Technology and Teaching Culture: Results of a State Survey of Foreign Language Teachers

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ABSTRACT
Findings from a state survey on technology and teaching culture indicated that teachers in general made little use of computer facilities such as the World Wide Web and e-mail. Although the teachers made considerable use of video materials, especially foreign films, they made little use of interactive media such as CD-ROMs and videodiscs even when these materials were part of commercially available instructional packages. Teachers' level of education and teaching experience accounted for some of the differences in the frequency with which teachers used technology. The study also found that Japanese teachers demonstrated more frequent use of technology than teachers of other foreign languages. Teachers in rural areas appeared to make very little use of interactive media learning materials. It is clear that foreign language teachers need to improve their knowledge of how to integrate technology with other activities in classroom instruction. This need could be met by including instructional technology issues in courses for pre-service and in-service teachers.

KEYWORDS
Culture, Technology, Teaching, Culture, Survey, Teachers, World Wide Web

INTRODUCTION
The recently published ACTFL National Standards for Foreign Language Teaching recommends that teachers approach the teaching of culture using three foci: cultural products, cultural practices, and cultural perspectives (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 1997).
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Furthermore, the writers of the document urge teachers not to limit the teaching of culture to simply disseminating information on cultural products and practices because such an approach tends to reduce the study of culture to learning facts and figures. Rather, they advise teachers to strive to create and design activities that encourage students to gain fuller insights into native speakers' perspectives, values, and opinions associated with their products and practices.

The need for such clearly stated national goals and guidelines for the teaching of culture emerged from attempts to come to grips with an area of instruction that has challenged the profession for decades (see Lafayette, 1976). In the 1960s, energies centered on convincing teachers that language could not be taught separately from culture (Brooks, 1968). In the 1970s, calls went out to teachers to integrate language and culture and to discontinue the habit of relegating cultural instruction to Friday afternoon activities when students had nothing else to do (Kennedy, 1973; Nostrand, 1974; Lafayette, 1976; Strasheim, 1981; Damen, 1987; Galloway, 1984). Continuing well into the 1990s a plethora of models, approaches, techniques, and strategies for teaching culture continued to be presented (Taylor & Sorensen, 1961; Fiedler, Mitchell & Triandis, 1971; Meade & Morain, 1973; Jorstad, 1976; Hendon, 1980; Galloway, 1984; Kramsch, 1983; Gaston, 1984; Crawford-Lange & Lange, 1987; Lafayette, 1988; Seelye, 1991; Ortuño, 1991; Moore, 1994). Nevertheless, according to results from a recent study, teachers continue to rely on textbooks as the main source of cultural information in which students learn about the target culture simply from reading cultural notes (Moore, 1996).

TECHNOLOGY AND TEACHING CULTURE

With the rapid changes in technology, the teaching profession can now welcome the possibility of developing process oriented ways of teaching and evaluation more in keeping with the multifaceted nature of culture (Bacon, 1995). For example, with the ever expanding use of networked computers that provide access to the World Wide Web (WWW), teachers have opportunities (and challenges) for creating better instructional material to teach language and culture and making more effective use of those materials than was previously possible. One of the alluring aspects of technological resources is the ease with which recent and relevant information can be brought to students. According to Finnemann (1996, p. 6), "... it is clear that the Web promises to be an important resource for language teachers." Students can be virtually surrounded by sights and sounds of native speakers in the target settings through the use of videodiscs, computer animated objects and figures, and voice activators that produce native-like utterances (Gale, 1989; Saint-Léon, 1988).
Writing on the effective use of computers in the foreign language classroom, Thrush and Thrush (1984) stressed that in order to achieve maximum effectiveness and efficiency of student learning, it is not enough simply to have the technological resources available for use; teachers must also know how to harness the educational capabilities of the technology. One effective way of harnessing these capabilities, according to Warschauer (1996), is to develop integrative approaches to Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Many of the recent advances in CALL are based on two important technological developments—multimedia computers and the WWW. Multimedia technology, as exemplified by CD-ROMs and videodiscs, allows a variety of media (text, graphics, sound, animation, and video) to be accessed on a desktop computer.

Most teachers and students are probably already familiar with e-mail and the WWW, the most common network resources used in first and second language instruction (Cononelos & Oliva, 1993). However Warschauer (1996) asserts that it is Multiple-user-domains, Object Oriented (MOOs) that best allow for real time communication, simulation, and role-playing. The highly interactive nature of CALL utilities, like MOOs, can facilitate the teaching of culture by providing immediate, ongoing contact with native speakers in the second language. In addition, the combined use of CD-ROMs and videodiscs can provide for more authentic interaction in simulated cultural contexts, like the role-playing of Macario developed at Brigham Young University (Gale, 1989). Such simulated cultural interactions enable students to learn appropriate cultural behavior.

Brown, Lewis, and Harceload (1983) stated that one of the advantages of the use of interactive media in foreign language learning is that students can move away from a dependence on the printed word (e.g., the textbook) to a combination of sight, sound, and movement. Videodisc technology offers excellent pictures of real life settings. Students can experience language use in cultural contexts and, because they are in control of using the material, can decide how and what they wish to learn (Brandvold et al., 1986).

Some language teachers have argued for the use of interactive media for many years, while others have experimented with video material as a source for listening practice as well as for deepening cultural understanding. Nostrand (1989, p. 192) noted that technology offers access to databases which can “potentially make swiftly available the information on foreign cultures.” Nevertheless, some still lament the fact that American schools and instructional methods have not kept up with available technological advances (Schmidt, 1994). Cononelos and Oliva (1993) cautioned that the contribution computer networks make to foreign language education will ultimately depend on teachers’ use of them. The ways in which teachers integrate network services with other language learning activities in
the instructional process will be instrumental in deciding the long term value of networks in foreign language education.

**THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This project addressed several research questions: whether foreign language teachers make use of the available technological facilities for teaching culture, how they use resources like videodiscs, interactive video, CD-ROMs, and computer networks for teaching culture, and how they incorporate the use of these resources into classroom activities. To answer these questions, the researchers conducted a survey of foreign language teachers. While the researchers are aware of the limitations of survey questionnaires as a data collecting tool for in depth inquiries, they also recognize its effectiveness for gathering data over broad populations and across great distances.

**THE STATE SURVEY**

The researchers conducted their teacher survey in the state of Texas. They developed a six page survey instrument to elicit information on several aspects of the teaching and testing of culture. (See the section of the questionnaire related to the study described here in the appendix to this article.) Teachers were asked to respond to questionnaire items by indicating on Likert-type scales how frequently they taught and tested culture, which topics they taught and tested, which sources (technological and other) they used for accessing cultural information, and which kinds of testing formats they used. A section of open ended questions provided teachers with the opportunity to elaborate on their normal classroom routine and how they incorporated the resources into their lessons. The teachers were also directed to provide information on the type of school in which they taught (elementary, middle, or high; urban, suburban, or inner city), their level of education, the languages they taught, their professional preparation, their familiarity with the target culture, their feelings about their competence to teach and test culture, and the constraints they experienced in teaching and testing culture.

**RESEARCH PROCEDURE**

Using a list of 100 school districts provided by the State Education Department, the researchers (a university professor and two doctoral students) solicited the help of department heads and school district foreign language supervisors to distribute copies of the survey questionnaire to their teachers. The researchers mailed two thousand copies of the survey questionnaire to school districts. After three letters and intensive tele-
phone reminders, the researchers received 388 completed questionnaires, a return of approximately 20%. Considering the size of the state of Texas, the researchers believed that the response rate, while not outstanding, was satisfactory. Preliminary examination of the data did in fact reveal that responses came from a variety of school types and generally reflected the national figures on language enrollments (see the MLA Survey, 1991). It is also interesting to note that of the teachers who responded, almost half (46%) had more than 11 years of teaching experience. Thus, although the rate was somewhat low, most of the responses came from teachers who had worked in the field for long periods of time thereby increasing the validity and reliability of the data. Table 1, Figure 1, and Figure 2 show the profiles of the teachers classified by (a) education, (b) years of teaching experience, (c) school type, (d) languages taught, and (e) school setting.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics on Teachers’ Level of Education, Experience, and School Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>No. of Teachers</th>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>No. of Teachers</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>No. of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.A./B.S</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Elem.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A./M.S.</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11+</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>Mid &amp; high</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N.R.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>388</td>
<td></td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1
Teachers and Languages Taught (N=388)
DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected from the survey was vast, and not all of the data analysis can be reported in a single article. This article focuses only on the findings related to technology and the teaching of culture. Five variables were used to analyze the data from the quantitative section of the survey questionnaire: level of teacher education, years of teaching experience, languages taught, school setting, (urban versus suburban, urban versus rural) and level of school (elementary, middle, and high). A one-way ANOVA generated sets of t tests for each separate variable in which the level of significance was set at $p < .05$. Tables 2 through 6 summarize the results of this analysis ($N = 388$).

Table 2
Means Ranking by Level of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>Videodisc</th>
<th>CD</th>
<th>Video</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.A./B.S.</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A./M.S.</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>2.50*</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05

Table 3
Means Ranking by Years of Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Teaching</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>Videodisc</th>
<th>CD</th>
<th>Video</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CALICO Journal
In addition, since the study sought information on the ways teachers used technology, descriptive analysis of the open ended responses was conducted under the four headings: WWW, videodiscs, video and CD-ROMs. First, the frequency of use of the four most popular technological resources (WWW, videodiscs, CD-ROMs, and video) is reported. Second, the ways in which teachers used the resources is described. Finally, the pedagogical implications of the study will be discussed, and suitable recommendations will be made.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Education

According to the analysis of the data, teachers’ level of education tended to influence the frequency with which they used technological facilities for teaching culture (see Table 2). Specifically, teachers with a doctorate
degree had higher scores in the use of all four facilities (the WWW, Video-discs, CD-ROMs, and Video). Although the mean scores for this group were higher than those in the other groups, the differences were not statistically significant with the exception of use of the Internet (p < .05). Other data analysis indicated that only 24% of the teachers had exposure to culture courses in their degree programs, and most of these teachers had advanced degrees. This finding represents a possible explanation for the fact that teachers with higher degrees tended to make greater use of technology for culture teaching.

Years of Experience

Years of teaching experience appeared to be a factor in determining how frequently teachers incorporated technology into their teaching. Table 3 shows that the least experienced teachers (0-2 years) generally tended to have the lowest scores in almost all areas, except in the use of CD-ROMS, in which their scores were the highest (mean of 1.82 compared to 1.59 for teachers with 3-5 years and 1.60 for teachers with more than 6 years). None of the differences between the means were statistically significant. The tendency that the least experienced teachers made the most use of CD-ROMS can possibly be attributed to the fact that recent college graduates may be more familiar with some of the newer multimedia facilities than their senior colleagues. Yet it was the teachers with more experience (6-10 years), who tended to have higher scores in all the other areas. Other research findings on teacher development indicate that it is at the more advanced stages of teaching (over 5 years) that teachers are able to make conscious choices, set priorities, reflect on performance, and be more inventive (Berliner, 1988). The data from the present study lend support to these findings.

Languages Taught

The researchers assumed that there would be differences among teachers depending on the language they taught. This assumption was based on two facts. The first is that Spanish, French, and German are the three most frequently taught foreign languages in the US, and the second, linked to the first, is that much more software has been developed for these three languages. (See, for example, Herron & Hanley, 1992; Rose, 1995; Smith, 1991; Garrett, 1991, to mention only a few). However, the analysis of the data showed that the Japanese teachers had higher scores in all areas, although significant difference was found only in the use of the WWW (p < .05).
This finding can perhaps be explained historically. According to Saito Abbott (1997), the Professional Development for Japanese Teachers in Texas was the first comprehensive program in the nation to develop a teacher certification program for in-service Japanese teachers. The program was developed through collaborative efforts of language teachers, state agency personnel, and college of education faculty, and included courses in the teaching and evaluation of culture. In addition, a large component of the course involved the use of a computer bulletin service (BBS). The BBS was essential for communicating with the teachers in schools across Texas, and the teachers became very adept at using computer networks for communicating with each other and their supervisor. Since the BBS was an effective teaching tool, the teachers may well have transferred the skills to their own classroom teaching.

School Setting

For many categories, teachers in rural settings had lower scores than teachers in urban and suburban settings. The differences were not statistically significant, possibly due to the small sample size for teachers in rural settings. Further investigation is needed to determine whether there are indeed significant differences, which, if so, has considerable import for equality of opportunity. One can even argue that it is the students in more remote rural areas (areas in which cultural diversity is less prevalent) who are in greater need of technological resources in order to keep pace with their urban counterparts.

Type of school

On the whole, elementary school teachers scored lower in most categories than teachers at the middle or high school level, although the differences were not statistically significant. Data analysis showed that teachers who straddled middle and high schools seemed to make significantly greater use of videodiscs. Since the data set included only 10 teachers who taught at both Middle and High schools, caution should be taken in interpreting this finding.

OPEN ENDED RESPONSES

Few teachers offered examples or explanations of how they used the WWW, videodiscs, or CD-ROMs, but many offered comments on the use of the video.
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The WWW

Thirty-five teachers offered explanations on their use of the WWW. Twenty-seven Spanish teachers, four French and four German teachers provided examples of activities. Most of the activities involved students “surfing the net” for information on specific geographical areas, historical topics, famous personalities, or weather reports. Students then shared the information they collected with the rest of the class through either oral or written presentations. One Spanish teacher mentioned that students who had computers at home interacted with penpals in a Spanish speaking country using e-mail. Unfortunately, the teacher did not elaborate on whether the students engaged the native speakers in any discussions dealing with culture. One French teacher created a home page for her class in which students could share information but, again, provided no details. Teachers of less commonly taught languages did not explain how students used the internet.

Videodiscs

The use of videodiscs was minimal. Ten Spanish teachers, two French teachers, and two German teachers mentioned that they used films on videodiscs, but none provided examples of how they were incorporated into lesson activities.

Video

Pusak and Otto (1990, p. 40) stated that “by far the most compelling medium for presenting cultural content is video.” They also expressed the belief that the lack of pedagogically sound software may discourage the widespread use of interactive media. The present survey results certainly confirm their findings and concerns. The videocassette recorder (a device normally without interactive capabilities) was the most often used piece of equipment, probably due to the fact that videocassette recorders have a long history in school use and that a great amount of material is available in video format. Sixty-nine Spanish teachers, twenty-three French teachers, four German teachers, and one Japanese teacher gave examples of the material they used, mostly films. Commercially prepared instructional video material like Destinos and travel documentaries seemed to be popular with Spanish and French teachers. Spanish students could obtain information on celebrations like el dia de los muertos ‘the day of the dead’, la quinceanera ‘one’s fifteenth birthday,’ cultural practices like bullfighting, and famous personalities. French and German students watched travel
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documentaries and films on important painters and buildings. Cartoons in French and Spanish provided authentic material for listening activities.

Video material appeared to be limited to commercially prepared videos (videos that formed part of instructional packets) or popular foreign films. For example, one Japanese teacher mentioned showing the students Akira Kurosawa's Dreams to help them understand the importance of environmental harmony for the Japanese people. Two teachers—one Spanish and one French—wrote that they organized discussions based on the films that the students watched but provided no examples of the films they used nor of the topics used for discussion. No mention was made of the use of interactive video. It would appear that when video material was used in the classroom, its purpose was more for diversion or for enhancing other skills such as listening or speaking.

CD-ROMs

CD-ROMs are becoming increasingly popular with publishing houses. Many instructional packets in Spanish, French, and German now include CD-ROMs. This fact may explain why the more junior teachers seemed to be more familiar with them. Perhaps, too, the junior teachers may have used CD-ROMs in their college language programs. Yet, in spite of their increasing popularity, only two teachers with less than 2 years experience mentioned that they used CD-ROMs that were part of their instructional packages and then only to reinforce grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation. Two senior teachers had their students use encyclopedias on CDs for reference purposes. One Latin teacher mentioned the use of CD-ROMs for accessing information about Rome and the voyages of Ulysses. Apparently, CD-ROMs that come with textbooks focus on developing language skills and contain very little material for culture learning.

Less Commonly Taught Languages

On the whole, the teachers of the Latin, Portuguese, and Russian made little use of technology in their classes. A possible explanation may be the lack of appropriate material in these less commonly taught languages. However, since Texas is one of the five states in the nation which exchanges teachers from Russia every year, the researchers expected greater interaction with students in Russia via e-mail. It is also possible that the presence of Russian native speakers in the schools may make the use of technological facilities redundant since students could more easily and directly interact with them. Still, it would seem that middle school and high school students would prefer to interact with native speakers of their
OWN AGES, AND E-MAIL CERTAINLY ALLOWS FOR SUCH INDIVIDUAL INTERACTION.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the results of the project described here, it is clear that the teachers surveyed were making minimal use of technological facilities for teaching culture. The teachers provided two general reasons for this lack of use: either the schools did not have the facilities, or the teachers did not have access to suitable material for culture instruction. The teachers did not indicate that they lacked the skills or knowledge necessary for using technology. The situation seemed especially grave at the elementary school level, in schools in rural settings, and in less commonly taught languages.

Based on the findings from this study, the researchers offer the following recommendations:

1. Teacher development programs, pre-service as well as in-service, would benefit from courses in instructional technology.

   These courses must focus not merely on enhancing teachers' technical knowledge but, more important, on ways to use the capabilities of the technology. For example, teachers can learn to tailor existing material to make programs more relevant to their own lessons and to teach students to use the material in more interactive ways. Advances in this area may require more collaborative work between foreign language instructors and instructional technology teachers in colleges and high schools.

2. Since the survey results gave little indication that teachers were familiar with MOOs, methodology teachers would do well to incorporate the use of some multiple user domains, such as chat rooms, into their courses.

   The inclusion of such facilities would enable pre-service and in-service teachers to appreciate the benefits of networking and real time communication for enhancing cultural understanding and behavior. Communicative facilities like MOOs would also prove especially effective for in-service teacher training. Foreign language school district supervisors may also wish to explore the possibility of designing distance learning programs, particularly for teachers in rural areas.
3. Continued collaborative work between teachers of foreign language pedagogy and teachers of language courses in postsecondary institutions would help to create greater curricular articulation.

Language programs, especially those at the undergraduate level, must include culture courses. The findings in this project indicated that the majority of the teachers surveyed (226 or 58%) had only a bachelors degree and that only 2% of these teachers were exposed to cultural instruction in their programs. The majority of undergraduates (98%) who entered the teacher certification programs did so with little knowledge of the culture of the people whose language they intended to teach and likely had to, as Kagan (1992, p. 159) stated, "compensate for deficits by relying on textbooks and recollections of their own experiences as pupils."

4. In spite of the fact that the consensus of the teaching profession indicates that language cannot be taught separately from culture, the profession continues to bear witness to an imbalance of energies devoted to research on language learning and testing.

Research on the use of computer enhanced language learning tends to focus mainly on reading and writing and on the benefits of doing so in real life situations with native speakers. The sparse work done on computer enhanced culture learning focuses primarily on products and practices and follows the same model of interacting with native speakers for the purpose of getting information on holidays, celebrations, food, celebrity figures, music, and so forth (Lee, 1997). Such a model may not be effective for providing students with the investigatory tools by which they can come to an understanding of the perspectives of speakers of the second language. Furthermore, such a model raises concerns about native speakers' socio-economic status, education level, gender, and ethnicity as they relate to other cultures. Other ways in which students can learn not only about cultural products and practices but also about the cultural perspectives of native speakers are clearly needed. The theoretical frameworks that guide research on
CALL (for example, the popular Vygotskian social-constructivist principles) seem to be effective for language learning, particularly for helping students to improve their language skills by modeling and interaction (Warschauer, 1997). Similar research has yet to be done with culture learning.

Although the overall results of the survey are very disturbing for the foreign language profession, they do reflect findings from other studies on the use of technology in the classroom, specifically, that computers continue to be used in very limited ways (Warschauer, 1995b). As pointed out by Garrett (1991), the use of computers does not constitute a method; successful use of computers will depend on methods, approaches and pedagogical philosophies.

SAMPLE LESSON

In conclusion, an example of a culture lesson incorporating the use of computer mediated technology is offered below. The pedagogic principles guiding the lesson plan are based on synergistic learning theories and discovery learning, principles which the researchers believe may be more suitable for culture learning than traditional teaching techniques. Students become involved in a number of multisensorial experiences as they develop an understanding of the cultural perspectives associated with a product and practice.

The following lesson was designed and implemented by a group of graduate students in a methods course. The lesson was designed for teaching first-year Japanese students. The lesson lasted 25 minutes and took place in a multimedia laboratory equipped with relatively powerful computers, large monitors, video recorders, CD-ROM players, and Zip disk drives. The video material, photos, and newspaper clippings were digitized and placed on a CD-ROM. The teacher prepared the lesson outline on a computer and used a computer work station for demonstrations.

Lesson Objective

Students will become aware of the influences of geographical, historical, and religious factors on Japanese eating habits as exemplified by the use of tsekumono 'pickled vegetables.' They will learn about the cultural product (the pickled vegetables themselves) and practice (eating pickled vegetables) and develop an understanding of some native perspectives associated with both.
Instructional material

1. A short segment of the Film “Tampopo” in which a Japanese man is seen eating pickled cucumbers.
2. (a) Scanned color map of Japan, (b) Regions of Japan showing geographic and weather differences (prepared using PowerPoint).
3. (a) First handout with examples of WWW sites for information on pickled vegetables. (b) Second handout (to use for discussion in small groups) with a brief historical account of Buddhist influence on the Japanese and vegetarian diets.
4. Pictures of pickled vegetables on menu charts
5. Samples of home prepared pickled vegetables and samples of commercially packaged pickled vegetables; rice and chopsticks for the students to sample the food.

Procedure and activities

Students view the clip and observe the eating of pickles, how they are eaten and with what they are eaten (2 mins.). In groups of three, the students will view the map of Japan and make hypotheses on the different regional foods (one hypothesis per group; 3 mins.). They will study the handout on Buddhism and refine their hypotheses (3 mins.). They will identify pickled vegetables in their own culture and discuss how they are eaten and what part they play in their diet (5 mins.).

The students will then “surf the net” (using the handout on WWW sites prepared by the teacher) to find one piece of information on pickled vegetables. They will share this piece of information with the class in a “chat room” situation (10 mins.). At the end of the class, they will sample the pickled vegetables with rice brought in by the teacher. They will be given a handout listing shops in the vicinity where they can buy commercially prepared pickled vegetables.

Comments

The class can be divided into groups of two depending on the number of computers available. The material can be prepared with help from instructional technology faculty. Needless to say, the teacher must also have some knowledge of computer technology. As with any other instructional material, the culture material must be well designed to achieve the lesson objectives. The culture lesson can be followed by a lessons on listening, speaking, reading, and writing, all on the same topic. The culture lesson can serve as the context for the language functions of identifying, describing, and expressing likes and dislikes.
APPENDIX

Survey Questionnaire on Teaching Culture
Section 3. Sources of Cultural information

Please indicate how frequently you engage students in using the following media for cultural learning. Please give examples of activities using the sources.

Resources   1   2   3   4   5

1. Internet:
Examples

2. Videodiscs:
Examples

3. CD-ROM:
Examples

4. Video:
Examples

Tell us about yourself. (Circle whatever is relevant.)

1. I hold the following college degrees:

2. My degree included courses in the teaching of culture.
   YES    NO

3. I teach the following languages: (M = Major; M N = Minor)
   1. ______ Chinese    6. ______ Portuguese
   2. ______ French    7. ______ Russian
   3. ______ Spanish    8. ______ Japanese
   4. ______ Latin    9. ______ Other
   5. ______ German
3. I have been a foreign language teacher for:
   a. 0-2 years  b. 3-5 years  c. 6-10 years  d. 11+ years

4. I teach the following level:
   a. Elementary  b. Middle  c. High  d. Middle & High

5. The following best describes the setting in which I teach
   a. Urban but not inner-city  c. Rural
   b. Urban-inner-city  d. Suburban

Many Thanks for Your Cooperation

NOTES

1 The literature suggests that discovery learning or the constructivist approach to learning is based on a theory of cognitive learning (Bruner, Goodnow, & Austin, 1956; Bruner, 1973). The most important and most obvious characteristic of the discovery approach to teaching is that it requires far less teacher involvement and direction than most other methods. However, the discovery approach does not imply that the teacher may cease to give guidance once the initial problem has been presented. In fact, the approach requires far more preparation of teachers (both professional preparation and individual preparation for each lesson) than “regular” pedagogies. The advantages of the discovery approach are that such learning facilitates transfer and retention, increases problem solving ability, and increases motivation.

2 The researchers would like to acknowledge the contribution of three graduate students in the College of Education at the University of Texas, Kenji Takahashi, Junko Murata, and Dan Morain, who all helped in creating the lesson.

REFERENCES


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