition.

Task 2 (Text 1)

Read again and tick the elements that you find in the text:

___ Number of inhabitants
___ Location of the country
___ How the country is composed
___ Natural resources
___ Data about its border common border with the United States

Task 3 (Text 1)

Read and complete the following phrases:

- Canada extends from …
- Canada is the world’s second…
- Its common border with the United States is …

Task 4 (Text 1)

Read once more and find in the text:

- A gerund
- The English equivalent of al Norte de
- A synonym of biggest
- An antonym of shortest
- A verb in third person singular of simple present

Task 5
Work with your partner and try to complete a list of at least five other things you know about Canada. Be ready to present your list in front of the class.

E. The most distinctive symbols of the nation

Task 6

Brainstorming:

In pairs, make a list of words in English that you need to talk about your national symbols. Then, share your answers with another pair.

Task 7 (Text 2)

Your teacher will make a presentation about Canada symbols. Listen to her and take notes. Use this chart to summarize your notes.

About the National Flag:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Its colors</th>
<th>Name of the leaf in it</th>
<th>Meaning of these dates:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>February 15, 1965 and August 1860</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Task 8 (Text 3)

About the National Coat of Arms:

- When did it become official?
- What model was followed to design it?
- How is it formally known?

Task 9 (Text 4)

Read the lyrics of Canada’s National Anthem and:

c) List the values that it embeds
d) List some words that express some of those values. Write them down on this chart.

| Values | Words |
Task 10

Do some research to find answers to these two questions:

c) Why is the beaver the Canadian national animal?
d) Why is the maple the Canadian national tree?

Task 11

Work in pairs and discuss:

d) What are the proper names of the main Cuban national symbols?
e) What other Cuban national symbols do you know of?

F. Canada Landmarks

Task 12 (Text 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14)

4. Work in pairs and look up the meaning of the word *landmark* in the dictionary.

5. Read about Canada Landmarks and make a list.

6. Discuss with your partner: Do we have distinctive landmarks in Cuba? Explain

Reflect on your learning

- What strategies did you use to solve the tasks that you were given during this unit?
- What strengths as a language learner did you identify about yourself during this unit?
- What suggestions do you have for the teacher concerning teaching and your learning preferences?
Self-evaluation

Evaluate yourself in a scale from 1(-) to 5 (+): How well have you attained the objectives from this unit?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<td>I can explain the importance of national symbols for Canadians and for Cubans</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can understand the vocabulary from this unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can solve all the tasks from this unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can write coherently about the topics in this unit</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Unit glossary:

- Anthem: Himno
- Beaver: Castor
- Coat of Arms: Escudo de armas
- Falls: Cataratas
- Flag: Bandera
- Maple leaf: Hoja de arce

Unit 2: The Geography of Canada

Objective: The students will evaluate the place of Canada in the world considering its territorial extension and wealth with the purpose of valuing the importance of Cuba-Canada relations.

Task 1 (Students ‘Book p.47)

Read the text and answer the following questions:

1- List all the provinces and territories in Canada.
2- In terms of territorial extension how is Canada compared with Russia?
3- How is Canada compared to Australia on a per-capita basis in terms of its resource endowments?
4- Why are the main cities in Canada located in the southern part of the country?
5- What is the capital of Canada?

Task 2 (Text 15)

Use the map of Canada and locate:

1- The Northwest Territories
2- Yukon
3- Canada’s most important cities

Task 3

Do some research and find out this:

4- Why do some Canadians live in “territories” and not in “provinces”?
5- What is Canada’s population at present?

Task 4

Work in pairs and discuss these questions:

1- Why is it important for Cuba to have economic relations with Canada?
2- Why is it important for Canada to invest in Cuba’s economy and to trade with Cuba?
3- Why do so many Canadians come to Cuba every year? (They occupy the first place with respect to the number of tourists visiting Cuba in a year)

Reflect on your learning:

- What strategies did you use to solve the tasks that you were given during this unit?
- What strengths as a language learner did you identify about yourself during this unit?
- What suggestions do you have for the teacher concerning teaching and your learning preferences?

Self-evaluation
Evaluate yourself in a scale from 1(-) to 5 (+): How well have you attained the objectives from this unit?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
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<tr>
<td>I can explain why Canada is a rich country</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can write coherently about the topics in this unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can understand the vocabulary from this unit</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Unit glossary:

- Deciduous forest: Bosque templado
- Harsh: Duro, severo
- Prairie grassland: Pradera
- Rain forest: Selva húmeda
- Resource endowments: Recursos disponibles
- Wetlands: Pantanos

Unit 3: Social, economic and political structures.

Objective: The students will compare Canada and Cuba in terms of their social, economic and political structures with the purpose of valuing what is progressive in such structures.

A. Government

Task 1 (Text 24)

Read the text and compare Canada and Cuba in terms of their form of government. Use this chart:

| Canada | Cuba |
Task 2 (Text 25)

Cuba and Canada have quite a few differences regarding their government components. Do some research and establish them using this chart:

**Government components**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Cuba</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

B. Religion

Task 3 (Text 27)

Read the graph about religion in Canada and discuss these questions:

- Which of those religious congregations are present in Cuba?
- Which are not present in Cuba? How do you know?

C. Economy

Task 4 (Text 28)

Canada has an advanced economy which makes it a first-world nation. What makes Canada a rich country?

D. Education and health care

Task 5 (Text 29)
About the educational system in Canada, find out about these points:

a) The languages that are used as a means of instruction
b) Participation of the federal government
c) The role of the church

Task 6

Do some research about these questions:

a) Who pays for the education of the Canadians?
b) Who pays for the education of the Cubans?

Task 7 (Text 30)

About the health system in Canada, find out about these points:

a) Participation of the federal government in the health system
b) Participation of the provincial governments
c) Are hospitals private or public?
d) What is Medicare?

Reflect on your learning

- What strategies did you use to solve the tasks that you were given during this unit?
- What strengths as a language learner did you identify about yourself during this unit?
- What suggestions do you have for the teacher concerning teaching and your learning preferences?

Self-evaluation

Evaluate yourself in a scale from 1(-) to 5 (+): How well have you attained the objectives from this unit?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can compare Canada and Cuba in terms of their social, economic and political structures</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
I can value what is progressive in each of those structures
I can write coherently about the topics in this unit
I can understand the vocabulary from this unit

Unit glossary:

- Expenditures: Gasto
- Furs: Pieles
- Inmates: Internos, reclusos
- Insurers: Aseguradora
- Outlays: Gastos, desembolsos
- Providers: Proveedores
- Revenues: Rentas
- Secular: Laico, secular
- Timber: Madera
- Wealth: Riqueza

Unit 4: The Canadian Customs and Social Norms

Objective: Understand Canadian customs and social norms, with the purpose of behaving appropriately when interacting with them.

A. Greetings

Task 1 (Text 31)

Read the text and answer the following questions:

a) Do all Canadians greet the same way? Explain.
b) What is the most common non-verbal greeting and what other form of non-verbal greeting can replace it in informal situations?
c) What non-verbal greeting is common in French speakers?
d) What are some verbal greetings that might be used in Canada?
e) What is correct to do when passing a stranger on the street?
f) How can we address others in Canada?

Task 2 (Text 31)
a) On the whole, we Cubans tend to touch other people when greeting or communicating with them. Is this an appropriate behavior when relating with Canadians? Explain.

B. Visiting

**Task 3 (Text 32)**

a) Do you normally telephone ahead before visiting someone? Explain.
b) When you have a guest, is it a custom in your family to offer something? If so, what do you usually offer visitors?
c) Is it appropriate for Cuban guests to offer a gift to the host? Explain.
d) Is etiquette important for Cubans? How do you know?
e) How different from Cuban are visiting customs in Canada? Explain.

C. General attitudes.

**Task 4 (Students´ Book p. 54)**

Read the text about Canadians general attitudes and make two lists of adjectives, one describing Americans the way Canadians see them, and another one describing the way Canadians see themselves.

Use this chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Americans</th>
<th>Canadians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

D. Language, personal appearance, gestures, the family, dating and marriage, recreation and holydays.

**Task 5 (Students´ Book p.p.54- 57)**
Make eight teams and select one topic, then do this:

a) Prepare a team presentation with the topic that each team selected.

b) Once all the teams have made their presentations, for homework, write about similarities and differences concerning Cuba and Canada customs, with respect to the topic that each team selected.

c) In class, discuss around the class about similarities and differences concerning Cuba and Canada customs with respect to personal appearance, gestures, the family, dating and marriage, recreation and holidays.

Reflect on your learning

- What strategies did you use to solve the tasks that you were given during this unit?
- What strengths as a language learner did you identify about yourself during this unit?
- What suggestions do you have for the teacher concerning teaching and your learning preferences?

Self-evaluation

Evaluate yourself in a scale from 1(-) to 5 (+): How well have you attained the objectives from this unit?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
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<th>2</th>
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<td>I can understand Canadian customs and social norms</td>
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<td>I can compare Canadian and Cuban customs and social norms</td>
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<td>I can write coherently about the topics in this unit</td>
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</table>

Unit glossary:

- Acquaintances: Conocidos
- Appetizers: Aperitivos
- Cheek: Mejilla
- Cottages: Casita
- Easter: Pascuas
- Handshake: Apretón de manos
- Leisure time: Tiempo libre
- Refreshments: Refrigerios
- Senior: Mayor
- Shrimp: Camarón
- To arrange: Disponer