CERCLL Workshop
University of Arizona
June 1 and 2, 2010

Developing intercultural competence in the language class: why and how?

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An overview

- The overall goals:
  - Familiarize you with *Cultura*, a **web-based** project designed to develop **intercultural competence** within the context of a language class
  - Enable you to create one or two modules that you could use/integrate in one of your own language classes for developing your own students' intercultural understanding.

Program – June 1 (morning)

- 9:00- 9:30 **Introductions**:
  - Some words about my background (and how I came to be interested in the field of intercultural communication)
  - Toward a definition of "intercultural competence"
- 9:30-10:30 **A tour of *Cultura* : an insider's view**
  - Its raison d'être
  - Its specific objectives
  - Its approach
  - The website and the materials (our choices)
  - Questions and Answers
- *10:30-10:45: Break*

- 10:45-11:30 **Focus on the process**
  - How students build their knowledge and understanding of the other culture: a "hands-on" simulation *(group work)*
  - A view of the classroom
- 11:30-12:00 Questions and Answers

Program – June 1 (afternoon)

1:00 -2:00: **Focus on communication** (the *Cultura* tour continued)

- How students communicate across cultures (= the online discussion forums)
- Our choices (regarding what language to use) and why
- Some detailed examples and illustrations

2:00 – 2:15: **Where does the study of language fit in?**

2:15 – 2:45: **The new pedagogies**

The new roles of teachers

- What it now means to "teach" culture
- Task design: some principles
- The issue of evaluation

The new roles of learners

Program – June 1 (afternoon continued)

2:45-3:00: Break

3:00-4:00:

- ◦ The main challenges in implementing such a project
- ◦ Adaptations of *Cultura* in other languages: some examples (Chinese/Filipino/Russian/Samoan/Spanish)
- ◦ Questions and answers

Program - June 2

June 2 (morning)

9:00-9:30: **Focus on the use of images and videos**

Working with images and videos for cross-cultural comparisons: some examples and resources

9:30-12:00 **Designing your own course/project/module content** (*hands-on work in teams*):

Exploring materials; selecting content; developing appropriate pedagogical tasks

• June 2 (afternoon)

Project presentations by the different teams
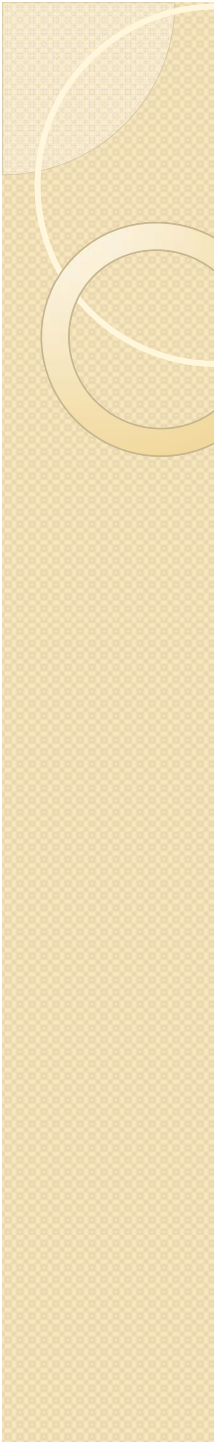
Final questions and answers period

Introducing yourself..

A few words about my background

- Not a techie (trained in literature)
- Essentially a language teacher who got enthused by a particular technology (my story)
- My own work with multimedia (*A la Rencontre de Philippe* and *Dans un Quartier de Paris*)
- My subsequent views about technology:
  - It is not a panacea.
  - It is a pedagogical tool
  - It needs to add value to our endeavor
  - There needs to be a congruence between our use of the technology and our goals
  - Technology needs to generate new pedagogical practices.

How I came to be interested in bringing culture to the forefront of the language class.

- A gradual process..

- Always been an interest of mine (my work as a journalist)

- My experience in designing and teaching with *A la Rencontre de Philippe*

- My work with *Dans un Quartier de Paris*

How I became to be interested in cross-cultural work

- Continued with my experience in teaching with French films and their remakes.
- Then, the advent of internet-based tools provided a very natural extension, as it allowed French and American students to communicate and interact about those films, thus adding a new rich, dynamic "intercultural" dimension to the students' comparison, interpretation and analysis of the films

The "perfect" synergy..

- There was an obvious **perfect synergy** between the field of **inter**-cultural communication (which *implies* encounters between people and the **Inter**-net (which *facilitates* such encounters)

Toward a definition of intercultural competence

- First a definition of culture: "*a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, and norms, which affect the behavior of a relatively large group of people*".

  Lustig, M. and Koestler, Intercultural Competence (2003) Fourth Edition

- Intercultural competence is simply the ability to **grasp and understand** those differences between cultures, allowing the "*intercultural speaker*" able to behave appropriately.

- In the case of *Cultura*, where the environment is virtual and the interactions are only online, the main goal is to develop intercultural **understanding.**

So, what is *Cultura*?

- A Web-based project - **taking place in a language and culture class** with students in a French class interacting with French students in an English class over a period of a semester (eight weeks minimum) – for the the goal of trying to better understand the other culture (reversal of the usual equation).

- The basis of a whole course that takes place in a language class, but that is also adaptable to many other contexts where intercultural communication is a crucial component (ex: business/ international relations)

- Ultimate goal: help students better know and **understand** other cultures.

Where does Cultura fit into the larger scheme of things?

- Intercultural communication has become a necessity in our global world, and one of our educational priorities, as we all need to prepare our students to communicate and interact with people of different cultures. The stakes (political, economic and humanistic) are very high

- Universities in the US have taken many steps to internationalize the curriculum

  - The American Council on Education is pushing for a greater internationalization of the curriculum through its "Internationalization Collaborative"

  - The number of Study Abroad programs is proliferating (even at MIT)

  - Intercultural communication is now increasingly taking center stage, in domains such as business (where the role of culture in international business is now recognized)

At MIT too…

- A report entitled **Mens et Manus et Mundus** was published last October, with a mandate to create "*New Directions for Global Education and Research*".

  - "*By preparing our students to work, lead, and thrive in cultures around the globe, we equip them with crucial skills for tackling the world's great challenges.*"

    Susan Hockfield, President, MIT.

  - "*Giving MIT students deep knowledge of other languages and cultures, and the capacity to be global citizens and wise leaders, is vital to a 21st century education - and critical to the Institute's leadership position*".

    Deborah K. Fitzgerald, Kenan Sahin Dean MIT School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences

And in its 2007 report.. ….

…   The Modern Language Association made the development of students *"translingual and transcultural competence"* a priority, adding that *"it is one of five imperative needs to which higher education must respond in the next ten years if it is to remain relevant"*.

http://www.mla.org/flreport

http://www.mla.org/mlaissuesmajor

A new role for us language teachers?

- We are at the heart of that endeavor
- Have always been (teaching language and culture)
- We have always known they are inextricably linked, and teaching about foreign cultures has always been part and parcel of what we do
- So we do have a very big role to play in the international education of our students!
- But I believe that we need to increase it and show how much we can contribute to the field of intercultural communication

A new challenge too!

- Not trained
- Not necessarily specialists in the fields of communication or culture
- We are very adept at teaching language, but not necessarily at "teaching" culture.
- However, we have a great ally…

Technology!

- We have long seen and used the assets of the WWW – that enables our students to explore the cultures at large - and we are increasingly using the assets of the W2 tools, that allows our students to be connected to native speakers all over the world via chat rooms or environments such as LiveMocha and Second Life.

- And these tools, which are greatly facilitating intercultural communication, have helped IC come to the forefront of the foreign language class, many of us having developed telecollaborative projects, connecting our students with native students abroad, with the explicit goal of developing intercultural understanding.

The big question: how to develop intercultural competence?

- Will not happen on its own.
  - IC needs :
    - to be **constructed** around an **approach** and on the basis of **materials -** that need to be selected in terms of relevance to the field of interest
    - to include a high level of **reflection** (including self-reflection)
- This is what the *Cultura* Project offers.
- It also provides a very concrete example of the 5 C's espoused by the ACTFL Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century: communication-cultures-comparisons-connections-communities

The history of Cultura

- Started in 1997, the project - funded by NEH – was initially developed in French, between students taking a French language class (at MIT) and French students taking an English class in a French Institution (University or Grande Ecole)

- **Since then**: the project has since been adapted to other languages and cultures in many different Universities, connecting language students in the US with students in such countries as Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Philippines, Samoa, Spain, etc … Cultura-based projects are also taking place outside of the US: within Europe (ex: between Italy and Turkey and Poland) and between Canada and Morocco

Cultura: the specific context

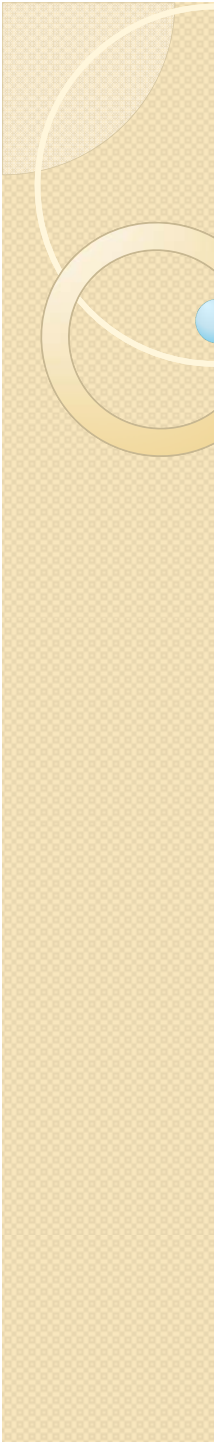- Developed for an intermediate language class – borne out of the desire to reverse the relationship between language and culture and make culture the core of the language class.

- But of course, *Cultura* can be adapted and used at many other levels, from intermediate to advanced (within a language class or a culture class or a Study Abroad class)

Cultura: the goals

- Bring students to **understand:** the attitudes, values, ways of thinking and interacting of those who live in another culture.

- Quite a challenge, as this is the "*hidden dimension*", the "*silent language*" (Edward Hall) of culture.

- Question: how to make that dimension visible?

---> An approach was needed

Cultura: the approach

- Approach: a comparative one, with students comparing what Julie Belz calls "parallel texts" – similar types of documents/texts drawn from two different cultures.

- The juxtaposition process seems very apt in allowing resemblances and differences to clearly emerge.

- Mikhail Bakhtin: *"It is only in the eyes of ANOTHER culture that foreign culture reveals itself fully and profoundly [….] A meaning only reveals its depths once it has encountered and come into contact with another, foreign meaning"*

Why use a comparative approach?

A demonstration ---$\rightarrow$

Coffee cups…
What can you say?

Coffee cups in France and in the US

Making more comparisons…

Coffee cups as seen in a somewhat larger context: can you say a bit more?

The power of juxtaposition

Bahktin's quote again:

"It is only in the eyes of ANOTHER culture that foreign culture reveals itself fully and profoundly [….] A meaning only reveals its depths once it has encountered and come into contact with another, foreign meaning"

Cultura: the underlying pedagogical principles

- Understanding another culture is not simply a matter of accumulating facts and knowledge. Goes way beyond the cultural "capsules" still found in textbooks

- Understanding another culture is not static but entails a dynamic **process** of construction and co-construction

  Ting-Toomey, S and Chung L (2005) Understanding Intercultural Communication

- Learners need to be engaged in a dynamic **process** of discovery, exploration and inquiry - which favors a constructivist approach to learning

- Belief: intercultural competence can be developed in a classroom setting (not just by going abroad)

The *Cultura* set-up: a blend of in-class and on-line interactions

French class at MIT

English class in a French University

A two-layered approach

With students on both sides of the Atlantic, sharing a **common website**:

(1) **analyze and compare** a large variety of digital textual and visual materials from their respective cultures.

(2) **exchange perspectives** about these materials, via on-line discussion forums in order to gain an insider's view of each other's culture
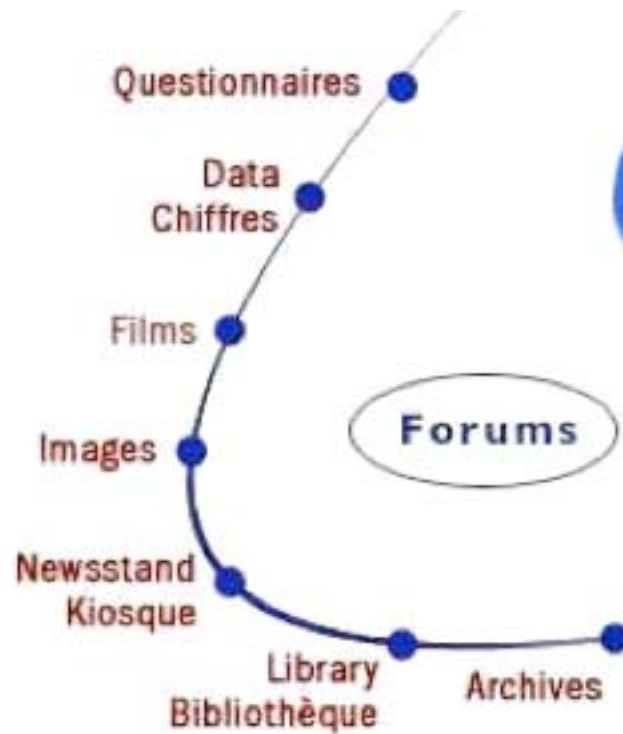
The *Cultura* website and its content

- The Website itself can be viewed as a kind of **itinerary**, which both sets of students follow together. It can be seen as the **road map** for the **collective journey** which students from two different cultures are embarking on together for the duration of a semester.

- A journey that will lead them to gradually **construct together -** around a set of materials - an understanding of each other's culture, with the goal of developing a **deeper understanding of each other's cultural attitudes,** values, representations and frames of references.

THE MATERIALS

Questionnaires

Data
Chiffres

Films

Forums

Images

Newsstand
Kiosque

Library
Bibliothèque

Archives

"La seule véritable exploration,
la seule vraie fontaine de Jouvence,
ne serait pas de visiter des terres
étrangères mais de posséder d'autres
yeux, de regarder l'univers à travers les
yeux des autres"

Marcel Proust

BREAK

The start of the journey and the process

- Students in both classes answer, in their own language, a series of identical questionnaires:
  - A word associations questionnaire
  - A sentence completions questionnaire
  - A hypothetical situations questionnaire

First stage: comparing the answers

The answers to the questionnaires provide the **entry point** into the respective cultures and the **initial basis of the on-line discussion forums.**

Examples:

Word association to the words: suburbs/banlieue

Word association to: individualism/individualisme

Now your turn to analyze the answers to:

- **The words:**
  - Culture
  - Freedom
  - Elite
- **The sentences**
  - A well-behaved child
  - A good boss
  - A rude person
- **The situations**
  - You see a mother in a supermarket slap her child
  - Your are at the movies. Someone sitting right behind you makes loud comments
  - A teller at a bank addresses you with your first name

A view of the classroom

◦ How students share their observations with their own classmates (views of classroom interactions.)

The importance of the classroom

- This is where students share their observations with each other, and start making connections, seeing patterns and developing new insights.

- In this particular instance, they see some striking differences emerge: the emphasis on feelings (in American culture) vs an emphasis on "savoir" (in French culture).

- The boards play an important role in serving as mirrors and bringing patterns to light.

- QUESTIONS?

- LUNCH BREAK

June 1 (afternoon): How students communicate

- The main conduit: the online discussion forums
- *Other possible means of communication:*
  - *Skype*
  - *Chats*
  - *Blogs*
  - *wikis*

Second stage: the online discussion forums

- They are at the <u>heart</u> of the process. This is where the intercultural communication and reflection take place.
- This is where students:
  - share their discoveries and observations on the documents they have compared
  - **ask questions**
  - make hypotheses
  - raise issues
  - answer their partners' questions, in a constant and reciprocal process of inquiry, trying to understand the other's perspective and to explain/reveal their own culture.

Characteristics of the on-line forums

- **Multiple**: there is a forum <u>attached to every word, phrase, document.</u>

- **Collective**: a discussion that unfolds like <u>an open dialogue</u> between students.

- **Asynchronous** (allow for a more reflective and deliberate stance.)

- Led entirely by **students** (they are in charge of the conversations and the teacher never interferes.)

- **Written in the students' "native" language** (this is a foreign **language** class)

A closer look at a discussion forum

- Starting point: the associations to the word "Individualism/individualisme"

- Some excerpts from a forum----->

A dialogue around the word "individualism/individualisme"

Cindy:

"Comparing the two responses to this word were quite shocking. Americans used words such as "freedom" and "uniqueness", which are fairly positive, whereas the French used "self-centered", "alone", which are very negative. Why is individualism viewed in this way in France?"

Sean:

"Why is individualism practically synonym to self-absorption and egoism in France? If not individualism, do you value community? What do you think is the basis behind this mentality?"
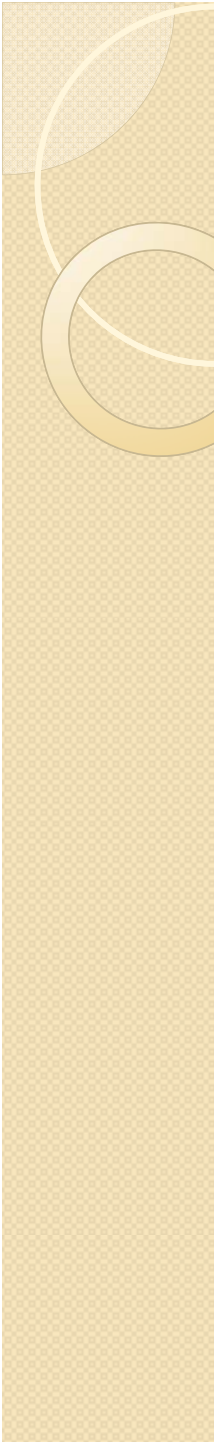
Forum on "Individualism" (continued

Michel:

"La définition du mot individualisme dans le dictionnaire français est: "tendance à privilégier la valeur et les droits de l'individu contre les valeurs et les droits des groupes sociaux." Je crois qu'en France on privilégie beaucoup plus les droits des groupes. L'important ce n'est pas soi, mais la communauté."
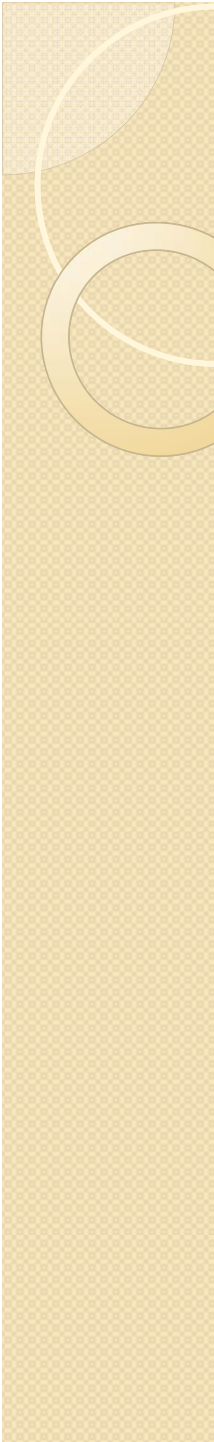
Sean responds

"I think the key word in the French definition of individualism is "contre". For Americans, individualism isn't valuing of the one over the many. Rather it is valuing of the one for the benefit of the many. Individualism is seen as an aspect of society that makes the whole better. See the writings of John Stuart Mill."

Forum on "Individualism" (continued)

Aline:

> *"Merci pour ton explication, Sean. Elle lève le voile sur un malentendu lié au sens même du mot dans nos deux langues. Je pense que ce n'est pas la seule divergence dans nos lexiques respectifs. C'est pour cette raison que je vous propose de mettre sur le forum les définitions officielles (française et américaine) de chacun des termes sur lesquels nous ne nous entendons pas?"*

Forum on "Individualism" - (continued)

Aline (responding to Seans' earlier question: *What do you think is the basis behind this mentality?"*)

"Je pense pouvoir expliquer cela en trois mots se rapportant à des valeurs dans lesquelles nous avons été éduqués dans nos familles et aussi dans l'Education Nationale française: **"Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité".** *Ces trois mots s'inscrivent dans le cadre d'une vie en communauté basée sur l'entraide et la solidarité."*
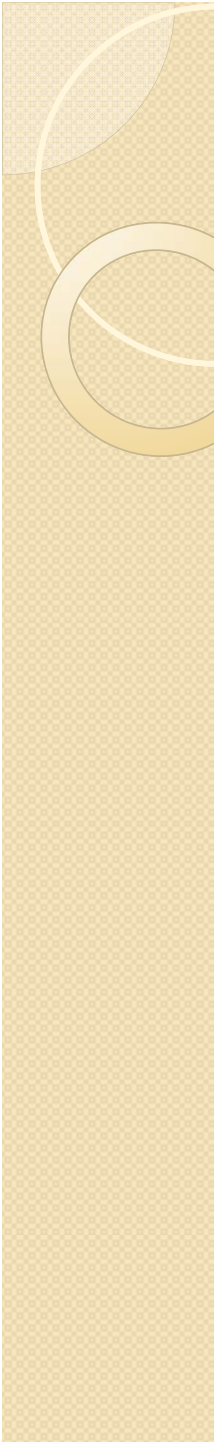
Forum on "Individualism" - (end)

Cindy:

"I feel like our definition of individualism is firmly rooted in American transcendentalist philosophers, like Thoreau and Emerson. From the foundation of their works, came our modern sense of what it means to be an individual."
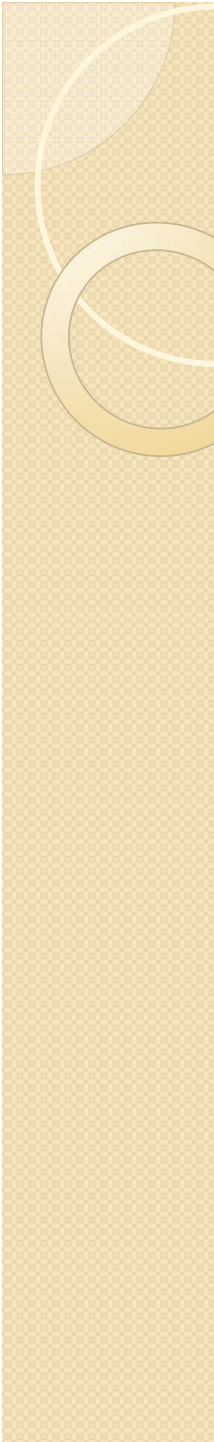
Michel:

[…] Ce débat m'a permis de me rendre compte que l'individualisme était carrément une notion philosophique qui s'est développée spécifiquement aux Etats-Unis… toute une manière de penser qui nous est inconnue…"

Another forum: a conversation around the word "family"

- Initial impetus: the students' comparative analysis of the answers to the word "family".
- Subsequent forum
- Excerpts ----->

Alicia, an MIT student starts the conversation :

- *One big difference that I noticed in reactions to this word was that on the American side, "love" showed up a lot of times. However, on the French side, only 2 people used "amour." I think that in America, there is a strong emphasis placed on cultivating a "loving, caring, supportive family environment" which is why "love" is one of the first words that come to mind. I was wondering, what do the French not use that word much..*

Gabrielle, a French student, responds

- *Il semble effectivement que les Français utilisent moins le mot "amour" dans le test. Peut-être est-ce parce que, justement il n'y a aucune crainte de manquer d'amour, donc ce n'est pas une préoccupation. Cela dit, ce n'est qu'une théorie : je ne sais pas réellement à quoi cela tient. Il faudrait avoir plus de détails sur les contextes familiaux pour avoir une meilleure analyse. Mais cela deviendrait peut-être trop personnel...*

  Translation: *It does seem indeed that the French [students] use the word "amour" less often. The reason, perhaps, is that one is not afraid of lacking love, so it is not a worry. That being said, it is only a theory: I don't really know why. One would need to have more details on specific family contexts to make a better analysis. But that might perhaps become too personal…*

Gaëlle, another French student, chimes in

- *J'ai également remarqué la forte concentration du mot amour dans vos réponses. Peut-être qu'en France, il reste plus implicite, caché, ceci ne signifiant pas alors que l'amour n'est pas présent.*

- **Translation**: *I too noticed the high concentration of the word "love" in your responses. Perhaps in France it is more implicit, hidden, but this does not mean it is not present.*

Howard, an MIT student, asks a good question

- *Is it possible that love has a different connotation in France and other words related to love are being used do describe family on the French side? Words such as "entraide", "bonheur", "soutien", etc.? From my experience, I know that Americans sometimes tend to overuse the word love and the exact meaning really depends on the context.*

Alicia, responding to Gaëlle's comment

- *I think Gaelle touched on something very interesting about love being a more implicit emotion in France than it is in America. Definitely in America, the word "love" is thrown around a lot. It is used a lot as a way of parting, like people will say "I love you" before ending a phone conversation with their boyfriend/girlfriend, parents or siblings, even sometimes with very good friends. This is something that happens very often and we don't think very much of it. I was wondering, what is the case in France? Are the words "amour" or "s'aimer" spoken very often?*

Gaelle tries to respond

- *Cette question est vraiment intéressante. Les Français sont, je le crois, peut-être un peu **plus pudiques**, **plus discrets** sur leurs sentiments amoureux. Je viens de faire un petit sondage dans la classe pour savoir combien d'entre nous disaient parfois "je vous aime" à leurs parents. Or, personne ne semble le faire, moi y compris. Malgré cela, il est certain que cet amour existe.*

  De votre côté, cette habitude (très bonne d'ailleurs) de dire "je t'aime" assez souvent n'entraine t-elle pas une dévalorisation partielle de ce mot? Existe t-il des mots plus forts encore que "love"?

  Translation: *This question is really interesting. The French, I believe, are a little more modest, more discreet about their feelings of love. I just did a little survey in class to find out how many of us say "I love you" to their parents. Well, nobody seems to do it, myself included. In spite of that, it is clear that that love does exist.*

  Now, doesn't this (actually very good) habit of yours to say "I love you" quite often partially devalue the word? Are there words that are stronger still than "love"?

Kezia, an MIT student, is confused..

- *Interesting comment, Gaelle. I always thought that the French were more open about their emotions. The French always seem to be kissing and hugging each other. Whereas in America, people tend to touch less when they're in public. Some people even frown upon couples kissing in front of others and mothers breast-feeding their babies. Why do you say the French are more discreet?*

To which Gaëlle responds…

- *Les Francais sont plus pudiques quant à leurs sentiments, le fait de les clamer haut et fort, mais il est effectivement fréquent d'apercevoir des couples s'embrasser dans la rue [..]*

- **Translation**: *The French are more modest in terms of expressing their feelings loud and clear, but it is indeed commonplace to see couples kissing in the streets.*

Let's now take a step back and..

… look at some of the key components of this discussion - which, in my opinion, constitute "real" intercultural communication.

Key components

Students here:

- **share observations** and reactions (*One big difference I noticed*)

- **piggyback** on s.o.else's observation (*il semble effectivement..*)

- **make hypotheses** (*Peut-être que..is it possible that?*)

Some key components (continued)

- **ask questions**: *why do the French not use that word much.. Are the words "amour" or "s'aimer" spoken very often? Are there other words? Existe t-il des mots plus forts encore que "love"?*

- **acknowledge the others' postings**, going further: "*Cette question est vraiment intéressante*". "*I think that Gaelle touched on sth interesting… about love being more implicit*" (in the process acknowledging that she thought it was an interesting observation and perspective)

Some key components (continued)

Students:

- **provide pertinent, real life illustrations** *(in America, the word "love" is thrown around a lot. It is used a lot as a way of parting, like people will say "I love you" before ending a phone conversation)*

- **take initiatives**: *(Je viens de faire un petit sondage dans la classe ..)*

- **respond to questions**

Some key components (continued)

- **They challenge** the other "*Cette habitude (très bonne d'ailleurs) de dire "je t'aime" assez souvent n'entraine t-elle pas une dévalorisation partielle de ce mot?)*

- **allude to the context** (*I know that Americans sometimes tend to overuse the word love and the exact meaning really depends on the context*)

- **confront clichés and raise paradoxes** (*I always thought that the French..The French always seem to be kissing and hugging each other…Why do you say the French are more discreet?*

Finally …

- Students <u>learn</u> some key cultural concepts, such as:
  - the different culturally imbedded ways of expressing emotions (saying and verbalizing vs showing and demonstrating)
  - Notions of implicit vs explicit,

  both being fundamental culturally driven values (values they will revisit when looking at other documents)

- In the process, students also learn a lot of language and get to see first hand how the French structure their arguments

An overall definition of "real" (intercultural) communication

Taken from a World Bank blog:

- *"Most dictionaries and basic textbooks define communication basically as "the act of sending messages or, more specifically as a sender **transmitting messages** through channels to one or more receivers [..]*

- *BUT… communication needs to be seen as **a two-way process** not used exclusively to send message or pass information, but **to explore, discover and generate knowledge** and consensus. Interestingly enough, the semantic root of the word communication is the same as in communion and community and it is about **sharing** [..]*

- *It would imply that communication **should not be restricted to informing people** and persuading them to change certain attitudes or behaviors, but it should be used also **to facilitate dialogue, build trust and ensure mutual understanding"***

The key to a successful forum, my opinion…..

- Is where participants communicate not to speak directly to each other, but to talk about a third object (= the materials), through which they will reveal their culture and themselves.

It is important to realize that..

Not everyone has the same opinion

- Neither within the French group or the American group (many diverging views), even regarding the notion of individualism

- Example (from an MIT student): *"As has been said, we obviously have very different ideas of what the word means. MIT students in particular tend to be the people who were the outsiders in their high school, because they did better in classes and sometimes weren't so popular. I think that among some other groups in America, individualism is not seen so positively. There are many stories of people who have different opinions, different fashions, etc, being considered wrong or dangerous by their communities (schools, towns, and so on). So I don't think that every American would agree that individualism is a good characteristic, even though it is very important to me."*

It is important to realize that.. (continued)

- Constant references are made by students themselves about the necessity to differentiate (ex: MIT vs other schools; New England vs the South or California; big city vs small town, etc.) or to pay attention to different social milieux (ex: suburbs vs inner city).

- Students do not offer a monolithic view, but rather a varied kaleidoscopic portrait of the culture (we encourage them to point out differences based upon their experiences.)

The role of foreign students

- There are quite a few foreign students in our classes who play a very important part.
- Other voices, who offer yet different perspectives which they share (they identify themselves)
- As both outsiders and insiders, they often play the role of mediators (addressing themselves both to the Americans and the French; explaining what their classmates may mean), etc..

What about online confrontation?

…. Confrontation is often seen as the reason for "failed communication" (often avoided/ a cultural trait) but we do encourage students to raise what they see as contradictions and look at them squarely in the face. We suggest to our students that they **NOT** avoid conflict at all cost.

The end goal of these on-line discussions is not to create a consensus among all students but rather to be a forum where issues are constantly raised and debated at every turn.

Forums dedicated to paradoxes and contradictions

- We feel that creating a forum dedicated to raising paradoxes and contradictions is important, as it truly encourages the students to probe further and further and think more critically about the other culture.

Example: **Forum on paradoxes and contradictions**

This forum is for (1) raising what you see as paradoxes in the other culture (which you have discovered across several questionnaire answers and/or the comments on the forums) and (2) for offering possible hypotheses and interpretations to your transatlantic partners' own queries.

A student's view

- *"Paradoxes are hard to come up with, but once you stumble upon one, they are pretty easy to write about. These discussions are among the more interesting because in this topic, the students are synthesizing more new ideas."*

Example 1

- An American/Roumanian student at MIT (in response to the situation where they see a student cheating at an exam):

  "I think there is a great difference between denouncing a Jew in WWII and denouncing a student who is cheating on an exam. Jews were innocent people and the treatment they received was immoral (to say the least). However, the punishment of a student who is copying is not immoral. I think it is unacceptable to tolerate cheating. If an exam is important, then people should take action when they see somebody attempting to cheat […]

  In most discussions in the forums so far, you (the French students) have advocated for social justice, yet you inexplicably tolerate being cheated …"

Example 2

- Regina:

"To add to Irene's comment # 17. I'm surprised politeness is claimed to be the most important word in the French language. Is it really important to the French to be polite to strangers? The commonest complaint I've heard about French people is that they are sarcastic and rude. I've witnessed a lot of the sarcasm in the course of this forum and a little bit of the rudeness. I'm having a little trouble relating French politeness and their sharp sarcasm. Could someone help me out?".

Assessment of forums by a student

- *"The forums were an invaluable part of my French course experience. It was good to interact with peers in another country and gain insight into a different cultural perspective on common themes and motifs. Through the word associations forum I was able to get a glimpse of the thought processes of my French peers. It's interesting to see how ideas are connected within the minds of individuals in another culture, in comparison to my own, so to better understand the other culture"*

The key to a successful intercultural forum in my opinion….

- ….the participants communicate not to talk directly about each other but to talk about a third object (= the materials they are discussing), through which they will reveal their culture and reveal themselves.

# Rationale for using one's native language in the forums

- No linguistic dominance by any group (the groups can be of very different level) or any person within a group (everyone is on exactly the same footing)
- Students can express their thoughts fully and are able to tackle complex subjects (not limited by their linguistic abilities)
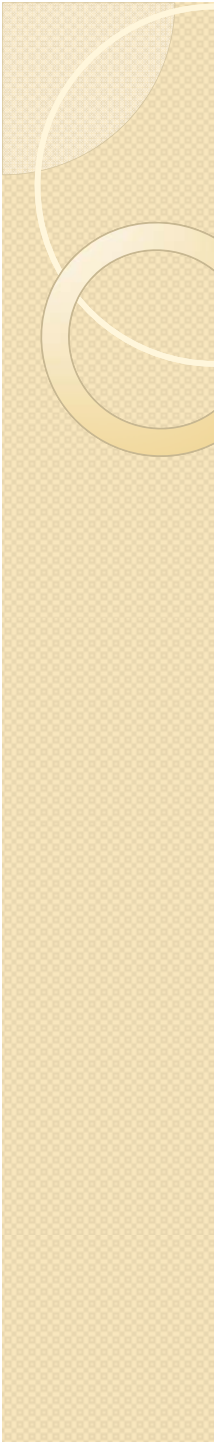
In return for writing in English..

- Students read completely authentic French/Spanish/German, etc. *Imagine the opposite!*
- They can appropriate the other language
- The differences in discourse become a new cultural object

Important to note that they speak nothing but French in the classroom and in their written work.

A comparison of the use of the the 1st person
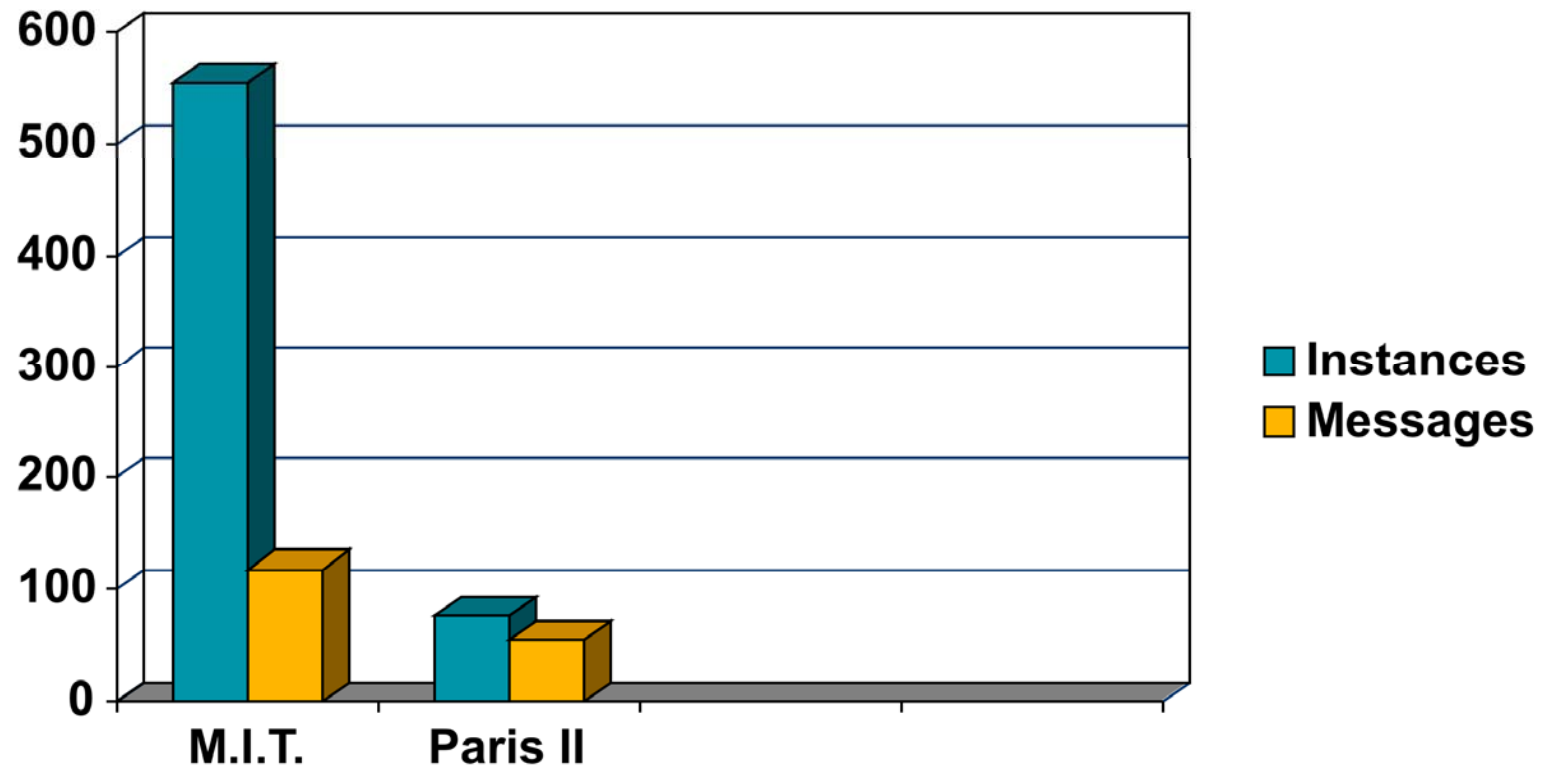
An American student explains what individualism means to him

- John:

  Individualism also stands for original thinking and creative ideas. As an artist, I am always trying to be an individual, and I work for a personal and unique style.

An American student explains

- **Carol K M - 08:10pm Mar 7, 1999** (#4 of 15) **Individualism and Self-Esteem**

- *As an American, I feel that individualism is very important. [..] Unlike the French, I don't view individualism as a solitary and selfish quality. Being an individual helps me to help others because all people view things differently. Sharing one's insight with others benefits everyone. Being different doesn't make me feel lonely or alone. Knowing that I'm happy with who I am boosts my self-esteem.*

A French student responds

- **Eric B- 11:54am Mar 8, 1999**
- *L'individualisme pour les Français…[…]*

  En France, l'individualisme est perçu comme la volonté de faire passer ses propres intérêts avant ceux des autres. C'est de ce point de vue là qu'il renvoie à la notion d'égoïsme. D'autre part, un individualiste est perçu comme un marginal, c'est-à-dire quelqu'un qui ne sait pas vivre en société ou qui n'aime pas la société, qui préfère être seul, et c'est pour ça qu'individualisme renvoie à la notion de solitude….

He continues

- *Je me suis demandé si le sens que les Français donnent au mot individualisme était bien la définition exacte du mot. Il se trouve que oui... le dictionnaire définit l'individualisme comme : "1- Attitude visant à affirmer la prééminence de l'individu sur des groupes sociaux et à ne considérer que son intérêt ou ses droits propres. 2-Tendance à s'affirmer indépendamment des autres (synonyme NON-CONFORMISME)." La question que je me pose maintenant est : Quelle définition donne le dictionnaire anglais pour individualism ?*

The differences in discourses…

…. can become a great source of cultural misunderstanding

It would be easy to conclude, based on discourse only, that Americans are self-centered and the French aloof. That is a difference in discourse style only…

The rest of the journey (continuation of the process)

Other materials to be compared and discussed

- National French and American opinion polls on a variety of issues
- Films (comparing French films to their American remakes)
- Media (ex: comparing the *New York Times* and *Le Monde*)
- Literary and historical texts (ex: comparing *The Bill of Rights* and *La Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme*)
- Images (with students selecting topics to illustrate and downloading images on the site) ----->

The reason for this module

Comparing national opinion polls

- The goal: enabling students to place their initial observations in a much broader national context

- What students do: they research and come back to class with one or two opinion polls on a topic of their choice but related to some of the issues explored through the questionnaires (ex: family; work; concepts of authority, politeness, notions of freedom, respect, etc..), which they share in class and then on the corresponding forum

The film module: the remakes

- Comparing remakes provides another medium through which to look at the cultures (characters/narration, etc..).

- The changes made in the remakes always reveal underlying cultural traits of the second culture

- A look at an ABC broadcast about *The Simpsons*

Comparing films (and their remakes)

- <u>A look at the film module</u>
  - List of remakes
  - French and American articles/reviews about the remakes
- What students do: The French and American students watch the movies independently then exchange their observations on the forums -→

Forums based on the films

- Students discuss general differences as well as specific scenes
- Example of discussion about the scene between Jacques/Jack and his mother.
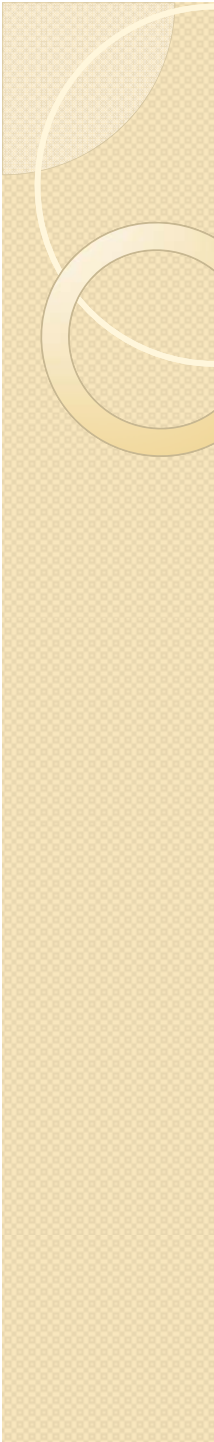
Illustration of how students put together their information..

- … and make connections from one document to another trying to understand and make sense of what they are seeing.

- -----→ Excerpt from a forum about the very different ways in which the police was treated in the French version (where the main protagonists help the drug dealers escape from the police) and the American version (where they help the police catch the drug dealers).

An on-line discussion forum on the film..

Allison L W -

Hi Sébastien. I am surprised to hear that you think that the French don't accept authority well, and that is why you think the men didn't cooperate in the French movie. In the word associations for "police" and "authority", the French responses were much more positive than the American. Also, I was looking at the opinion polls on the Cultura page, and one poll asked French people if they had faith in the police... 70% said yes. There seems to be a contradiction here... What are your thoughts on this?

Response by the French student

- Fabrice G -

  Bonjour!. La contradiction entre le sondage qui montre que 70% des Français ont confiance en leur police nationale, et le fait que dans le film français la police se fait doubler, est caractéristique du fait que les Français font toujours le contraire de ce qu'ils disent en public. On craint l'autorité, donc on dit qu'on est confiant en elle. Mais derrière son dos on n'y pense plus, ou pire on essaye de la contourner.

- *N'est ce pas le contraire aux Etats Unis, la police n'est-elle pas moins bien perçue ? en tout cas on pourrait le croire en regardant les réponses américaines au questionnaire sur l'association de mots. Mais en réalité on craint son pouvoir et donc on collabore avec elle.*

The Library

- It provides access to a number of [primary texts](#) from both cultures as well as texts written by historians, authors, anthropologists, philosophers about the other culture, providing "regards croisés".
- These texts provide yet another lens through which to compare the two cultures.
- Put at the end for a reason

The Image module

- Different from the other one, as students themselves will upload their own materials
- Adds yet another important dimension : a visual one.
  - Students, in cross-Atlantic dyads, choose topics to illustrate their respective realities
  - will comment on images individually (thanks the m:media tool)
- These images provide yet a new object of analysis, leading students to develop insights into the cultural meanings of everyday objects or products (ex: ice cream or coffee)
- ----> The Image module

Examples from preceding semesters

- Comparing advertisements

In order to access the exchange of photos, click on Images, then on M:media
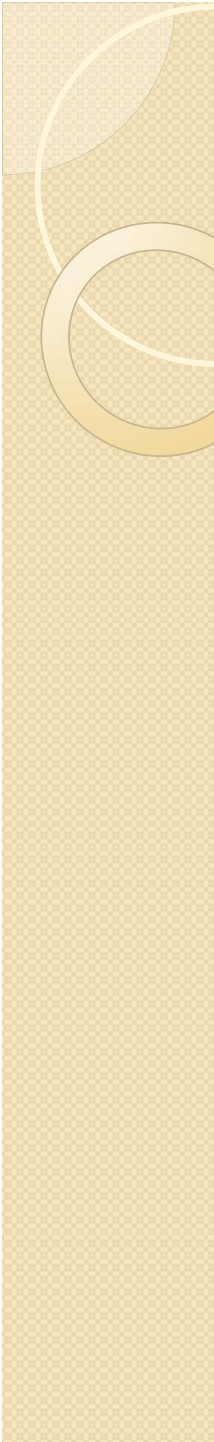
  - *login: gilberte*
  - *Password: odessa*

  - See Spring 07: beer: Coors girl
    - bière 1664 (au delà des mots)
    - Heineken (Bague d'Heineken)
    - Beer: Heineken at the beach 21-40

- Comparing daily life:
  - See Photo projects Fall 05: coffee (early morning coffee/café dans ma chambre)
  - Photo projects Spring 04: a typical day (food trucks/une journée typique (notre lieu de déjeuner/notre repas. P. 2)

An overview of the overall process – in and outside of class

- Students work in a series of stages:
  - work individually outside of class (analyzing the materials)
  - share their observations with their own classmates in the classroom (views of classroom interactions.)
  - write individual comments in the online discussion forums, outside of class, participating in the collective discussions.
  - bring back to class comments from the French students and discuss them in class.
- They then analyze a new set of materials, continuing their journey of exploration.

An animated view of the process
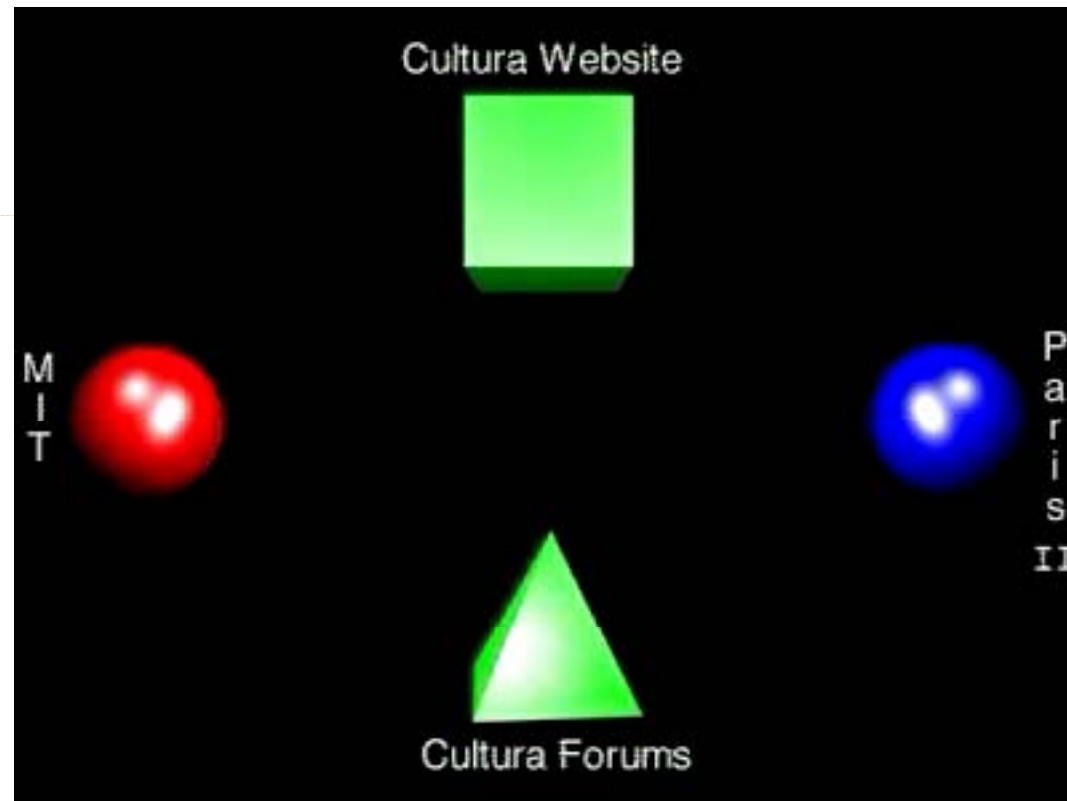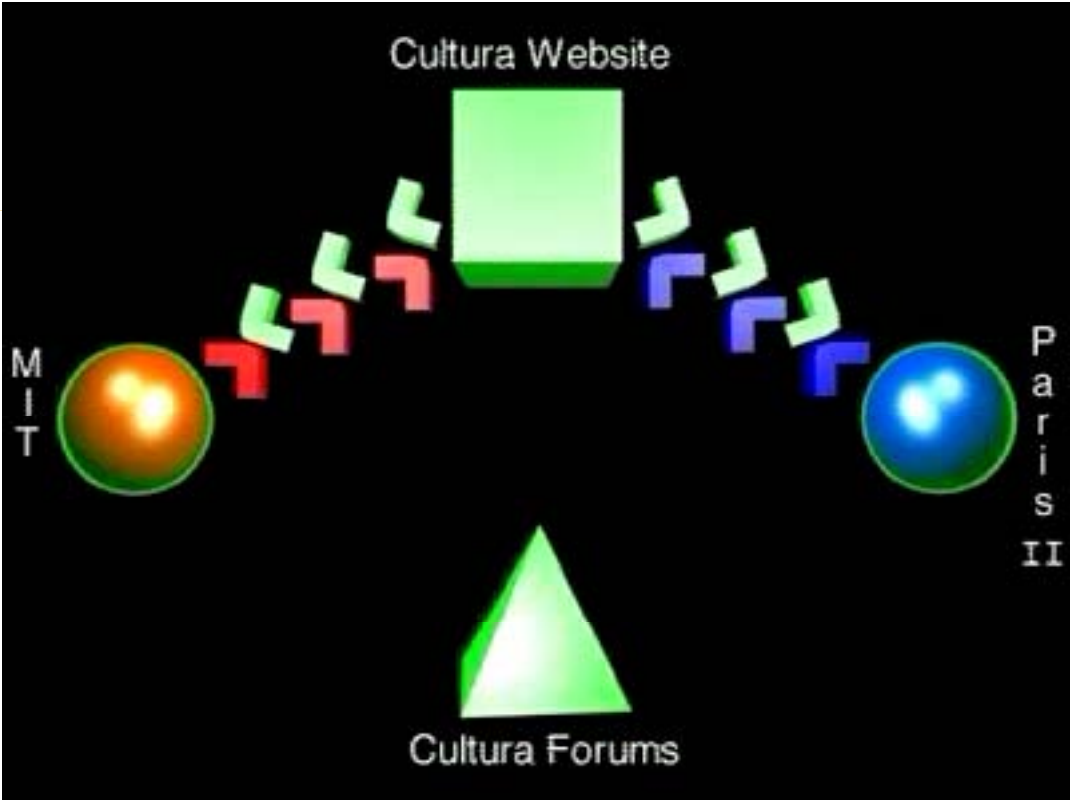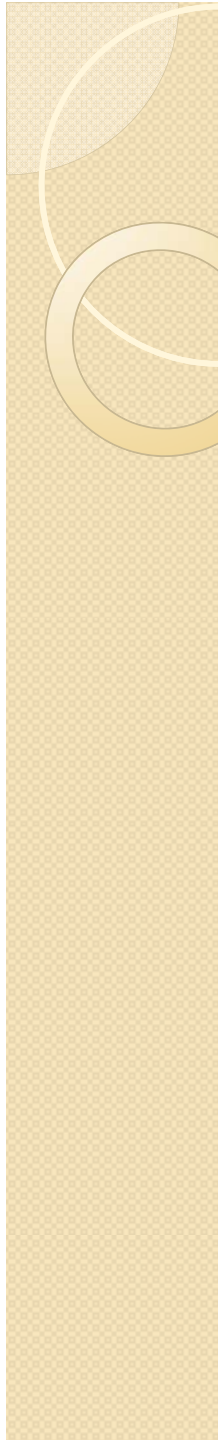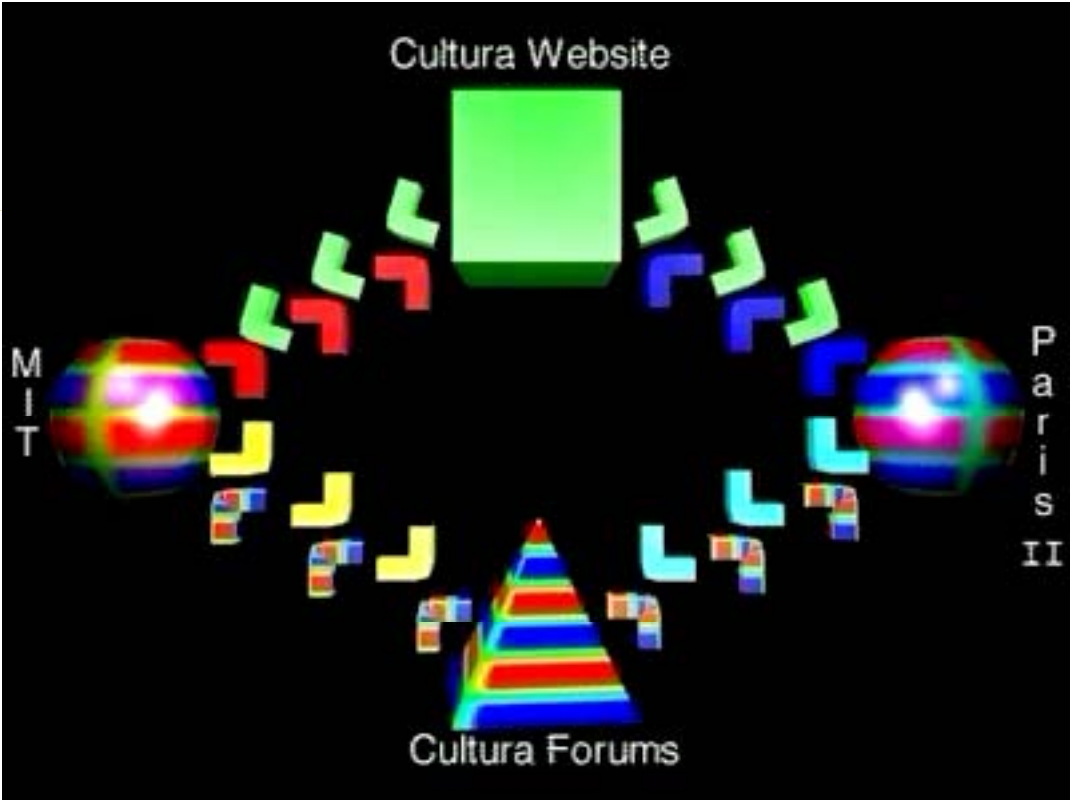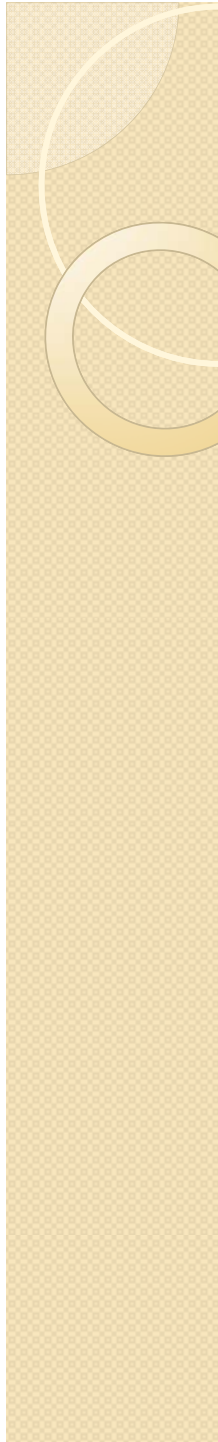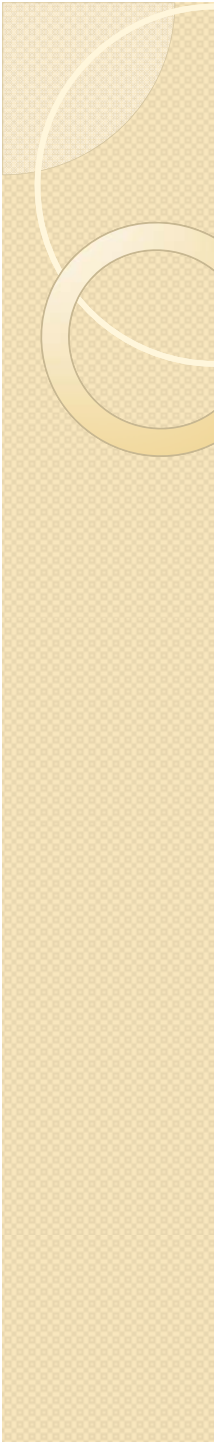
Is there an end to the journey?

- Not really

- The **dynamic process** in which students are involved requires them to:
  - keep suspending judgments about the other culture and be ready to constantly revise them, question them, expand them, and refine them, in the light of new materials and new perspectives.

Discovering the other also invariably means…

… discovering oneself. That is what the journey also entails.

"*Those who try to better understand the other "will also be able to have a better understanding and mastery of their own values and cultural behaviors - after seeing them through the mirror of another culture.*"

Translated from Addallah-Pretceille, M. "Relations et apprentissages interculturels", Armand Colin, Paris, 1995

Example

- In reaction to a posting by Martin, one of her classmates who had written: "*I tend to notice that many Americans try to avoid confrontation as much as possible. While deep down it would really bother me to be cut in line by a complete stranger, I don't know them and I can't imagine starting a verbal confrontation with them*", Another MIT student wrote: "*Perhaps Martin has made a good point? I tend to want to avoid confrontation when I can (without, of course, causing myself harm), and I thought it was due to my personality. But perhaps Americans in general tend to want to avoid confrontation unless absolutely necessary*".

- QUESTIONS? BREAK?

Where does the study of language fit in?

- *Cultura* is our textbook – a "live" textbook that provides raw materials not only in terms of content but also in terms of language learning.

- Every document is a source of authentic language:
  - the answers to the questionnaires: source of (1) very authentic and current vocabulary and (2) grammar:
    - Ex: noun formation (with the answers to the words); relative clauses (with the answers to the sentences); object pronouns (with the situations), etc.
  - the forums: source of colloquialisms and phrases;

Language - vocabulary

◦ Acronyms: *HLM, RER, 93* (answers to *Banlieue*) *CDI, CDD*, *Elysée*

◦ Many cultural references: the French inquire about *popo*, *doughnuts* while the Americans wonder about *flics*

Language - semantic networks

- Category one is **bonheur** :
  - *"plaisir, s'épanouir, intéressant, rend heureux, que j'aime faire, enrichissant"*

- Category two is **salaire**
  - *"rémunérateur, permet de vivre décemment, bien rétribué"*

Language - registers

- The issue of registers often emerges spontaneously as a topic of discussion in the forums

- Example: concerning the situation at the movies. In the responses, many French students wrote: *"je leur demande de se taire"*

- In the subsequent forum ---->

Forum about registers: a question

- An MIT student asks:

  "*A lot of Lille-3 students responded with "je leur demande de se taire" or an equivalent. Is this polite in France? I cannot tell, since there is no adverb. In English, to ask someone to be quiet does not have a negative connotation, where to tell someone does.*"

The answer

- To which the French student responds:

  "Le fait de dire : "je lui demande de se taire" ne donne pas de précision sur la manière dont on demanderait à cette personne de se taire: ça pourrait être: "tais-toi" ou "taisez-vous" ou "taisez-vous s'il vous plait", "est-ce que vous pouvez vous taire s'il vous plait"... et en dernier recours, "la ferme" ou "ta gueule" dans le cas où on est carrément excédé!"

Language - Grammar

- Work on:
  - The comparative forms (when counting answers, using statistics, etc.)
  - The relative pronouns (with the second questionnaire that focuses on definitions.)
    - Ex: good job/bon emploi : pronoms relatifs: *dans lequel* on s'épanouit, *qui* permet de s'épanouir, *où* l'on peut s'épanouir, *pour lequel* je me lève chaque matin
  - The different object pronouns: *je <u>lui</u> dis, je <u>leur</u> signale, je <u>le</u> fusille du regard,* etc.
  - The forums can be used to review ways of expressing an opinion, an agreement, a disagreement (subjunctive vs indicative) etc.

Language : the speech acts

- The forums provide an inexhaustible source of speech acts:
  - ways to express:
    - an opinion
    - an agreement
    - a disagreement,
    - a hypothesis, etc.

Language: the discourse markers

- *L'individualisme pour les Français…[…]*
  En France, l'individualisme est perçu comme la volonté de faire passer ses propres intérêts avant ceux des autres. C'est de ce point de vue là qu'il renvoie à la notion d'égoisme. D'autre part, un individualiste est perçu comme un marginal, c'est-à-dire quelqu'un qui ne sait pas vivre en société ou qui n'aime pas la société, qui préfère être seul, et c'est pour ça qu'individualisme renvoie à la notion de solitude….

- QUESTIONS?

The new pedagogies: new roles for teachers and learners

- The biggest novelty for teachers is that they are no longer the sole source of information and the sole authority but are opening the classroom to multiple other voices

- Both an advantage and a disadvantage:
  - Advantages: they don't know to have all the answers and it allows for a plurality of answers.
  - Disadvantages: the teacher now has to manage this new environment and that other community of students.

His/her main role is to create tasks….

…. that will scaffold the process of intercultural learning, ensuring that students gradually build their understanding of the other culture and in helping along the process of co-construction.

With the integration of the virtual online community, the teacher is not the only voice of authority in the classroom. Our main role has changed: it is no longer to just impart cultural knowledge but to give our students center stage and provide them with opportunities to share what they have learnt and discovered, to reflect, discuss, confront points of view, their knowledge enriched by the contributing voices of the native students across the ocean.

Their main role is to provide **tasks** that will achieve that goal.

First task: Explain what such a course is all about

- Explain the goals and the pedagogy so that students adhere to the project.
- Very important!
- Possible preliminary activity: the Barnga card game

Example of specific task:

Providing specific instructions for analyzing the answers to the questionnaires – analysis sheets that will guide their observations

1. *Write down the words and expressions that appear the most often in both languages; organize them into categories.*

- *2. Are the connotations negative, positive or neutral?*

- *3. Write your observations, hypotheses, and questions.* **These comments will be used as a starting point for the classroom discussions and for the forums**

Example of specific task

Clarifying the function of the forums and giving specific instructions

- Les forums vous permettent d'échanger vos observations et points de vue avec vos partenaires pour expliquer vos façons de voir et essayer de mieux comprendre les leurs. Vous allez:
  - poster vos remarques et observations personnelles
  - proposer des hypothèses
  - poser des questions aux étudiants français dans le but d'en savoir plus et d'éclairer un point ou une autre.
  - répondre à leurs questions.

- Adding new forums as the need arises (cf current events/ coffee break)

Example of specific task

About exploring the surveys and statistics on the website

- *Vous allez maintenant élargir votre horizon et chercher **un sondage national** sur les attitudes des Français à propos d'un sujet abordé dans les questionnaires.*

- Regardez la liste de sites page 2 pour trouver un sondage à propos d'un sujet qui vous intéresse. Imprimez-le, soulignez les parties qui vous intéressent et **apportez-le en classe**. Soyez prêt à dire si ce sondage: 1. Confirme ou contredit ce que vous avez découvert à travers les réponses aux trois questionnaires et les forums 2. Révèle une attitude qui vous surprend.

Example of specific task
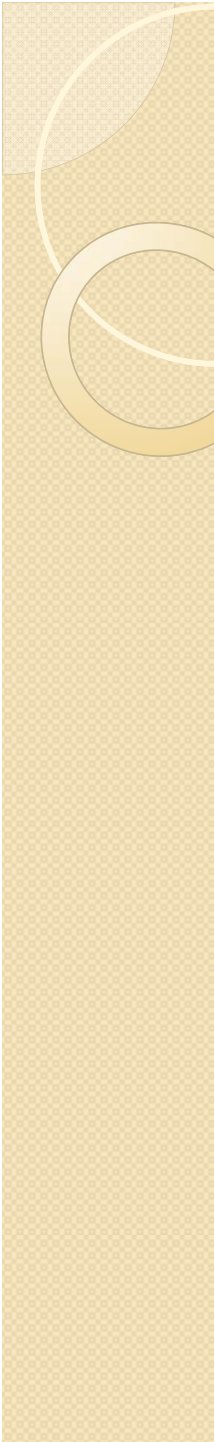
Providing specific prompts about the forum on paradoxes

- **Teacher's prompt**: "*This forum is for (1) raising what you see as paradoxes in the other culture (which you have discovered across several questionnaire answers and/or the comments on the forums) and (2) for offering possible hypotheses and interpretations to your transatlantic partners' queries.*"

Other task: connecting the forums to the classroom

- Design activities that will ensure that the online discussion forums are integrated and brought back into the classroom, so as to bring the voices of the French students alive

- Example of task: *Go back into the forum and bring back to class one or two comments from the French students that you find either illuminating or intriguing or surprising, and be ready to share it with your classmates)*

The role of the teacher in the classroom

- The role of the classroom is crucial:
  - This is where students <u>share their discoveries</u> with each other (about what they have observed from reading documents or texts presented on the Web or from reading the comments written by their counterparts in the on-line discussion forums), thus expand their individual knowledge.
  - This is also the place where they not only share their newly found knowledge, develop new insights, raise new questions and paradoxes, arrive at new interpretations, and constantly refine their understanding of the other culture, trying to put the cultural puzzle together.

It does not mean that the teacher does not say anything.

- It is important for her/him to also take center stage in order to:
  - clarify a particular misunderstanding (cf "*éduquer*"),
  - bring students' attention to a particular document that he/she thinks is particularly culturally informative (cf to whom and how to say bonjour) or which he/she think provides a lot of information that may be opaque to the student or may bring particularly interesting cultural and/or linguistic information
  - can bring/show outside documents that might illustrate or illuminate a conversation (cf la gifle)

From *Le Monde de l'Education* (May 5, 2010)

Excerpt from article in *Le Monde* (April 14, 2010)

- Cf le mot "care"

- *"La société du bien-être passe aussi par une évolution des rapports des individus entre eux. Il faut passer d'une société individualiste à une société du "care", selon le mot anglais que l'on pourrait traduire par "soin mutuel" : la société prend soin de vous, mais vous devez aussi prendre soin des autres et de la société."* Pour la première fois, une responsable politique français introduit la notion anglo-saxonne du *care* dans le débat public, notion longtemps débattue outre-Atlantique.

- *Care* est un mot qui appartient au vocabulaire le plus quotidien des Anglo-Saxons. Ne se quittent-ils pas le plus souvent en lançant un *"take care"* ("prends soin de toi"), qui vaut un "au revoir" ? Ne disent-ils pas aussi très communément *"I don't care"* ("Je m'en fiche") ? Il appartient au champ de la réflexion philosophique et politique depuis le siècle des Lumières, développé d'abord par trois philosophes écossais, Francis Hutcheson, David Hume et Adam Smith, qui ont très tôt réfléchi aux formes nouvelles de la "sympathie", au sens du souci de l'autre.

Other types of documents

- Reason vs feelingshttp://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/25/opinion/25brooks.html

- Survey on the French motto: Liberté/Egalité/Fraternité
  http://www.prs31.com/spip.php?article1890

New roles for learners

Cultura offers a constructivist approach to learning - where students themselves, with the help of their teacher, co-construct their understanding of the foreign culture

The constructivist classroom

- *"Constructivism is a philosophy of learning founded on the premise that, by reflecting on our experiences, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in. ... [...] The purpose of learning is for an individual to construct his or her own meaning, not just memorize the "right" answers and regurgigate someone else's meaning...The focus in on making connections between facts and fostering new understanding in students. Instructors tailor their teaching strategies to student responses and encourage students to analyze, interpret, and predict information. Teachers also rely heavily on open-ended questions and promote extensive dialogue among students'.*"

  "In Search Of Understanding: The Case For Constructivist Classrooms, Jacqueline and Martin Brooks

In such a classsrom…

- As teachers, we are no longer there to only make sure that the students have seen, understood what **we** want them to know and understand, but to have them tell us what **they** have seen, discovered, learnt.

A new kind of classroom…

….Where the focus is on the **process** and where students themselves, become like "cultural archeologists", who try to put the cultural puzzle together --->

The cultural Puzzle
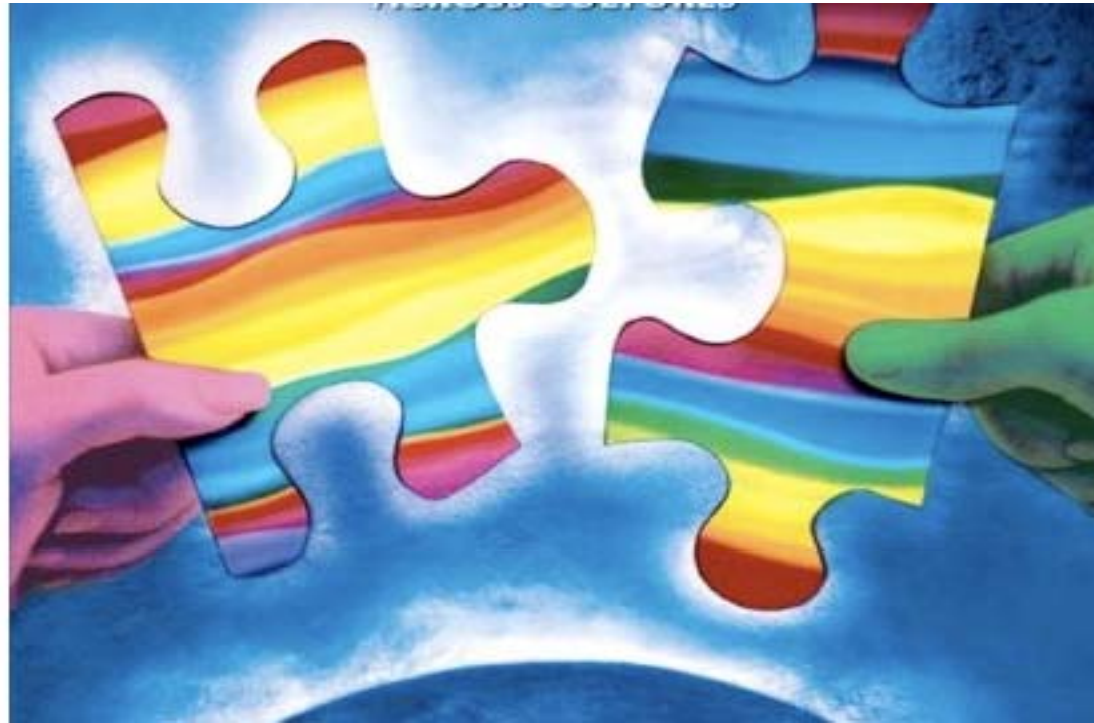
The classroom discussions..
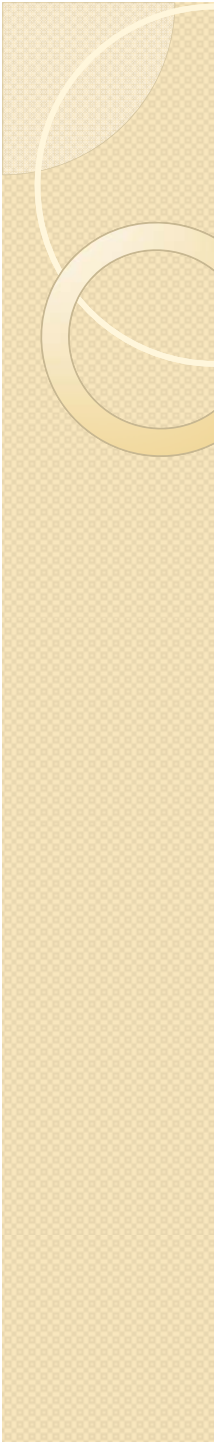
- .. In turn generate more materials for the forums.
- The forums both enrich and are enriched by the classroom discussions. They are inextricably linked.

The students' active role...

… is often mentioned by the students in their end-of-semester evaluations.

- *" I enjoyed it. It was a fun way to learn about French culture, rather than the typical history lectures and other things of the sort. It's more interactive, current, and thus more interesting, for me at least"*

- *"This method of learning about French culture is very interactive and thus it is easier, as well as more fun to learn"*

Then, of course, the question of evaluation..

- Evaluation: crucial but difficult

- Biggest question and challenge: How do you assess process?

- Appropriate tools need to be used

What to assess?

- Let's start by looking at Byram's **categories** of intercultural competence.
  - 1. The *attitude* factor which includes curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own"
  - 2. *Knowledge* of one's self and others = knowledge of the rules for individual and social interaction both in one's one culture and in the other culture.
  - 3. *Skills*
  - *Skills of interpreting and relating*, describes an individual's ability to interpret, explain, and relate events and documents from another culture to one's own culture.
  - *skills of discovery and interaction,* allows the individual to acquire "new knowledge of culture and cultural practices,"
  - 4. C*ritical cultural awareness* http://inet.dpb.dpu.dk/infodok/sprogforum/Espr18/byram.html 2000

How to assess?

- How do you **measure** those attitudes, the knowledge acquired, the skills developed and the notion of cultural awareness?

- What tools are most appropriate?

Some appropriate tools -

- **Portfolios**: the tool of choice for assessing a process
- They are the best tool for:
  - Capturing what students have seen/observed
  - Capturing what connections they have made
  - Capturing what they have learnt
  - And generating self reflection (crucial)
- In Cultura, we use(d) weekly "carnets de bord" (or logbooks).

Sample of questions asked

What "phrases" did you analyze this past week?

- What did you learn (from comparing the answers and the postings of the French students)?

- What questions did you ask? What comments did you make

- What questions were answered?

- Did some answers surprise you (contradicted or reinforced a cliché?)

- Your personal journal

Also…

- ***Carnets de découverte*** (designed by Virginie Trémion, a doctoral student from the U. of Lille who spent a semester coming to every class and interviewing students)
Two items:
Ce que j'ai découvert
Ce qui m'étonne et pourquoi?

Example of a student "*Carnet de découverte*"

- *Today we analyzed our own and the Polytechniciens' responses to various situations. I personally was very surprised by the fact that Americans would not mind if a bank teller addressed them by their first name. […] And I know that it was not long ago in the U.S. that addressing an unfamiliar client by their first name was considered very rude. Why has this changed in America and why are Americans adapting to it so readily ? Could it be that we are simply more lax about politeness and changes in ideas/conventions/traditions regarding politeness while the French are more stalwart and more willing to defend established norms of politeness ?*

Carnet de découverte

- *It surprised me also that the French students said that they would speak up in the theater more than we American students do. I would think it would surprise them too, as Americans are often seen as very individualistic, blunt (francs), and set on getting their way (including getting someone who is annoying them to be quiet immediately). Again, I wonder what the cause of this difference is and how we can extrapolate to other situations (i.e. when can we predict that the French will be more or less outspoken ?). It could be that the French become more indignant about politeness than Americans.*

Mark of a "good" intercultural log book

- Reflection…
- Reflection..
- Reflection..

But..

- Extremely time-consuming

  But possible to simplify:

- Now: *Notez ici 5 choses que vous avez apprises/ découvertes/observées jusqu'à présent sur les Francais et/ou la culture française (les attitudes, façons de faire et/ou de penser des Français) à travers les réponses aux deux premiers questionnaires de Cultura et les forums sur ces deux questionnaires. Donnez des exemples qui vous ont permis de faire ces observations (= où en voit-on l'illustration?)*

Other possible tools for assessment: synthetizing

- Example of assignment: Une première synthèse

*En vous appuyant sur les réponses françaises aux trois questionnaires (les associations de mots, les phrases à terminer et les situations) et les commentaires des Français sur les forums, choisissez un concept qui vous paraît **central** à la culture française. Dites dans quels différents contextes et sous quelles différentes formes ce concept apparaît. Y a t-il des cas des situations, des exemples qui semblent le contredire, ou au contraire semble-t-il être une constante? Elaborez et donnez des exemples précis.*

Accompagnez votre essai d'un diagramme montrant les différentes connections.

Example of a "schéma"

- [Raluca's "dessin"](#)
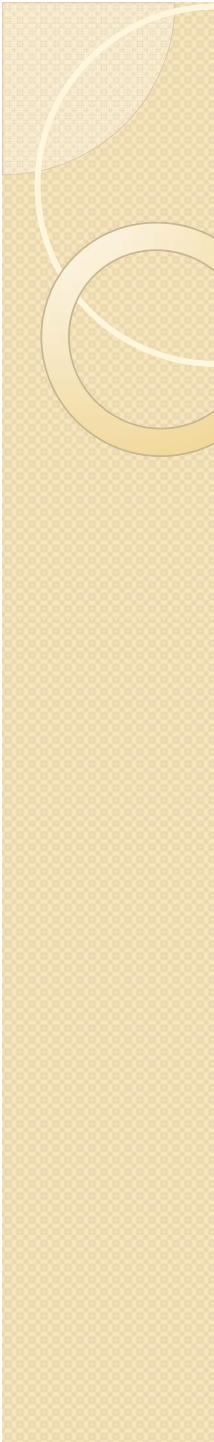
Type of essay titles by students

- La notion de respect dans la société francaise
- L'importance de l'égalité dans la culture française
- Le concept de "Savoir" dans la culture francaise
- Le rapport à l'argent
- L'importance de la vie privée
- Le rôle de l'individu
- ## L'importance des règles
- Le conformisme et l'anti-conformisme
- La France si douce, mais si aigre
- La notion d'ordre

Student class presentations

- **About the comparison of the films**
- ANALYSE COMPARATIVE DE DEUX SCENES SPECIFIQUES: MARCHE A SUIVRE
- Travail préliminaire: Notez les différences que vous remarquez - dans la version américaine par rapport à la version francaise – ce qui a été éliminé, ajouté, modifié
- Pour votre présentation, classez ces différences en plusieurs catégories, et pour chaque catégorie, dites (1) ce que vous avez remarqué (globalement/ il ne s'agit pas de faire une simple liste (2) si ces différences illustrent certains aspects de la culture américaine et lesquels (3) si vous pouvez faire des parallèles entre certaines différences dans les films et ce que vous avez découvert dans vos conversations avec les étudiants français avec Cultura.

PPT class presentations (based on an analysis of the image exchange)

- Students analyzed what the photos were saying ?
- Analyzed the photos but also the type of photos taken
- Inside/outside (façade/cafés/food)
- People vs objects
- Related it to the discourse

Other possibilities

- Having students compare other types of documents

    (ex: the website of the French Embassy in Washington DC and the American Embassy in Paris)

    Question: who does the evaluation?

Main challenges in implementing such a project

- Teachers need to:
  - Find a compatible partner in a compatible partner school (age issue)
  - Harmonize goals and calendars (regular contact is essential)
  - Try and bridge the gap between the different institutional contexts and priorities, as well as students' attitudes toward learning and homework
  - Try and make that "third place" (where the students meet and interact) as reciprocal as possible

Main challenges in implementing such a project (continued)

- ◦ Select (together with the partner) relevant and appropriate materials - which need to be varied, interesting, motivating, and sustain interest over the long term.

- ◦ Create appropriate tasks and assignments (which can be different in the two classes)

- ◦ Keep the ball rolling, making sure that students stay together on task, keep writing in the forums, etc..

- ◦ Evaluating what the students have learnt

What about technology?

- Very simple: any CMS will do.
- MIT offers a tool (for free) to create the questionnaires and automatize the responses.

Would like to end with..

- Sharing with you three lessons I have learnt in my 25 years of involvement in the design and use of technology-based materials for teaching/learning language and culture and that are still valid to this day.
- We constantly need to ask ourselves very basic questions (about our use of it)
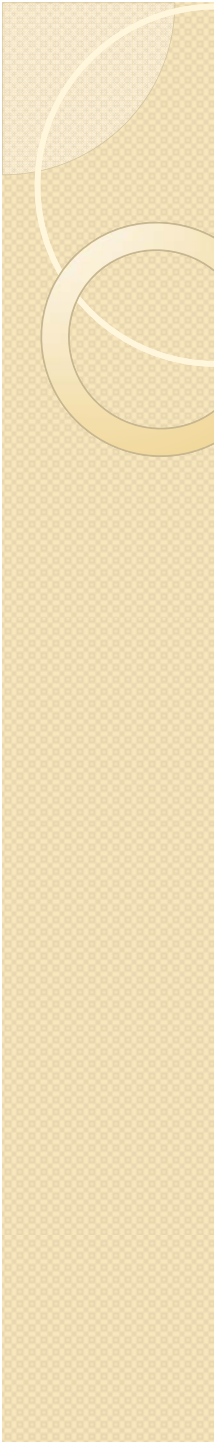
Question 1: why am I using this technology?

- If you can't answer that question satisfactorily, no use..

- Technology has to serve a purpose. It has to add value. It has to make sense.

- Videodisc technology, for instance, made sense. It provided two essential ingredients for foreign language learning: immersion and interaction. And if designed appropriately, it allowed students to even interact with characters in a story and explore cultural spaces, thus greatly enriching the students' experience.

Likewise

- It makes perfect sense to use the Internet for intercultural communication, since there exists a perfect synergy between the field of **inter**cultural communication (which *implies* encounters between people) and the **Inter**net (which *facilitates* such encounters)

Question 2: am I using it in a way that helps me achieve my goals?

- A crucial question!

  As we design new learning environments for our students, and figure out "best" ways to use them, we always need to go back to the basic questions:
    - what is my goal?
    - what is the best way to achieve that goal?

  The choices we make always have to be subservient, to our goals (ex: the choice of language in Cultura: the goal was not to practice the target language. Ex: the choice of assessment tools)

Question 3

Do I use this technology in a way that transforms my classroom pedagogy - in a way that transform the way my students learn and the way I teach?

If not, then why am I using it? Or am I using it the right way?

If nothing changes, then, let's heed this warning by Thoreau

" *Our inventions are wont (= likely) to be pretty toys, which distract our attention from serious things.* **They are but improved means to an unimproved end. [..]**

We are in great haste to construct a magnetic telegraph from Maine to Texas; but Maine and Texas, it may be, have nothing important to communicate"

(Walden, 52)

Finally..

- Thank you! Merci!

Some useful references

- The *Cultura* Community Site: http://cultura.mit.edu

  where you can find:

  - Articles
  - A teacher's Guide
  - Access to the *Cultura* tool (for creating questionnaires)
  - *Cultura* archives
- My e-mail address: gfursten@mit.edu

LOOKING AT ADAPTATIONS OF CULTURA

Adaptations of *Cultura*

- Cultura biz (Bentley College)- US-France

http://atc.bentley.edu/courses/resources/clic/jukebox/specialprograms/culturabiz/index.htm

- The Chinese project (U. of Hawaii) – US-China

http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/onlinecourse/course_login.cfm?ClassCode=CUBC01

Also (a new idea for stimulus)http://www.igo.cn/News/200803/633413999370817500.shtml

- The Spanish Cultura (Barnard College) US-Spain

http://cultura.ccnmtl.columbia.edu/cultura/user_login.php

Adaptations of *Cultura (continued)*

- The Filippino café project (U. of Hawaii)

http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/onlinecourse/course_login.cfm?ClassCode=FIL001

- The Samoan Project (U. of Hawaii)

http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/onlinecourse/course_login.cfm?ClassCode=EPW001

- Article on Cultura and its adaptations:

See "Internet-mediated Intercultural Foreign Language Education: The *Cultura* Project"

http://cultura.mit.edu/community/index/cid/4

Other similar telecollaborative projects

- The Padova-Dickinson project (US-Italy)
- http://interculturewiki.pbworks.com/Padova-Dickinson+Fall+08
- http://interculturewiki.pbworks.com/Padova-Dickinson-Fall-2009

- QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Working with web-based images and videos : film trailers

- Comparing film trailers (Examples from the US and France)
  - *La Marche de l'Empereur*

    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hcABAJIMonk

    Films are made to be seen:

    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZ_mlwnAmr0

  - *The march of the Penguins*

    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB_GisVFboU

Working with web-based images and videos: advertisements

- Comparing ads of French and American airlines (Air France and American Airlines)
  - *American Airlines "Going Home"*

  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rts3ezaXQBs&feature=PlayList&p=F91D87EE17C7E43D&playnext_from=PL&playnext=1&index=23

  - *Air France – la piscine*

  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSvMykoew88&feature=related

And now, your turn…

- … to design a module or two (see worksheet)

Comparing trailers of a same film

French documentary film: *La Marche de l'Empereur*

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hcABAJIMonk

Films are made to be seen

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZ_mlwnAmr0

- American remake (with same images!): *The March of the Penguins*

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB_GisVFboU

Comparing Air France and American Airlines commercials

- American Airlines

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rts3ezaXQBs&feature=PlayList&p=F91D87EE17C7E43D&playnext_from=PL&playnext=1&index=23

- Air France:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQfsrO32lVU

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  http://cultura.mit.edu/community/index/cid/4

- Belz, Julie A. (2001). Institutional and Individual Dimensions of Transatlantic Group Work in Network-Based Language Teaching. *ReCALL* Vol.13(2):213–231.

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- Muller-Hartmann, A. (2000) The role of tasks in promoting intercultural learning in electronic learning networks. Language Learning and Technology: 2000 (4) 2 129-14

- http://llt.msu.edu/vol4num2/muller/default.html

- The *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (1999)*

  http://www.globalteachinglearning.com/standards/5cs.shtml

CERCLL Workshop
University of Arizona
June 1 and 2, 2010

**Developing intercultural competence in the language class:
why and how?**
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*Gilberte Furstenberg
Foreign Languages and Literatures
M.I.T.*

- Program -

June 1 – morning -

9:00-9:30 Introduction(s)
• Overall goals
• Some words about my background
• Toward a definition of "intercultural competence"
• The context for bringing the development of intercultural competence into the language class

9:30-10:30 A tour of *Cultura* : an insider's view
• Its specific objectives
• Its approach
• The website and the materials (our choices)

Questions and Answers

10:30-10:45: Break

10:45-11:30 Focus on the process
• How students construct their knowledge and understanding of the other culture: a "hands-on" simulation *(group work)*
• A view of the classroom

11:30-12:00 Questions and Answers

June 1 – afternoon -

1:00-2:00 Focus on communication (the *Cultura* tour continued)
• The role of the online discussion forums: Examples and illustrations.
• Our choices (regarding what language to use) and why
• How the materials are designed to fit a "spiral" learning

2:00–2:15 Where does the study of language fit in?

2:15–2:45: **The new pedagogies**
  • The new roles of teachers and learners
  • A constructivist approach to learning
  • Teacher as task designer
  • The issue of evaluation
  • What it now means to "teach" culture

2:45-3:00: Break

3:00-4:00
• The main challenges in implementing such a project

• Adaptations of *Cultura* in other fields and languages: some examples (Business French/Chinese/Filipino/Samoan/Spanish)

• Questions and Answers

June 2 – morning -

9:00-9:30 Focus on the use of images and videos

Working with images and videos for cross-cultural comparisons: some examples and resources.

9:30-12:00 Designing your own course/project/module content
(*hands-on work in teams*):

Exploring materials; selecting content; developing appropriate pedagogical tasks.

June 2 – afternoon -

1:00-2:00 Designing your own course/project/module content
(*hands-on work in teams continued)*
Preparing for the team presentations

2:00-4:00 Project presentations by the different teams

Final questions and answers period

**Developing intercultural competence in the language class:
why and how?**

Gilberte Furstenberg
Foreign Languages and Literatures
M.I.T.

June 2 (morning)

**EXPLORING MATERIALS FOR DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL
COMPETENCE/UNDERSTANDING**

**The goal is for you (and your team) to start (1) thinking about what
materials you might want to use for a course or part of a course
where the focus would be on developing students' intercultural
understanding and (2) developing a set of materials and pedagogical
activities.**

STEP I: THINK ABOUT YOUR OWN CONTEXT
1. What specific (or non specific) course you would like to develop OR in
which course you would like to integrate such materials.
2. what specific level (if any) you are interested in targeting
3. what kinds of materials **- that lend themselves to cross-cultural
comparisons -** might seem relevant/suitable (make a list, based on the one
below)

STEP 2: EXPLORE MATERIALS (in your own language)
They may include:
 A series of words/sentences/situations (if you are thinking of   doing
     a Cultura-like telecollaborative project)
   - **Statistics/surveys sites** (about a variety of topics)
   - **Media** (press, TV, etc.)
   - **Advertisements** of specific products (see next pages)
   - **Films or videos** (see next pages)
   - **Texts that can be compared** (ex: the different constitutions/texts
     read by all school children, etc.)
   - **Websites** (cf The site of the French Embassy in the US and the site of
     the American Embassy in France)
   - **Other** (drawings/cartoons, etc.)

STEP 3: Pick one or two types of materials (from above)
 1. **See** what is available online
 2. **Select (from STEP 2, including "other")** similar items to juxtapose and compare (if you can) or a possible stimulus/stimuli
 3. **Identify a few potential cultural differences** that seem to emerge and could be explored in your class (topics, items that may relate to your curriculum)

STEP 4: CREATE/DESIGN A TASK/ACTIVITY TO BE DONE BY YOUR STUDENTS
Include all aspects:
- if it is a film or an ad: image (color, movement), nature of interaction between characters, music, dialogues, etc.
- if it is a survey or a cartoon/drawing: what does it reveal?

Note: your "module" does not need to be "finished".

STEP 5: PRESENT YOU WORK
Note: this will be done in the afternoon.

ONLINE MATERIALS TO EXPLORE

Always start with Google!!!

CULTURA MATERIALS YOU MIGHT WANT TO EXPLORE
The Cultura Community Site:
http://cultura.mit.edu

The Cultura website (where all the materials are located)
http://cultura.mit.edu/culturaNEH/2006s/index.html
To access the exchange of photos, click on Images, then on M:media
login: gilberte
Password: odessa

OTHER CULTURA-BASED PROJECTS YOU MIGHT WANT TO EXPLORE FURTHER
● Cultura Biz (Bentley College)- US-France
http://atc.bentley.edu/courses/resources/clic/jukebox/specialprograms/culturabiz/index.htm

● The Chinese business café project (U. of Hawaii) – US-China
http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/onlinecourse/course_login.cfm?ClassCode=CUBC01
login: guest
password: guest
Also (a new idea for stimulus)
http://www.igo.cn/News/200803/633413999370817500.shtml

● The Filippino café project (U. of Hawaii)
http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/onlinecourse/course_login.cfm?ClassCode=FIL001
login: guest
password: guest

● The Samoan Project (U. of Hawaii)
http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/onlinecourse/course_login.cfm?ClassCode=EPW001
login: guest
password: guest

• The Padova-Dickinson project (US-Italy)
http://interculturewiki.pbworks.com/Padova-Dickinson+Fall+08
http://interculturewiki.pbworks.com/Padova-Dickinson-Fall-2009

● The Spanish Cultura (Barnard College) US-Spain
http://cultura.ccnmtl.columbia.edu/cultura/user_login.php

RESOURCES FOR ADVERTISEMENTS

A good place to start (you can choose by (1) type of media (print, online, etc..), (2) region of the world (3) country and (4) industry (product)
http://adsoftheworld.com/

- in French
http://word.toutes-les-pubs.com/

http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/ford_qualitycare_summer_air_condition_campaign_check_point
The ads of the world

RESOURCES ABOUT REMAKES *(courtesy of my colleague Sabine Levet)*

ARTICLES ABOUT AMERICAN REMAKES IN GENERAL
http://www.lofficier.com/wgaarticle.htm

http://flavorwire.com/60482/are-hollywood-remakes-of-foreign-classics-ever-a-good-idea

SOURCES ABOUT REMAKES *(courtesy of my colleague Sabine Levet)*

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http://flavorwire.com/60482/are-hollywood-remakes-of-foreign-classics-ever-a-good-idea

http://www.avclub.com/articles/howd-it-get-burned-22-film-remakes-dramatically-di,2172/

List of English-language films based on foreign-language films
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_English-language_films_based_on_foreign-language_films

Other list (mostly French)
http://www.listology.com/list/feature-films-based-films-foreign-language

SOME EXAMPLES OF RESOURCES
POSTERS, TRAILERS AND FILMS (*listed by language*)
Pick a movie and its remake
Explore the links, see what is available online: poster, plot summary, trailer, scenes, articles …

ARABIC
YOUtube: **Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People**
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ko_N4BcaIPY
Ben Affleck defends Arabs
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9d-9GM9RGQ&feature=related

Articles:
The 9 Most Racist Disney Characters
http://www.cracked.com/article_15677_9-most-racist-disney-characters.html

Arab in America – the Motion picture

Trailer:
http://fiveonfifty.com/arab_blog/about-the-film/

CHINESE
List of films:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_English-language_films_based_on_foreign-language_films#Chinese

Eat Drink Man Woman AND Tortilla Soup

飲食男女 (1994) Ang Lee

饮食男女

 It was nominated for Best Foreign Language film in 1994

Tortilla Soup (2001) Maria Ripoll

Eat Drink Man Woman (English trailer)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrNlK9d7LI8&NR=1

Tortilla soup trailer
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWYj8gVdgZU

Other related materials
Eat Drink Man Woman (opening Scene)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zs5WiddD7i0

Eat Drink Man Woman (interview in English)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxUIqRI8pI0&NR=1

Tortilla soup (dancing with two sisters)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aHHYbkPuYm4

CHINESE
Infernal Affairs AND the Departed

Infernal Affairs (2002) trailer in Chinese

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tRcQRQ7ntA

Internal Affaires, trailer in Chinese with subtitles in English

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jO4RLrNVbd4&feature=related

The Departed (trailer) Martin Scorsese
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGWvwjZ0eDc

won 4 academy awards in 2006 the only remake of a foreign film to win Best Picture award.

Film posters
Infernal Affairs (in Chinese)
http://www.moviegoods.com/movie_poster/infernal_affairs_2004.htm
Infernal Affairs (in English)
http://www.movieposter.com/poster/MPW-11218/Infernal_Affairs.html
The Departed
http://www.imdb.com/media/rm2767556096/tt0407887

Film reviews (the New York Times)
- Infernal Affairs:
http://movies.nytimes.com/2004/09/24/movies/24AFFA.html
- The Departed:
http://movies.nytimes.com/2006/10/06/movies/06depa.html

Film reviews (in Chinese)
????

FRENCH
List of films:
See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_English-language_films_based_on_foreign-language_films#French

Breathless and A bout de souffle

original trailer for A bout de souffle
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MvX0GyPbfk&feature=related
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2hDR_e1o1M&feature=related
same as above, with subtitles

American Trailer of the French movie
http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/7054/Breathless/trailers

American remake
American trailer Richard Gere, Breathless
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7YbMWDNw3LU&feature=player_embedded

GERMAN
List of films:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_English-language_films_based_on_foreign-language_films#German

SPANISH
List of films:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_English-language_films_based_on_foreign-language_films#Spanish

Specific films
Abre los Ojos AND Vanilla Sky

Abre los ojos trailer in English
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Xlghyie3fo&NR=1

abre los ojos trailer with English subtitles
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ewhb3ic57E

Bre los ojos trailer with no English subtitles (better image quality)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yeLZgDf2Ce0&NR=1

Vanilla Sky trailer
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkN9_0Sbar8&feature=related
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCFHo4u1YhA&feature=related
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KBMRgDtBCI&feature=related

Vanilla Sky different trailer
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0RxHsrLN3s&feature=related

Vanilla Sky slow last sequence
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4PNEBdahsv0&feature=related

SPANISH/ Specific films (continued)
Nueve Reinas AND Criminal

Nueve Reinas (2000) (trailer in Spanish)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWUs-smqOeQ

Nueve Reinas (trailer in English)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9Les56e22c&NR=1

Nueve Reinas, first 5 minutes (Spanish, no subtitle)
http://www.veoh.com/browse/videos/category/entertainment/watch/v32010
8JABHMtSf

Criminal (trailer) 2004
http://www.imdb.com/video/screenplay/vi3367960857

Internet Movie Database
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0362526/