SUCCESSFUL TEACHERS OF SPANISH WHO COMMIT TO THE
TEACHING OF CULTURES:
TWO QUALITATIVE CASE STUDIES

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
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* * * * *

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate how two successful teachers of secondary Spanish, who are committed to teaching about culture, actually taught culture. In this study, ‘culture’ was described from a postmodern perspective that seeks to understand contemporary global events and how these events affect Spanish speakers. Culture-general goals for overcoming ethnocentrism and being able to make cross-cultural comparisons were at the core of this view. The traditional notions of formal culture (literature, music, and art) and everyday culture (customs, values, and beliefs) were subsumed under this description.

Data were collected for each participant over six months. The data sources included observation notes, interview transcripts, the researcher’s journal, and document analysis of vocabulary lists, quizzes, rubrics for culture-related presentations, adaptations of short stories, and culture-information handouts.

Data were analyzed by Banks’ (2003) four levels of integration of multicultural content, as adapted for the foreign language classroom: the contributions, additive, transformation, and social action approaches. These approaches also aided with investigating the teachers’ use of local, state, and national standards; their resources and materials for teaching cultures; their pedagogies of cultural and linguistic content; and their perceptions of the cultural content their students were learning.
A major finding of the study was that the participants taught primarily through the transformative and additive approaches with respect to culture-specific topics such as Hispanic holidays and culture-general topics such as stereotyping. Although they were not familiar with national, state, or local guidelines, their teaching aligned closely with district goals. Another finding was that the participants primarily used literature and movies to teach about culture. Also of note was the finding that the linguistic and cultural pedagogies of the participants differed, in that the first participant planned her lessons around culture learning, while the second planned for grammar learning. Both participants perceived their students to prefer learning culture-general rather than culture-specific material in their Spanish classes. Neither participant assessed cultural knowledge beyond objective facts.

The findings suggest that there is a need to focus on three important areas during pre-service training: coursework to develop nuanced understandings of Hispanic cultures; study or live abroad requirements; and, incorporation of Banks’ modified approaches as a framework for examining and implementing cultural content and pedagogy. The findings further suggest a need to emphasize two important domains during teacher in-service work: familiarity with and the use of the national standards as a guide for creating curricula and integrating multicultural content into lessons, as well as for the development and synthesis of alternative resources for teaching culture.

The findings also suggest additional areas for future research: development of more sophisticated lessons using transformative and social action approaches; exploration of alternative and authentic means of assessment of cultural knowledge; and native versus nonnative Spanish-speaking teachers’ comfort with and knowledge of Hispanic cultures.
Dedicated to the three men in my life—Jim, Curran, and Ryan.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them. (Kramsch, 1991, p.1)

“I don’t teach culture. I don’t have time. There’s too much to cover in the curriculum to do food and fiestas.” These comments were spoken to me two years ago in a discussion with a colleague in a mid-western suburban high school. While her sentiments may be common among foreign language (FL) teachers, her evocative statements provided me with a plethora of questions and concerns about the nature of teaching culture to high school students. Is not culture an inherent aspect of language teaching? Is not learning culture a process rather than a list of unrelated facts and dates to memorize? Are we not doing a disservice to our students when we exclude discussions of culture and current events from our curriculum? Can we truly decontextualize and compartmentalize the linguistic content of FL teaching and learning from cultural information? Is it the
unfamiliarity we as teachers often feel about the target cultures and the resultant unsettled feelings that dissuade us from teaching culture? It is likely that this teacher, like many in our field, may not have had opportunities in her pre-service education to learn about the teaching of cultures. Additionally, any training in the teaching of cultures may have been geared solely toward culture capsules or a food and festivals approach to the teaching of cultures rather than activities and discussions that “help students acquire the sensitivity to understand deeper cultural values” (Heusinkveld, 1985, p. 321).

Based upon my views of FL teaching and learning, I found my colleague’s remarks about not teaching culture particularly unsettling. I believe that connections must continually be made between the classroom and the target countries, communities, and cultures. I also believe that, as a teacher, I help my students construct their notion of the cultures of Spanish-speakers and help them better understand their own cultures as a frame of reference. I believe that the Spanish as a FL classroom is the ideal context for discussing local and global events and critically discussing issues of discrimination, multiculturalism, and power. Finally, I believe that the ultimate goal for learning Spanish as a FL should be a greater awareness of and an appreciation for diverse cultures, and I am not alone in this belief. As will be seen later in this chapter in a brief review of national standards of FL teaching, culture is conceptualized as more than a tool in teaching a foreign language; it is regarded as a major reason for studying another language and a significant component of the teaching and learning process. Thus, the teacher’s role, as Reagan and Osborn (2002) note, becomes one of a critical, applied linguist. Pennycook (2001) describes this role as a second or foreign language teacher who relates aspects of applied linguistics (FL and second language (L2) teaching) to
“broader social, cultural, and political domains” (p. 5), all the while raising critical questions of power, access, difference, desire, and resistance. Goals aiming predominately for target language proficiency should be revised to integrate language and culture to help students develop critical language awareness (p. 2). It is with this awareness of the interdependent nature of language and culture that students and teachers may find more success and the experience of learning a FL more meaningful. It is this powerful paradigm shift of the FL teacher’s role that guided the theoretical and methodological decisions of this study.

The Nature of Foreign Language Studies in the United States

In the United States, foreign language classes generally meet one period a day for a maximum of 150 hours per school year. Those hours do not account for loss of class time due to teacher and student absences, assemblies, and snow days. However, a minimum of 240 hours is required for a student of average ability to obtain minimal proficiency in Spanish (Omaggio Hadley, 1993, p. 28). As a result, over the course of two years of study, students “…will have had sufficient exposure to the target language to achieve at best minimal survival levels of competence in the target language, and are in fact very unlikely to achieve even that” (Reagan & Osborn, 2002, p. 3).

In 1990, an all-time high of 37% of U. S. students in grades nine through twelve were studying a modern foreign language. However, fewer than 20% of FL students in high school studied beyond the second level. Thus, prior to graduating from high school, only about 6% of all students have studied more than two years of a foreign language (Draper 1991, as cited in Omaggio, 1993, pp. 353-355). This is disappointing, especially considering that the average fourth grader in many other countries (which may be
considered developing countries) has studied more years of foreign language than the average college graduate in the U.S. (Simon, 1991, p. 14).

Attitudes Toward Teaching and Learning Culture

In studies of students’ attitudes toward learning foreign languages, Ely (1986) and Morello (1988) discovered that one of the primary reasons for studying a foreign language was due to the students’ interests in learning about the culture. Difficulties with the teaching of cultures may be eased by working with students who enter Spanish courses with interest in culture learning. However, many students (and some instructors) see little or no connection between language and culture learning (Bateman, 2002, p. 319). If those connections are not drawn in ways that help promote positive attitudes toward the target cultures, any discussions of culture may be harmful by promoting bilingual chauvinism (Bateman, 2002). The traditional methods of teaching culture as a body of knowledge to be learned tend to emphasize binary differences rather than promote multicultural awareness and similarities among cultures (Kramsch, 1993).

From comments gleaned from students (who are predominately white) in the middle to upper class high school where I teach, it is clear they generalize native Spanish speakers and Spanish-speaking countries as impoverished, illiterate, and unwilling to and/or incapable of changing their socioeconomic status. Their views toward speakers of languages other than English, particularly toward immigrants, are often ethnocentric and xenophobic. They speak fondly of travels to Mexico for vacationing yet ridicule the notion of working alongside Spanish-speakers at local fast food restaurants and golf courses. It does not seem unreasonable to assume that their attitudes are common among students studying Spanish in U.S. high schools. Traditional models of teaching culture
(i.e., facts, food, holidays, etc.) will not help change their attitudes. Teaching the
linguistic content without inviting critical inquiries of events and cultures will not assist
them in becoming multicultural citizens. The key to attitude change, as Mantle-Bromley
(1993) explains, is to create dissonance or disagreement among the three components of
attitudes: cognition, behavior, and affect.

Lessons of cultural awareness should be acts of inquiry. They are planned yet flexible
activities that allow students greater understanding which ultimately will better prepare
them to face new cultural situations. These declarations may very well be unpopular
among FL teachers; they require teachers to move from what has always been done to
learning a new role of teacher as guiding students through issues of values, beliefs,
pluralism, and multiculturalism. Students will need to re-view their own frames of
reference for understanding each of their own cultures prior to attempting to understand
other cultures. Discussions and activities designed for such openness to students’
attitudes can be hazy and threatening, leading teachers from their pedagogical comfort
zones.

Guidelines for Teaching Culture

At the national level, the teaching of culture is one of five goal areas established by
the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). In their 1996
publication, Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century,
they presented a total of eleven standards, developed for kindergarten through twelfth
grades. These standards are grouped into five goal areas, called the Five C’s:
communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. Individually, the
cultures goal encompasses two standards relating the perspectives of the target cultures to
their products and practices. However, the cultures goal is also inextricably woven with the other four goals (Lange, 1999), allowing for a constant spiraling and blending of the five goals, all building toward successful communication.

Additionally, in 1996, the Ohio Department of Education published *Foreign Languages: Ohio’s Model Competency-Based Program*. This text, which was designed to provide direction for Ohio’s school districts, details four instructional strands for each grade level, prekindergarten through twelfth grades. The strands are cultural knowledge; multidisciplinary connections, information, and knowledge; insights in the nature of language and culture; and participation in multilingual communities at home and around the world. As with the national standards, culture is both a separate strand and an inherent element within the other three strands.

Therefore, with both state and national guidelines heavily based upon teaching cultures, why is there often a disconnect between the guidelines and what actually is taught? Why is it that within the same teaching setting there are such differences among FL teachers’ pedagogical approaches, beliefs, and content coverage related to culture? Because foreign language is not yet generally considered a core subject, teachers often have much more freedom with curricular and methodological decisions. For the most part it is regarded as a positive aspect of the FL discipline, as each instructor teaches to her strengths and appropriately for her personality. However, it is clear that teachers often avoid teaching culture. This is particularly due to a lack of time in an already crowded curriculum, to avoid dealing with student attitudes, and due to the perception that teaching the mechanics of the language is most important (Omaggio, 1993). Nevertheless, when instructors choose to focus only on the linguistic content to the
exclusion of quality critical discussions of culture, their students miss out on important language and life lessons. Throughout their text, Reagan and Osborn (2002) make the case that critical multicultural discussions are “actually a more educationally appropriate use of the time than much of what currently takes place in classrooms” (p. 74).

There is much written about the teaching of cultures, however, there is a dearth of research within the secondary FL classroom investigating teachers’ attitudes, perceptions, decision-making, materials, and pedagogies related to the teaching of cultures as an integral element of the FL classroom (Bateman, 2002; Lange, 1999; Robinson-Stuart & Nocon, 1996). Lazarton (2003) notes that other than a few studies of cultural content and cultural biases in English as a Second Language and English as a Foreign Language materials, information related to cultural knowledge from a curricular viewpoint in this area has come from self-report data from questionnaires and interviews (p. 218).

**Purpose of the Study**

In light of this gap in the research, the purpose of this study is to better understand the teaching of cultures in the high school Spanish classroom, including the extent to which teachers are influenced by or aligned with institutional guidelines on the teaching of cultures, and their reliance on established models and materials for cultures teaching versus the development and use of their own models and materials. In this project I examined how two successful high school teachers of Spanish, both of whom professed a commitment to the teaching of cultures, integrated culture teaching in their lessons. Through a series of teacher observations and interviews in these two case studies, I closely examined their perceptions, pedagogies, current classroom materials, and curricular guidelines at the local, state, and national levels. I aimed, therefore, to gain an
emic perspective for drawing a detailed portrait of the teaching of cultures in central Ohio by two successful secondary teachers. By doing so, I hoped to increase the awareness of and the knowledge base on the value and methods of teaching Spanish, grounded in a contemporary construction of cultures.

Research Questions

The overarching question of this study was, how do successful teachers of secondary Spanish who commit to the teaching of cultures, actually teach culture? The research categories and specific research questions for this study were:

**National, state, and local guidelines for teaching culture**

1. How do the ACTFL standards, the State of Ohio Foreign Language Guidelines, and the local district’s graded course of study present the teaching of culture?
   a. Are teachers familiar with the culture-teaching guidelines for each of these documents?
   b. Which of these guidelines do teachers follow?

**B. Resources for teaching culture**

2. What culture-teaching materials are teachers currently using?
3. With what frequency do teachers use the materials for teaching culture?
4. How do teachers use the culture-teaching materials?

**C. Teachers’ pedagogical self-descriptions**

5. How do teachers describe the development of their views of the teaching of cultures in the FL classroom?
6. How do teachers describe their pedagogy of culture/cultural information/content?
7. How do teachers describe their pedagogy of linguistic content?
8. How do teachers describe the political approach they take (if any) in teaching foreign languages (particularly the cultural content)?

9. How do teachers assess cultural knowledge?

**D. Teachers’ perceptions of culture in the classroom.**

10. What are the perceptions of successful teachers of Spanish in central Ohio of the cultures they teach?

11. What kind of cultural knowledge do teachers of Spanish in Ohio perceive their students to be learning?

*Descriptions of Terms--Discussions of Nomenclature*

**Culture**

Culture in foreign and second language teaching is a very broad area. The traditional view “sees culture as unchanging and homogeneous aspects of bounded geographical and national entities” (Atkinson, 1999, p. 626). Among the writings of culture perceived as more traditional are the discussions of culture with a “Big C,” elitist culture, also called “the best in human life,” “Olympian culture,” or “culture MLA” (music, literature, art) (Brooks, 1971, as cited in Omaggio, 1993, p. 361). Seelye (1984) places much of the blame for boredom in language classes on teaching culture from an elitist perspective. Culture with a “small c,” is much broader and includes “Big C” culture with all aspects of life “from folktales to carved whales” (Seelye, 1984, p. 26). Together, both perspectives form the commonly received view of culture, an information-based culture that includes the customs, knowledge, mores, practices, skills, music, literature, art, behaviors, languages, family, religions, signs, symbols, etc. of generations and
communities/countries. This traditional view is generally considered the curriculum for culture teaching.

A second, postmodern view of culture, as Atkinson (1999) describes, is “nonstandard” where the traditional notions of culture have been replaced with terms such as identity and resistance (p. 626). Where the more traditional view distinguishes language from culture and employs culture solely as a curricular component, the postmodern, critical view sees cultural understanding as a practice that is socially constructed. This emergent view of culture eschews the notion of culture as a disembodied set of facts for memorization. Rather, from a teaching perspective, culture is more about the process of discovery and meaning making. It is the context in which language should be taught (Kramsch, 1991). Important to this view of culture is the element of impermanence; culture is constantly in flux. Atkinson (1999) describes the most appropriate perspective as one that balances the “heterogeneity, fragmentation, power, and difference embodied in the new critical agenda” with the traditional emphases of homogeneity, stability and continuity (p. 626).

For the purpose of this study of successful Spanish teachers of high school students, I used a postmodern perspective of culture that subsumes the more traditional culture definition. Additionally, the term cultures (plural), as a more informed and current construction, was used when applicable for my discussion and not necessarily for that of other writers. This term stresses the numerous communities and Spanish-speaking countries within North America and throughout the world. It includes an awareness of issues that affect Spanish speakers, particularly issues of race, class, poverty, and discrimination.
The Teaching of Cultures

Generally, the teaching of cultures denotes any moment of teaching involving both the traditional and postmodern definitions of culture. Thus, the teaching of cultures may include a spontaneous notion, anecdote, geographic notation, or factoid as well as planned events and lessons centered on cultural elements. For the purpose of this study, I used the term ‘culture unit’ to mean a series of lessons or an entire teaching unit based upon the teaching of cultures. The length of each culture unit varied, consisting minimally of one day. I observed each of the two participants teaching a minimum of three culture units.

Foreign Language

A fundamental element in this project, based upon critical work in language studies, is the notion of an appropriate term for second language studies. Although the term ‘foreign’ has been used for many years in the United States to refer to all languages taught in the schools with the exception of English, it connotes distance and otherness. Even though a language other than English is spoken in more than 12% of the homes in the United States, English is not considered one of the ‘foreign’ languages (Center for Applied Linguistics 1995, as cited in Osborn, 2000, p. 8). In order not to distance others, educators have sought diverse terms such as ‘world languages,’ ‘second languages,’ and ‘global languages.’ I personally have been involved in lengthy debates in two different school districts about what to call that which we teach. In my former district we decided upon the term ‘global languages’ but debate still ensues in my current school district. Of the two high schools in this district, one, for the time being, has chosen to continue using ‘foreign languages’ and the other has changed their department name to ‘global
Even though titles may have been changed, it is questionable whether the language departments have made real philosophical changes or just semantic ones.

Reagan and Osborn (2002) call for teachers to continue the use of the term foreign because to do otherwise only draws more attention to the perception by students and adults of these languages as foreign. The articulated bias inherent in changing to global, second, or world, does not mean that “more enlightened and ethically responsive ways of teaching” are actually taking place (Apple, 1979, as cited in Reagan & Osborn, 2002, p. 8). Thus, I elected to use the term foreign language (FL) throughout this writing.

Successful Teachers

The term ‘successful’ often connotes winning (as in performing better than others) or lucrative (as in financial gain). In education, however, there are no objective measures widely recognized for rating and comparing the work of teachers. Generally, when asked to describe successful teachers, one either remembers the work of certain former teachers or remembers others who have a reputation for being successful. When I began a search for successful teachers of Spanish with a commitment to the teaching of cultures, I sought the opinions of experts (described in chapter three), who ultimately supplied five names. The experts credited these teachers as being knowledgeable and dynamic. Each teacher offers unique talents that have earned her a reputation for being successful. Thus, for the purpose of this study, ‘successful secondary teachers of Spanish with a commitment to the teaching of cultures’ was described by the following: individual accomplishments, titles, talents and accolades; recognition by department chairs and principals; participation in conferences; and participation with pre-service teachers.
Significance of the Study

Glissan (1996) lists language proficiency and cultural awareness as the two primary areas among those to be addressed by professional development, noting that keeping abreast of current happenings in the target cultures is imperative (p. 73). Because there is little empirical data about culture learning and teaching in the secondary Spanish as a foreign language classroom (Moore, 1996), the different facets of these case studies will provide part of a much-needed foundation for pre-service and professional development programs. It will aid in reducing the guesswork on the teaching of cultures at the high school level. By studying successful, experienced teachers, it will inform the current literature about the views, pedagogies, and materials of two excellent Spanish teachers.

Assumptions

For this study, I assumed that the teachers recognized as ‘successful and who profess a commitment to the teaching of cultures,’ continued to be some of the most successful secondary teachers of Spanish in central Ohio. Additionally, I assumed that the teachers involved were willing participants who would share their beliefs and knowledge. Furthermore, I worked with a certain assumption of how cultures should be taught. It is my belief that lessons of cultural awareness should be acts of inquiry.

As a researcher serving as the research instrument, I continually reflected on the power I held and how my biases may have affected my findings. Teachers and students may have
reacted differently to my presence in the classroom over time. While they may have become accustomed to me and I felt relatively unobtrusive, my presence altered the situation.

Limitations

A case study is a detailed examination of a single subject, a particular event, one setting, or a collection of documents (Bogdan & Bicklen, 2003; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2000; Yin, 1989). In this research, ethnographic techniques used in qualitative case studies were used to gain a holistic portrait of how two successful secondary teachers of Spanish taught culture in two specific and local contexts. As a complement to the larger picture, I obtained an emic perspective through interviews and post-observation discussions that presented a deeper understanding of teachers’ beliefs, political perspectives, and pedagogies. However, from the interpretations, I made no assertions about the findings being generalizable to a larger population of teachers of Spanish. Through the use of thick description with details and the very words of the teachers involved, I aimed to bring the reader close to the study. The comparative nature of these studies offered a wealth of examples, descriptions, and empirical data about pedagogies, beliefs, materials, and guidelines on teaching cultures in the secondary Spanish classroom. However, I used one particular framework with which to view my participants’ work and beliefs about culture teaching. Exploration of their practices through another analytical framework may provide findings different from those I present in chapters four and five.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Instead of supporting the kind of talk that leads to the kind of nuanced inquiry discussed in this study, most public schools take a food and festivals approach to multicultural issues. The upshot of such surface level celebration is that the celebrated are reduced to a range of clichés and students of the mainstream feel no real sense of urgency that impels them to understand other cultures at a deeper level. Crossing boundaries of cultures is necessary, risky, and threatening. (Fecho, 2001, p. 31)

This study investigated how two successful teachers of Spanish who professed a commitment to the teaching of cultures actually taught culture. In this qualitative research, I gained an emic perspective by examining the teachers’ use of national, state, and local guidelines, and their pedagogies, materials, and perceptions of culture teaching and learning. The perspective of culture/s I used in this study, as described at length in chapter one, is a melding of both the traditional idea of teaching culture in the foreign language (FL) classroom (Big C elitist culture and little c everyday culture), with a postmodern, emergent view that embodies a critical agenda. I view this notion of cultures as a process for understanding contemporary global events and for developing an awareness of issues that affect Spanish speakers locally and throughout the world. It is an amalgam of issues and ideas that are both “culture-specific” and “culture-general” (M. Bennett, J. Bennett, &
Allen, 1999, p. 19), where there are goals specific to the second culture (C2) and goals for overcoming ethnocentrism and being able to make cross-cultural comparisons.

The theoretical framework of this qualitative case study was inspired by the literature and research of many, however, three sources in particular were instrumental in conceptualizing this inquiry. From Gloria Ladson-Billings’ text, *The Dreamkeepers* (1994), I learned of ethnographic techniques she used in her work with successful teachers of African American students. Timothy Reagan and Terry Osborn’s writings of the important work of FL teachers, in particular their text, *The Foreign Language Educator in Society* (2002), helped me synthesize my concerns about the current state of culture teaching. Finally, from James Banks’ (2003) work with multicultural curricula, I was able to conceptualize much of this study, including a means of analysis with Banks’ four levels of integration of multicultural content.

I begin this review of the literature with an historical framework of theories and methods of language teaching, necessary for visualizing the big picture and for understanding how and when the importance of teaching culture evolved. Much of the literature providing historical accounts of the field of FL teaching, describes the ongoing quest to locate the one “perfect” teaching method, approach, and/or theory. I begin this brief exploration of the history of FL teaching in the U.S. in the mid-1850s and highlight several theories and movements from that time to the present. I show the development of the current national guidelines that emphasize student proficiency, thus shifting the onus for finding one perfect approach to the possibility of adopting multiple approaches striving for proficiency. Related to culture teaching in U.S. secondary schools in
particular, my review of the literature shows that generally it has been divided into three periods: pre 1950, 1950 to the early 1980s, and the early 1980s to the present.

In the second section, I outline the national standards and the state of Ohio’s model for teaching culture in the FL classroom, and explain how culture is incorporated into each of those documents. In the final section I present what I gleaned from the writings about culture teaching in the FL classroom, the most salient models and studies that examine the teaching of cultures and/or attitudes toward foreign cultures. The studies I chose view the teaching of cultures as central to FL learning. The literature on my methodology is in chapter three.

I am compelled to comment upon the lenses through which I reviewed this literature and through which I view this study. First, I am a Spanish teacher. I have more than 15 years experience in secondary settings as a teacher and administrator. As a teacher-researcher, I am very familiar with the issues inherent in teaching foreign languages and cultures, with cultures placed at the core of learning. Today, this may still be considered a radical idea, certainly an unconventional practice. The historical phases of FL and second language (L2) learning described in the next section demonstrate the little importance this area has been given. Thus, I outline models and examples that contain what I consider to be some ideal characteristics for teaching cultures. I recognize, however, that FL teachers, and for that matter FL students, are generally far from prepared and/or ready to utilize such models (Kubota, Austin, & Saito-Abbott, 2003). Nonetheless, I have high expectations for this area and for the significant changes it can make for FL teaching and learning in the United States.
Theories and Methods of Language Teaching

From an historical review of second language acquisition (SLA) theories through current methods employed in FL teaching, the following section provides an overview of the role of culture in learning Spanish as a foreign language. From this information, the reader may better understand the importance of this study, primarily that throughout history, the FL field traditionally has not placed value on culture learning. Additionally, as reflected in Fecho’s (2001) quotation at the beginning of this chapter, the teaching of cultures either has been reduced to a food and festivals\(^1\) approach or taught as literature in upper level courses at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Furthermore, it is helpful to understand the evolution from the importance given to L2 theoretical models and approaches through emphasizing proficiency to today’s use of national, state, and local guidelines

Depending upon how one distinguishes them, there may be as few as three or an immeasurable number of theoretical approaches that have historically been the basis for understanding SLA. For the purposes of this historical review, I briefly address eight of the more prominent paradigms used in understanding first and second language (L1 and L2) learning and acquisition: grammar-translation, audiolingual method, Universal Grammar, information processing approaches, Krashen’s Monitor Model, sociocultural theory, communicative language teaching, and the proficiency movement. I show their alignment with the “evolution of SLA theory from viewing the learner in isolation to viewing the learner as a part of an interactive process” (Schinke-Llano, 1993, p. 123). It is

\(^{1}\)Fecho (2001) used the expression ‘food and festivals’ to describe multicultural teaching in general education. However, I use it throughout this document, with intentions similar to Fecho’s, to refer to
the interactive process that was one of the first to emphasize the importance of the learners’ cultures as well as the usefulness of the learners’ cultures in processing information about target cultures. In fact, although culture generally has been considered an element of FL teaching (Kelly, 1969; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Stern, 1983), the literature on the most prominent paradigms throughout U.S. history rarely attends to the approaches used to teach culture. Therefore, the information I discuss about culture teaching prior to the proficiency movement of the 1980s is brief.

Grammar-Translation

From about 1850 to 1950, the predominant method of FL teaching in the U.S. was grammar-translation (Higgs, 1984). Students learned grammar points and practiced them through translations with the goals of being able to read literature and improve mental discipline. It was based upon a rationalist/universalist linguistic theory, with the premise that all natural languages were lexical analogs of each other. Ultimately, this approach, also known as “the single approach,” was generally abandoned because other language learning needs were not being satisfied. Interestingly, however, many contemporary college texts still use grammar-translation principles (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Regarding culture teaching within this approach, Omaggio noted that there was “no concern for the teaching of cultural awareness, at least on an everyday level” (1984, p. 56). Therefore, the culture that was taught was undoubtedly related to Big C culture derived from the literature that students read and translated.

During World War II, the importance of teaching culture to American soldiers to reduce clashes between their cultural values and the cultural values of those they were cultural lessons that are merely “surface level celebrations” where “the celebrated are reduced to a range of
fighting, prompted development of “language and area programs” courses at many universities (Kelly, 1969). These interdisciplinary courses brought together history and geography departments with modern language departments. Although the teaching of culture was an integral part of the curriculum, the culture primarily related to objective and easily assessed facts and information.

Audiolingual Method

Following grammar-translation, the learning theory of behaviorism became popular in the United States in the 1940s and 1950s. In the FL realm, behaviorism combined with structuralism, a linguistic theory, to form the audiolingual method, which became a dominant approach to language learning. This method suggested that language is acquired through a listen and repeat model that does not account for context or social interaction. In this approach, language learning “is the result of imitation, practice, feedback on success, and habit formation” (Lightbown & Spada, 1999, p. 9). Although behaviorism may help us understand how some children learn certain routine aspects of language, it was criticized because other children imitate sounds infrequently and yet still learn a language. Thus, the audiolingual method taught students to develop habits, but in many cases they still could not use the language as they wanted.

University and secondary textbooks based upon the audiolingual method consisted of three parts: the dialogue, pattern drills, and application activities (Omaggio, 1984). Students learned about culture indirectly by doing the application activities in the textbook that “placed” them in everyday situations in the target language community. Thus, the little amount of cultural knowledge that students acquired was geared more
toward little c cultural knowledge rather than Big C culture. Since the reign of the audiolingual method, no other methodology has had near universal acceptance by FL teachers; none of the more recent theories and approaches has been considered “the paradigm” (Higgs, 1984).

Universal Grammar

Much of the criticism of behaviorism in the late 1950s and early 1960s was fueled by the writings of the linguist Noam Chomsky. In his linguistic theory, called Universal Grammar (UG), humans are believed to “inherit a universal set of principles and parameters which control the shape human languages can take, and which are what make human languages similar to one another” (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 43). The principles that he proposes are unvarying and apply to all natural languages. The parameters, on the other hand, contain a limited number of open values that describe differences between languages.

One example of the relationship between principles and parameters involves the principle of structure-dependency; all languages are organized by the structural relationships between elements in a sentence. The parameters, however, explain how languages differ; for instance, the structural elements of specific phrases may differ. For example, in Japanese, the complements precede the element, or “head”, they describe: “picture wall on is hanging.” In English, however, the “head” precedes the complements: “the picture is hanging on the wall” (p. 52). Therefore, although the universal principal states that languages are structured into phrases, there may be multiple parameters for ordering specific phrases in different languages. Equipped with universal grammar, or a language acquisition device (LAD), children do not need to be taught each specific
structural rule. Thus, the UG approach helps make the notion of language learning for children, with its inherent rules and irregularities, much more plausible. For example, in L1 acquisition, children go through stages; these stages are similar across children for a given language. Furthermore, the stages are similar across languages.

UG is a theory of language that aspires to describe and explain human language in general. Although it primarily makes no claims about L2 learning, it has contributed to understanding some L2 phenomena, including the stages L2 learners go through in acquiring mastery of the language. Its almost exclusive focus on syntax and its study of language in isolation from the social realm, however, limit studies of UG theory in the social setting of the FL classroom. Because UG is a linguistic theory as opposed to a learning theory/approach, the discussion of culture teaching is not relevant to culture teaching in the FL classroom.

*Information Processing*

Understanding how the human brain processes and learns new information is the focus of the cognitive approaches to FL learning (Mitchell & Myles, 1998), which are generally concerned with how students learn a foreign language, unlike UG theory that examines the *language* aspect. The cognitive approaches are distinct from the approaches mentioned above because they do not view humans as pre-equipped with a language-specific acquisition device. According to cognitivists, learning a language is similar to other information processing of the human mind. “The human mind is geared to the processing of all kinds of information (information being understood in a broad sense), and linguistic information is just one type, albeit highly complex” (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 73). The computer metaphor of inputs and outputs is often used to describe this
There has been much debate about whether language acquisition is derived from an LAD or whether language acquisition relies on general cognitive mechanisms, as well as whether or not L1 acquisition uses an LAD and L2 cognitive functions (Bley-Vroman, 1989; Butterworth & Harris, 1994; Harley, 1995).

There are several specific approaches that provide cognitive rationale for language learning: the perceptual saliency approach (Slobin, 1985), connectionism (Rumelhart & McClelland, 1986; N. Ellis & Schmidt, 1997), and information processing models (McLaughlin, 1987; 1990). Explanation of each approach is beyond the purview of this historical account of language learning theories; however, related to FL pedagogy, the approaches generally have the following basic tenets:

1. The goal of cognitive teaching is to develop in students the same types of abilities that native speakers have. This is done by helping students attain minimal control over the rules of the target language so that they can generate their own language to meet a previously unencountered situation in an adequate fashion.

2. In teaching the language, the instructor must move from the known to the unknown; that is, the student’s present knowledge base (cognitive structure) must be determined so that the necessary prerequisites for understanding the new material can be provided.

3. Text materials and the teacher must introduce students to situations that will promote the creative use of the language. The primary concern is that students have practice going from their underlying understanding of the way the language works to using the language in actual communication of ideas.
4. Because the language behavior is constantly innovative and varied, students must be taught to understand the rule system rather than be required to memorize surface strings in rote fashion. Therefore, the grammar should be overtly explained and discussed in a cognitive classroom.

5. Learning should always be meaningful; that is, students should understand at all times what they are being asked to do. New material should always be organized so that it is relatable to students’ existing cognitive structure. Since not all students learn in the same way, the teacher should appeal to all senses and learning styles. (Omaggio, 1984, 66-67)

There have been numerous studies investigating cognitive approaches, ranging from language learning with isolated individuals to language learning through interaction (McLaughlin, 1990; O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Pienemann, 1989). The common thread woven throughout this paradigm is the notion of seeing “learning as something to be accomplished by the individual, who uses relatively autonomous internal mechanisms of some kind in order to exploit the varying spectrum of input data” (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 122). Thus, language learning is seen as internal rule-governed behavior.

The cognitivist approach applied to FL learning is generally proficiency-oriented because it is expected that the FL is used in context with students speaking and creating with the FL throughout a large portion of each class period. Related to culture, students participate in real-life activities learning about small c cultural nuances and cultural awareness. Although acquisition of cultural knowledge is not seen as the primary goal of FL teaching from the cognitivist approach, some aspects of culture are learned indirectly through application activities.
A learning theory that has had great implications for second language teaching practices is Krashen’s (1985) Monitor Model (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Krashen’s model consists of five Input Hypotheses: the acquisition/learning hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the input hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis. The basis of these hypotheses is the distinction between acquisition and learning.2

Krashen’s first hypothesis is the acquisition/learning distinction, which notes that learners have two distinct and independent ways to develop competence in a second language. The first is through acquisition, a subconscious process similar to the way children develop their first language. The second is through learning, a conscious process in which the FL and L2 grammar rules are learned. Ultimately, the goal of FL studies is acquisition, however, the acquisition/learning dichotomy presents an ongoing dilemma for FL teachers in search of the most effective methods. This is due to the notion that traditionally, FL teachers are grammarians who focus on the learning aspects of grammar and vocabulary rather than functional themes taught for acquisition (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Krashen’s second hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, asserts that natural acquisition of grammatical structures proceeds in a predictable order. The third, the monitor hypothesis, maintains that acquisition is the only “initiator” of all spontaneous L2 utterances and is responsible for fluency, whereas learning works only as a “monitor”

2 Throughout this and the remaining chapters, I often use together the terms acquisition and learning (acquisition/learning). On occasion, however, I distinguish one from the other, depending upon the type of language and cultural information being discussed as well as the approach/es used.
for the output. Thus, the monitor operates when needed to consciously modify the output by applying specific grammar rules that were learned.

In the fourth hypothesis, the input model, Krashen proposed that humans acquire language by understanding input that is a little beyond their current level of acquired competence. He believed that listening comprehension and reading are the most important skills, and that the ability to speak or write fluently will develop in time after students have built up enough confidence through understanding input. Accordingly, we acquire language from what we hear and understand, not from what we say. “An acquirer can move from stage i (i is the acquirer’s level of competence) to stage i + 1 (i + 1 is the stage immediately following, along some natural order) by understanding language containing i + 1” (Krashen & Terrell, 1988, p. 32). Ultimately if communication is successful, then i + 1 is provided. Krashen proposed two further ideas related to this hypothesis: “(1) speaking is a result of acquisition and not its cause; and (2) if input is understood, and there is enough of it, the necessary grammar is automatically provided” (Krashen, 1985, p. 2).

The fifth hypothesis posits the notion of an affective filter, where all conditions must be optimal for acquisition to take place: the acquirer is motivated, she has self-confidence, and her anxiety level is low. By contrast, a high affective filter is believed to work against language acquisition.

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3 Krashen’s concept of i + 1 has often been compared to Vygotsky’s notion of the zone of proximal development. Though examination of this issue is beyond the purview of this paper, it is my belief that the two derive from very different theories and thus are incommensurate.
Culture plays an important role in the approaches derived from the monitor model because activities are not organized around a grammatical syllabus (since grammar is automatically provided in the comprehensible input), but around situational topics and themes. These topics relate to situations students may encounter in the target community/country, thus the focus is on both Big C and little c cultural information. Teaching materials consist of realia such as maps, menus, travel brochures, schedules, and advertisements, rather than textbooks.

Disagreement with and criticism of Krashen’s work became the impetus for much research into language input and output (Long, 1985; Pica, 1994; Swain, 1985). Many debates have surrounded Krashen’s work, particularly in three areas. First, by omitting the role that output plays in acquisition, as Krashen suggests, social interaction is completely disregarded (Dunn & Lantolf, 1998). Second, McLaughlin’s (1979) research shows that Krashen’s Monitor Model is incorrect because students can and do use what they “learn” through practice and repetition, and that ultimately this comprehension does become automatic and subconscious. Third, Krashen’s view that grammar need not be directly taught if comprehensible input is provided, fueled much debate from FL researchers and teachers who have long organized syllabi around grammar topics.

Sociocultural Theory

A perspective of second language learning where “interaction itself constitutes the learning process, which is quintessentially social rather than individual in nature” (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 144) reacted against the paradigms that reduced FL learning to inputs and outputs and/or strict rule learning or translating, as well as from the
cognitive paradigms. This sociocultural paradigm developed from the ideas of the Russian developmental psycholinguist Lev Vygotsky. His work has been expanded upon and since the mid-1980s has received growing attention from SLA researchers including Antón, 1999; Donato, 2000; Dunn and Lantolf, 1998; Kinginger, 2001; Kramsch, 2000; Lantolf, 1994, 2000; Lantolf and Appel, 1993; Schinke-Llano, 1993; and van Lier, 2000.

Vygotsky’s sociocultural approach, as considered in the FL classroom, is based upon an interactional view of language development. Rather than view target language (TL) interaction merely as input for autonomous and internal learning mechanisms, sociocultural theory suggests that TL interaction has a much larger role to play. According to sociocultural perspective, studying the social world is how one learns about a child’s cognitive and communicative development. Language is socially constructed rather than internally intrinsic and is based upon the social reality of the learner. Thus, sociocultural theory provides an ideal framework for examining interactions, particularly in the FL classroom where the TL and target cultures are both means and goals for learning.

Among the important constructs that are used by sociocultural theorists to explore language learning are scaffolding, the zone of proximal development (ZPD), regulation, activity theory, private speech, and inner speech, among others. I briefly describe here the ZPD, one of Vygotsky’s more well-known constructs, to provide readers a sketch of sociocultural theory.

*The zone of proximal development (ZPD).*

Language acquisition is a result of interaction and joint problem-solving activities. As Vygotsky explains (1978), “Every function in the child’s cultural development appears
twice, on two levels. It occurs first on the social, and later on the psychological level; first between people as an interpsychological category, and then in the child’s mind as an intrapsychological category” (p. 57). Learning and growth occur in each child’s ZPD and as a group in their collective and interrelated ZPDs (Moll & Whitmore, 1993). The ZPD represents the state where a child may begin a task but may not fully accomplish it without assistance from a more experienced person or expert, whether it be a teacher, parent or peer (Cole, 1985; Lantolf, 2000; Platt & Brooks, 1994). The expert helps to nurture development by offering scaffolded steps to assist the child through the activity. The ZPD refers to “those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation;” the actual development level refers to “functions that have already matured” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). Thus, according to Vygotskian sociocultural theory, rather than first needing to reach a certain developmental level in order to learn, learning leads development. Also, the higher cognitive processes that arise are deemed important, not the performance of the specific task at hand. Finally, according to Wells (1998), “the ZPD, as an opportunity for learning with and from others, applies potentially to all participants, and not simply to the less skillful or knowledgeable” (as cited in Antón, 1999, p. 305).

Although many Vygotskian sociocultural concepts were originally used to describe interactions between adults and young children, the current view from neo-Vygotskians studying SLA has been expanded to novice-expert interactions between older students (including adults) and teachers, as well as to interactive collaboration between non-experts (Antón, 1999). The extension from L1 learning to L2 acquisition has proven fruitful for theorists, researchers, and practitioners who have examined instructional
conversations, scaffolding, and the ZPD in the FL classroom. Several studies conducted in the last decade demonstrate the utility and importance of a sociocultural framework for the FL classroom, such as Antón’s (1999) exploration of the ZPD in university French and Italian courses, Takahashi’s (1998) longitudinal study of the role of mediation for FL elementary students learning Japanese, and Deguerrero and Villamil’s (1994) study of object-, other-, and self-regulation with university intermediate ESL students in Puerto Rico.

Culture in sociocultural theory.

The role of culture teaching in a theory entitled sociocultural theory should be explicit. However, as with most of the FL learning theories discussed in this chapter, culture was not the primary focus of most literature on sociocultural theory. Based upon Wells’ (2000) characteristics of a sociocultural classroom (in bullets below), I include several intimations
that I created appropriate to teaching culture in the FL classroom. Synthesized from the literature and research, they provide suggestions for how target cultures may be emphasized and actually learned based upon sociocultural theory.

➢ Constructing a collaborative community

1. Collaborative peer work should be a regular ingredient in the FL classroom.
   Students will scaffold one another within the ZPD, fluctuating between peer and expert roles, depending upon the nature of the activity. Students discuss their understanding of cultural information and questions of intercultural awareness.

➢ Engaging in purposeful activities involving whole persons actively forming identity

2. Autobiographical activities, presented either in the L1 or the L2, may easily be included in the FL classroom. L2 identity formation begins, for many students, in the FL classroom; it is essential to recognize and nurture the dual identities through written and oral reflection/journals. This may include the interplay of L1 and L2 (or L3…) cultures—how learning about different cultures changes our understanding of the cultures we appropriate as our own.

➢ Incorporating activities that are situated and unique

3. FL educators hope that one day their students will have the opportunity to travel to target culture countries/geographic locations. For many students this is not the case. Teaching culture and language means immersing them in a context with content that allows them to share their living reality—their music, daily activities, jobs, friends, family, and dreams. The most unique activities are derived from the ideas created by the students. Negotiation of curriculum and syllabi (including
culture as acts of inquiry, vocabulary, projects, and assessment) is tantamount in
the sociocultural classroom.

- Using curriculum as a means for learning, not just an end result

4. The curriculum may be used to help students employ meta-talk (Faerch, 1985); to
talk about what they are learning, by what means they learn successfully, as well
as the challenges inherent in teaching and learning about cultures.

5. The FL teacher employs the new vocabulary of study in Socratic-type questions.
Rather than practice it merely with games and simple review sheets, it should be
used, when appropriate, with thoughtful questions that personalize and explore
critical thought and meanings of perspectives of practices and products of both
the first and second cultures (C1 and C2).

- Producing outcomes that are both aimed for and emergent

6. Authentic assessment is essential. Students may individually or as a group
negotiate and help design assessment tasks. As a result, students’ strengths are
emphasized, needless comparisons are minimized, and life-long learning is
promoted. Resultant outcomes are skills and knowledge applicable to real-world
settings. FL examples include working with native speakers of the TL; guests may
be invited into the classroom regularly; students may work with native speakers in
authentic settings, or; students may use ethnographic interviews with native
speakers to learn about cultures and improve attitudes toward speakers of the TL
(Robinson-Stuart & Nocon, 1996).

- Constructing activities that must allow diversity and originality.
7. In sociocultural classrooms, students are encouraged to explore issues and activities that draw on strengths and diverse backgrounds. Borrowing from Moll’s (1990) application of the “funds of knowledge”, it is essential to bring together household events with classroom instruction. In this light, families are involved in L2 development, networks are obtained, and students respect the uniqueness of one another’s work and perspectives.

Vygotskian sociocultural theory provides FL researchers and educators a lens through which to differently understand thinking and learning. Unlike Krashen’s Monitor Model described in the previous section, it views the language learning process as essentially social. In the following section, I describe communicative language teaching, a theory of FL teaching that is both interactionist and functional.

*Communicative Language Teaching*

In the U.S. during the early 1970s, most secondary and post-secondary foreign language requirements were eliminated due to a striking decline in federal funding, thus causing a sharp decline in enrollments (Simon, 1991). Additionally, students had become disillusioned with the rote memorization drills of audiolingualism and perhaps their lack of success with speaking the target language. As a reaction to these developments, among others, communicative language teaching (CLT) came to the forefront. The foundation of CLT grew from several different origins, thus there is little consensus on the aspects of which it is comprised. Considered a revolution by researchers and practitioners, it may be considered an umbrella for some of the more popular approaches of the last three decades:
Functional-Notionalism; Humanistic, including teaching techniques such as Total Physical Response (Asher, 1969) and Community Language Learning (Curran, 1976); Proficiency-Oriented Instruction; and the Monitor Model (Krashen, 1985).

Rather than seen as a system for syntactic rules, in CLT, language is viewed as a system for the expression of meanings (Nunan, 1999). Endemic to CLT is a theoretical view of language learning that is functional: language is for communication—for filling a gap that requires negotiation and transaction, and; communicative competence is much more than habits—it is about creative ability that develops through real communication. Thus, class work must prepare students for these experiences of negotiation. The focus, therefore, is on content with all five language components (listening, reading, speaking, writing, and culture studies) viewed as important. Grammar is learned inductively, through communication, rather than being taught directly. Students learn by doing in authentic situations within the classroom. The authentic situations, often task-based, provide students opportunities to learn about little c cultural nuances in the target culture, such as inquiring about the metro system and making purchases. The wide variety of materials used to teach from a CLT approach often support the teaching of culture, such as authentic realia including signs, maps, and advertisements.

Today, most L2 teachers, elementary through tertiary levels, ascribe to teaching in some sort of eclectic communicative fashion (Higgs, 1984). Interestingly, students expect to be able to speak a foreign or second language after even a short time in the classroom (Reagan & Osborn, 2002). Curricular guidelines often note spoken communication as a first priority for student outcomes.

The Proficiency Movement
Among the competing methodologies since the time of the audiolingual method, no one approach has evolved as the solution for FL teaching. However, once the notion of “proficiency as the organizing principle” became popular, the search for the perfect universal method became less important because current practices support and encourage teachers to draw from many different approaches to teach toward proficiency goals (Higgs, 1984, p. 4). Furthermore, in FL learning, there are five areas to develop (reading, writing, listening, speaking, and culture), thus it seems likely that no one method could possibly be best for teaching all of them.

The proficiency movement owes much of its popularity to the functional-notional syllabus, which stood as an alternative to the traditional grammatical syllabus. Rather than organize the course content by vocabulary and grammar topics, the functional-notional syllabus is based upon developing language in real-life contexts for a particular purpose (Liskin-Gasparro, 1984). The content, or notions, are placed in contexts in which they can be readily used, such as asking questions and expressing disagreement, as opposed to the more traditional linear practices of learning interrogative words separate from the conjugations of present tense verbs separate from vocabulary around travel or greetings. For assessment, rather than merely checking for spelling and linguistic accuracy, the functional-notional syllabus examines accuracy as well as the ability to complete the function and use appropriate content. Likewise, the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) movement emerged based upon functions, as opposed to specific grammatical structures, in which the learner needed to become proficient.

The proficiency movement, grounded in the nonhierarchical interrelationship of function, content, and accuracy, led to the development of the American Council on the
Teaching of Foreign Languages’ (ACTFL) Provisional Proficiency Guidelines (1982). The goal of the guidelines is language proficiency, “the ability to function effectively in the language in real-life contexts” (Liskin-Gasparro, 1984, p. 12). The guidelines, motivated by the call from both within and outside the profession for increased accountability (J. Bennett, M. Bennett & Allen, 1999), and based upon years of empirical evidence rather than hypothetical descriptions (Omaggio, 1984), consist of a series of descriptions of proficiency levels for speaking, listening, writing, and reading. As an organizing principle, the proficiency guidelines serve to help teachers sequence learning objectives; thus, the various methods, approaches, and materials support those objectives.

The ACTFL proficiency guidelines were a first step for developing proficiency-based objectives that helped FL teachers designate what students should be able to do with the language at each level of learning. The goal of proficiency in all skills in the target language requires that students demonstrate what they can do with the language within specific contexts. It is with this notion that the inextricable intertwining of culture and language warrants attention. Prior to recent writings about the importance of this interrelationship (Kramsch, 1991; Lange, 1999; Moore, 1996), a food and festivals approach to teaching culture predominated, and culture-based research was almost nonexistent (Lange, 1999). Based upon several occurrences (e.g., decline of number of students studying foreign languages, loss of federal funds for programs, boredom with rote memorization, and frustration with the inability to use the FL in authentic settings and in meaningful and creative ways) the functional-notional syllabus and the proficiency movement gained in popularity. Placing culture at the core of the FL curriculum has evolved over the last two decades from both the ACTFL proficiency guidelines, where
content and language are integrated, and from the introduction of national standards for FL education (J. Bennett et al., 1999).

Summary

As a result of the evolution of SLA theories, the methods for FL teaching have progressed from grammatical to communicative and proficiency-based approaches. Although some of the theories I discussed present very different views of L1 and L2 learning, Lightbown and Spada (1999) suggest that each theory may help to explain different aspects of children’s language development. For example, behaviorist theory may explain the acquisition of vocabulary and grammatical morphemes (e.g., -ing, ed). The innatist or Universal Grammar theory may be most plausible in explaining acquisition of complex grammar. Finally, interactionist theory supports understanding how students relate form and meaning in language, how they interact in conversations, and how they learn to use language properly.

Interestingly, my review of the literature of L2 language theories revealed very little attention paid to the teaching of culture in the U.S. prior to the 1970s. In fact, if one were inclined to take Kelly’s (1969) comprehensive text, 25 Centuries of Language Teaching, and condense all of the references to culture teaching, there would be no more than five pages. Likewise, Stern’s (1983) oft-cited historical review, Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching, consisting of almost 600 pages, cites culture or culture teaching on only approximately 25 pages. Thus, although foreign language teachers have long proclaimed the importance of teaching/learning culture (Lange, 1999; Omaggio Hadley, 2001; Stern, 1983), it has not received the same prominence in the literature and has remained a superficial element of FL teaching. Today, however, as a result of the
proficiency movement of the 1970s and 1980s, as well as the publication and use of the National Standards (1996), there is currently much more literature about the teaching of cultures. In the next section, I discuss the national standards, particularly as they relate to teaching cultures, and present two studies: the first explores the quality of the standards, the second examines elementary and secondary teachers’ attitudes and use of the standards. Subsequently, I introduce Ohio’s own state FL curricular model and delineate the objectives expected of the students in the classes of the teachers involved in this study.

National and State Guidelines

The study of another language enables the student to understand a different culture on its own terms. The exquisite connections between the culture that is lived and the language that is spoken can only be realized by those who possess a knowledge of both. American students need to develop an awareness of other people’s world views, of their unique way of life, and of the patterns of behavior which order their world, as well as an awareness of their contributions to the world at large and the solutions they offer to the common problems of humankind. Such awareness will help combat the ethnocentrism that often dominates the thinking of our young people. (Standards for Foreign Language Learning, 1996, p. 43)

National Guidelines

From the proficiency movement of the 1970s and 1980s, ACTFL created the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (1982, 1986). These guidelines provide a common metric for measuring performance in speaking, reading, writing, and listening. The common metrics helped to begin conversations around performance assessment. Ten years later, in an effort to create a guide defining what all students should know and be able to do as a result of FL instruction, ACTFL developed Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century (Standards, 1996), The standards were based upon a functional and interactional theory of language and a view of language learning built
around communicative competence (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The task force charged
with this ambitious endeavor began with standards that encompassed communication and
culture. As their work progressed, they realized that the traditional notion of the four
separate skills of speaking, reading, writing, and listening, as distinguished in the
proficiency guidelines, no longer reflected how people learn and communicate (Phillips,
1999). Thus, they developed five interdependent and nonhierarchical goal areas, known
as the Five C’s: communication (communicate in a language other than English), cultures
(gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures), connections (connect with other
disciplines and acquire information), comparisons (develop insight into the nature of
language and culture), and communities (participate in multilingual communities at home
and around the world) (Standards, 1996). Culture is listed as a separate entity, as content
in its own right, but is also intertwined with and serves as the context for each of the
other four goals.

The Standards use a generally understood description of culture--the philosophical
perspectives, the behavioral practices, and the products of a society--as the basis for their
cultural content standards. Thus, the traditional culture-teaching dichotomy of Big C
versus little c culture is now viewed as inextricably woven, as well as a description that
no longer encapsulates the culture learning described in the cultures goal. By examining
the
perspectives of a target culture’s products and practices, the standards aim to help students gain an “insider’s” perspective, therefore improving cross-cultural awareness (p. 49).

Divided among the Five C’s are eleven standards; the following three directly relate to culture teaching/learning:

- Cultures Standard 2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied.
- Cultures Standard 2.2: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied.
- Comparisons Standard 4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through the comparisons of the cultures studied and their own. (Standards, 1996, p. 9)

Moreover, each standard contains sample progress indicators for grades 4, 8, and 12. Below are the grade 12 sample progress indicators for standard 2.1, which provide readers with an example of the knowledge and behaviors expected of students at approximately the same level of the classrooms I observed:

- Students interact in a variety of cultural contexts that reflect both peer-group and adult activities within the culture studied, using the appropriate verbal and nonverbal cues.
- Students learn about and participate in age-appropriate cultural practices, such as games, sports, and entertainment.
- Students identify, analyze, and discuss various patterns of behavior or interaction typical of the culture studied.
Students identify, examine, and discuss connections between cultural perspectives and socially approved behavioral patterns.

Since the introduction of the ACTFL standards, there has been more attention paid to the teaching of cultures (Phillips, 1999). This development seems to be due to the fact that culture permeates all of the standards. However, even though the standards may have revolutionized the FL field at the theoretical or curricular level, they are wanting in two important areas. First, the standards lack specific information on how to structure culture learning and how to integrate language and culture learning. Second, the cultures standards, based upon understanding the relationships among the practices, products and perspectives of the target cultures, lack an emphasis on sociopolitical issues such as race, class, gender, immigration, multiculturalism, ethnocentrism, and stereotyping. There have been few research studies examining the use and effectiveness of the national standards (e.g., Lange, 1997; Phillips, 1996; Solomon, 1997; Wood, 1999). In the next section I discuss two studies of the national standards that are most relevant to my discussion of the standards. The first study explores teachers’ awareness of the national standards; the second study examines the quality of the national standards.

Research Studies on the National Standards


In Wood’s (1999) article on research examining the use of the national and state standards, she discussed the findings of a survey designed by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and reported by Solomon (1997). The survey was used “to determine the effect of national and state standards on public and private foreign language teachers in grades K-12” (Wood, 1999, p. 436). The findings showed that 62% of the FL teachers
who were surveyed stated that they were aware of national or state standards (p. 436).

Results of the survey also showed that 56% of secondary FL teachers’ curricula changed
due to such awareness. Curriculum changes that teachers made due to awareness
included: encouraging authentic use of the target language, focusing on proficiency,
integrating culture, planning activity-based lessons, and adding an aural/oral component
(Solomon, 1997, as cited in Wood, 1999, p. 438). The teachers who stated that they were
aware of the standards but did not change their teaching provided the following reasons:
their district had no curriculum, no time, and no money; or that their curriculum was
already based on the national standards. Thus, Wood concluded that, “when teachers are
aware of national and state foreign language standards, the majority of these teachers will
incorporate the standards in their teaching” (p. 438).

I find Wood’s conclusion encouraging but am concerned about information that was
not provided in her article. First, her article did not report the reasons teachers were not
aware of the standards. Second, incorporating the standards and developing curricula
based upon the standards are two different actions. Although incorporating them may be
a start, it clearly does not mean that teachers are approaching their language and culture
teaching from a more informed philosophy with culture at the core.
Lange (1999).

Lange (1999) believes communication and culture are the core of the national standards; communication is the *how* of the standards and culture is the *what*. Thus, he posits that culture pervades the other goal areas of cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. With the goal of determining the quality of the cultures standards, Lange (1997) conducted a study by funneling the grades 4, 8, and 12 sample progress indicators for all the standards, minus the communication standards, through two different filters used in education: a filter for cognitive objectives by Bloom (1956) and a filter for affective objectives by Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia (1964) (Lange, 1999, p. 64). Both filters consisted of five to six areas, respectively, hierarchically arranged from less complicated to more complicated. For cognitive learning, the areas were knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Related to the affective learning filter, the areas were receiving, responding, valuing, organization, and characterization by a value. Thus, cognitive learning, for example, was considered less complicated if students were merely acquiring or comprehending.

The results of his analysis of the role of culture in the national standards indicated that there is a strong emphasis in the areas of knowledge and comprehension in the cognitive area. For the affective area, receiving and responding were most prominent. The findings, Lange suggests, show that there is a need for developing expanded progress indicators. Therefore, in the cognitive area, students could and should be involved in activities such as applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating (more complicated activities), rather than simply obtaining knowledge and comprehending (less complicated activities). Likewise, in the affective realm, expanded progress indicators are needed so that students
are valuing, conceptualizing, organizing, and characterizing their own values (more complicated activities), rather than merely receiving and responding (less complicated activities). In sum, Lange found the culture standards (eight of the eleven total standards) “credible, flexible, and useful,” adding that “they project high expectations” (p. 70). On the other hand, he acknowledged that the standards are problematic due to a discrepancy between the standards and the performance indicators. Whereas the standards project more complicated performances, their respective performance indicators project uncomplicated performances.

One way to begin to resolve the problems discovered in the two studies I presented, is to continue research on and related to the national standards. Furthermore, research should continue on the standards of those states that have adopted the national standards as their foundation. The continued lack of research on culture teaching/learning in the classroom setting troubles me. As Lange (1999) points out, “research of either a quantitative or qualitative nature on the teaching and learning of culture in language learning is almost nonexistent. We have little to go on…” (p. 59). Through an intense literature review, Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein, and Colby (1999) reported the same lack of empirical studies with culture teaching and learning.

State Guidelines

In 1983, in response to growing demand for accountability, the State Board of Education in Ohio began requiring competency-based education in the areas of English composition, math, and reading. Over the next ten years, Ohio’s Department of Education was directed by the Board of Education to develop competency-based model programs for many other disciplines, including foreign languages in 1993. Adopted in
1996 by the Ohio State Board of Education, *Foreign Languages: Ohio's Model Competency-Based Program*, was designed with the major purposes of providing “standards for optimal learning experiences in foreign languages for students in Ohio schools” and “to better guarantee correspondence among the written, implemented, and assessed curricula in Ohio’s schools” (Ohio Department of Education, 1996, p. 2).

Based upon the goals of the national standards, the Ohio model’s four instructional strands are a framework for organizing instructional and performance objectives. Developed for each level from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grades, the strands are: cultural knowledge; multidisciplinary connections, information, and knowledge; insights into the nature of language and culture; and participation in multilingual communities at home and around the world. Ohio’s model suggests that teachers will use the flexibility and ideas afforded them from the instructional strands to blend ideas from each strand. Thus, for example, a teacher could pull one instructional objective from each strand and combine them into one major instructional objective to be used in a Spanish Four (eleventh grade) unit on immigration.4

Similar to the national standards, culture permeates all four instructional strands in Ohio’s model. Specifically, the intent of the cultural knowledge strand is to focus on the content component of culture which emphasizes the interrelationships between language and culture: “communication skills develop as learners explore, identify, discuss, and analyze the perspectives, practices, and products of the target cultures” (Ohio Department of Education, 1996, p. 21). Below are the five specific objectives of the cultural knowledge strand for eleventh grade students and examples of the knowledge and
behaviors expected of students in the same grade as the majority of the students at approximately the same level as the classrooms I observed. The objectives state that the learner will:

1. use appropriate language and gestures in a wide range of social contexts.
2. identify and describe recent trends in social patterns and conventions of the target culture(s).
3. explain features of American culture which may be misunderstood by people in the target culture(s) (e.g., use of leisure time, teacher-student relationships, tendency to display material wealth, role of the federal government, etc.).
4. discuss similarities and differences between attitudes and behaviors of adolescents in the home and target cultures (e.g., recreational and leisure time activities, upbringing, behavior at home and school, attitude toward education, family relationships, attitudes toward money, etc.).
5. modify personal opinions, interpretations, explanations, and conclusions based on new information. (p. 74)

For each grade level there are also eight sample performance objectives provided. The following eleventh grade sample performance objective introduces an assessment activity on the theme of immigration: “The learner will obtain information (via interview questionnaire, letters, e-mail) from people of the target culture(s) who have immigrated to the United States, and report on their experiences/feelings in the new culture” (p. 77). Although the sample performance objectives, such as this one on immigration, are devoid

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4 I present immigration as an example because both of the participants in this study taught culture units on the subject of immigration.
of specific assessment benchmarks, they do provide ideas for practical and interesting challenges upon completing each unit of study.

Although I was unable to locate published research exploring Ohio’s model for foreign languages, I include here considerations that are important. First, Ohio’s model appears complex because it presents multiple informative areas of focus to consider prior to curricular development based upon this model. The areas are: four different instructional strands, each containing as many as nine specific objectives; suggested activities following some of the specific objectives; eight performance objectives for each grade; a scope and sequence that includes multiple entry points; and multiple stages of language development to consider. Nevertheless, what may seem to be unfavorable in one respect may be received as desirable in another. Once FL teachers devote time to thoroughly examining Ohio’s model, they will undoubtedly discover a wealth of thoughtful insights and ideas as well as statements about the nature of FL education drawn from the research and writings that have advanced the proficiency movement and development of the national standards. For example, the document provides summaries of assumptions the task force believes to be true of many important pedagogical themes: how students learn a foreign language as well as the importance of teaching for proficiency and assessing for communication.

As described in the state and national documents, it is expected that the national standards, Ohio’s own model, and local districts, will inform and influence each other. The national standards are broad, listing goals, standards, and sample progress indicators; the state and district documents narrow the focus so that each district may tailor content, methods, and assessment best suited for their students. Ultimately, the national and state
documents influence the district curriculum, but it is each local district curriculum that dominates what teachers are to be held accountable for teaching.

Summary

Prior to the national standards, culture “remained at the periphery,” and was referred to “as a fifth skill, […] a culture note at the bottom of a textbook page, or a Friday “fun” activity” (Phillips, 1999, p. 8). Teachers taught the culture they knew intimately and students learned random items or pieces of cultural information. The new culture standards and instructional objectives take an anthropologist’s approach by examining products and practices to gain insights into perspectives of the target cultures. Thus, the perspectives, practices, and products are the content and the performance objectives are met through understanding by means of demonstration and comparison. Emphasis, then, is on student performance as opposed to teacher approaches and methods. Therefore, within both the national standards and Ohio’s FL model, culture is a defining element of language teaching and learning.

The Teaching of Cultures

Descriptions of Culture

As the proficiency movement and communicative language teaching have evolved, so have the writings for meaningful culture study. It is that area of research and writings, based upon culture teaching and learning as a process, that I focus on in this section. Furthermore, where appropriate in this section, I discuss reactions by leading FL and culture writers to the inventories/theories/models I reviewed. A pervasive issue with the culture-teaching literature is that theories and approaches have often been prescribed and described, but there is clearly a lack of research studying the effectiveness and value of
the models (Lange, 1999). The focus of the small body of published research on the
teaching of cultures at the secondary level has focused on the amount of instructional
time devoted to culture teaching (Strasheim, 1981), or on instructional techniques that
generally teach a more traditional view of culture consisting of a combination of both Big
C elitist culture and small c everyday culture, together forming an information-based
cultural orientation (Hendon, 1980; Hickey, 1989).

A postmodern perspective of culture sees cultural understanding as a practice that is
socially constructed, where culture is perpetually in flux. This perspective of culture
eschews the notion of culture as unrelated facts for memorizing or unproblematic
curricular content, and proposes a view of culture that is about the process of discovery
and meaning making. What is attempted with culture learning, in this process, “is the
understanding and creation of personal meaning in relationship to another culture”
(Lange, 1999, p. 65). As Kramsch (1991) points out, this view of culture learning is the
context in which a FL should be taught. Atkinson (1999) believes the most appropriate
perspective is one that balances the traditional view with the newer critical agenda.
Critical, in this sense, is concerned with addressing issues of oppression and social justice
such as discrimination and stereotyping. For the purpose of this study of successful
Spanish teachers of high school students, I used a balanced perspective of both views.
However, there is very little published research on both the newer and balanced
perspectives. Consequently, I was unable to locate any research, particularly in
qualitative form, on the pedagogical practices of secondary FL educators who teach
culture.

*Historical Movements in Culture Teaching*
Kramsch (2002), in a talk entitled *The Predicament of Culture in Language Study*, concluded that:

…the teaching of culture in language study has moved from *cultural knowledge* to *cultural competence* to the much more complex level of *intercultural awareness* on the discourse level. Culture is located in the myriad ways of talking, writing, emailing, keeping silent. It is to be found in the social genres we use, in our lexical and grammatical choices, in the historical/ideological/emotional resonances of our metaphors, in our very choice of code. Our increasingly multilingual, multicultural students are adding, through the language we teach, yet another dimension of self to their semiotic potential and, ultimately, to their personal, social and cultural identity. (p. 1, as cited in Lazarton, 2003, p. 241)

According to Kramsch, divergent philosophies of culture teaching historically have existed at different periods of time: cultural knowledge, cultural competence, and intercultural awareness. In the first section of this chapter, I outlined some of the more prominent theories, approaches, movements, and methods in FL teaching/learning over the last 150 years in the U.S. In that synthesis, I also provided the information I discovered about the role of culture in the theories I described. Clearly, prior to the proficiency movement, most of the theories ascribed importance to acquisition of cultural knowledge, especially through reading and translating literature as well as discussing basic cultural facts and information. At the outset of the proficiency movement, cultural proficiency/competence--the ability to function effectively in social situations in real-life contexts⁵--became more popular. The current philosophy, as the basis for the national standards (1996), posits instead that intercultural awareness should be the goal for culture learning. The introduction to the cultures standards states:

> American students need to develop an awareness of other people’s world views, of their unique way of life, and of the patterns of behavior which order their world, as well as learn about contributions of other cultures to the world at large.

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⁵ See Omaggio (1986) for a detailed discussion of competence versus performance as well as various frameworks of grammatical and communicative competencies.
and the solutions they offer to the common problems of humankind. (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1999, p. 47)

Additionally, professional FL organizations such as ACTFL, among others, believe intercultural awareness to be “the true content” of FL courses, rather than grammar and vocabulary (p. 47).

_Theoretical Models for Teaching Culture_

_Introduction_

Recent models of and writings on culture generally view culture as dynamic and constantly changing and from a constructivist viewpoint where “…meaning is continuously being constructed through human interaction and communication” (Paige et al., 1999, p. 50). Thus, culture is seen as constantly changing and the cultural members as embodying a wide range of behaviors and value orientations. Over the last two decades, since the surge in popularity of the proficiency movement, FL teachers have worked to increase their students’ cultural understandings (Mantle-Bromley, 1993). Writings in support of FL and L2 teachers using global and multicultural approaches have evolved and emerged. Robinson (1978) was one of the first to encourage FL educators to accept partial responsibility for students’ multicultural skills, rather than merely focusing on development of language skills and traditional cultural understanding (Mantle-Bromley, 1993). Other L2 writers promoting the same message and outlining rationale and methods concurred, such as Strasheim (1979) and Kramsch (1991, 1993).

Kramsch (1991, 1993, 1997) has written extensively on the need to teach language in the context of culture. Her research has shown that most U.S. states recognize language study as essential to “this nation’s security,” both political and economic (1991, p. 221).
For example, many states agree with Wisconsin’s support of foreign language learning for the “purposes of cultivating international understanding, responsibility, and effective participation in a global age” (1991, p. 221). However, in spite of culture being considered an important aspect of FL content, it is often assumed that language study will automatically lead to cross-cultural understanding, and thus to world peace, without a foregrounding of culture. Robinson (1978) has coined this the “magic-carpet-ride-to-another-culture syndrome” and has shown that the research does not support this assumption (Robinson-Stuart & Nocon, 1996, p. 432). For example, in the oft-cited St. Lambert study in Canada, an English-only control group and an experimental group of students immersed in French throughout grades one through five were compared (Tucker & D’Anglejan, 1973). The results showed that the children in the experimental group had become functionally bilingual and showed more cognitive flexibility than the children in the control group. However, the attitudes of the children toward French speakers were essentially the same for both groups, and disappointingly, the attitudes were negative. Additional studies report findings similar to those of the St. Lambert study (e.g., Hamers, 1984; Massey, 1986; Stelly, 1991).

In this section I describe several models that laid the groundwork for meaningful culture study. Although, as I noted in previous sections, FL teachers have traditionally advocated for the study of culture, Omaggio (1986) reveals that the FL profession did not begin “dealing seriously with the issue of infusing cultural goals into the curriculum [until] the early 1970s” (p. 360). One of the reasons for this, according to Lange (1999), is that prior to the development of the national standards in 1996, the FL teaching profession was unable to agree on two fundamental issues: what culture to teach as well
as *how* to integrate language and culture (p. 58). Currently, there are a number of frameworks and models for culture teaching/learning and for developing intercultural awareness that may be applicable to L2 learning. The models I describe in the following section are movements toward *intercultural awareness*, the most recent of the three cultural movements Kramsch (2002) describes.

Brooks (1968, 1975, 1997) was one of the first to offer the FL field a rich resource beyond culture as literature and/or food and festivals. I begin with his work from the early 1970s and consider additional models that followed: H. Nostrand (1967, 1974) and H. Nostrand and F. Nostrand (1971), Seelye (1984, 1987), Hanvey (1979), Galloway (1992), Kramsch (1991, 1993), and M. Bennett (1986, 1993). Although there are additional culture-teaching frameworks (Byram 1989; Egan, 1979; Lafayette, 1997; Ortuño, 1991, among others), I found these to be both prominent and relevant to my study.
Brooks’ Description of Culture

Stemming from the issue of not having a succinct definition of culture, Brooks (1968, 1971, 1997) developed a description of culture for FL pedagogical purposes. He began his description with a list of what culture is not: it is not the same as geography, history, folklore, sociology, literature, and/or civilization. Although these areas are important and interrelated, Brooks believed that in culture one must never lose sight of the individual.

Brooks’ five-part definition contains the following:

- Culture 1: Biological growth
- Culture 2: Personal refinement
- Culture 3: Literature and the fine arts
- Culture 4: Patterns for living
- Culture 5: The sum total of a way of life. (1997, p. 22)

According to Brooks, FL teachers should focus on Culture 4, with emphasis on the individual’s everyday life. He specifically defined Culture 4 as:

…the individual’s role in the unending kaleidoscope of life situations of every kind and the rules and models for attitude and conduct in them. By reference to these models, every human being, from infancy onward, justifies the world to himself as best as he can, associates with those around him, and relates to the social order to which he is attached. (Brooks, 1997, p. 23)

Cultures 3 and 5 also offer cultural topics that may be appropriate for teaching in a classroom setting, thus Brooks suggests adding elements of Cultures 3 and 5 as competence increases. Furthermore, Brooks identified ten points upon which a culture-teaching plan should focus: (1) symbolism, (2) value, (3) authority, (4) order, (5) ceremony, (6) love, (7) honor, (8) humor, (9) beauty, and (10) spirit (1997, p. 28). The definitions and points are assembled and layered in several phases. In Phase I, students
learn the language plus Culture 4; in Phase II, students continue learning the language and Culture 4, but start to add some of Cultures 3 and 5; in Phase III, students continue in-depth study of the FL, plus a systematic study of culture through the ten-point profile (Omaggio Hadley, 1993).

Interestingly, I was unable to locate published studies examining Brooks’ definition, but found that other writers, such as Nostrand, 1967; H. Nostrand and F. Nostrand, 1971; and Seelye, 1984, designed models based upon their beliefs that Brooks’ model was lacking procedural knowledge to help students observe and analyze cultural aspects and patterns. In addition, Allen (1985) noted that Brooks’ description was too difficult to convert to pedagogical practice, leaving many questions unanswered, such as: How can one tell when students are ready for a given phase of instruction? What types of strategies should be used? And what materials should be used and where can they be obtained? The following two models by the Nostrands (1974) and Seelye (1984, 1987) both address the curricular deficiencies of Brooks’ culture definition.

Nostrands’ Model

In Howard and Frances Nostrand’s (1970, 1971) culture writings, they posed common culture-teaching concerns aimed at: curriculum selection; the techniques, with a critical view to the purposes; materials; and knowledge acquisition. They believed that curriculum development should not be based around a definition such as Brooks offered, but rather through nine curricular objectives or understandings that students should develop. Lafayette and Schulz (1975, 1997) provide the Nostrands’ objectives in an abbreviated form, stating that students should have the ability to:

1. React appropriately in a social situation.
2. Describe, or ascribe to the proper part of the population, a pattern in the culture or social behavior.

3. Recognize a pattern when it is illustrated.

4. “Explain” a pattern.

5. Predict how a pattern is likely to apply in a given situation.

6. Describe or manifest an attitude important for making oneself acceptable in the foreign society.

7. Evaluate the form of a statement concerning a culture pattern.

8. Describe or demonstrate defensible methods of analyzing a sociocultural whole.

9. Identify basic human purposes that make significant the understanding that is being taught. (1997, pp. 578-579)

The Nostrands’ model has been important in the evolution of writing about and teaching cultures because it clarifies important themes to be integrated into FL classrooms and materials. However, in Moore’s (1991) critique of Nostrands’ original model of objectives, she found that the objectives were geared toward a view of culture as static, as teachable facts, without examining the underlying values or the role of the participant in the creation of culture. Additionally, Lafayette and Schulz (1997) express concern that it may be unrealistic for many students to develop several of the goals listed; thus, ascertaining appropriateness for students is an issue. There have been many modifications made to the Nostrands’ nine objectives, including the following by Seelye (1974, 1984).

Seelye’s Model
Seelye (1974, 1984) modified the Nostrands’ model and developed how-to texts for teaching for intercultural learning and communication. From the Nostrands’ original nine objectives, Seelye created seven goals of cultural instruction. I include the main tenets of each goal here:

1. The sense, or functionality, of culturally conditioned behavior.
2. Interaction of language and social variables.
3. Conventional behavior in common situations.
4. Cultural connotations of words and phrases.
5. Evaluating statements about a society.
6. Researching another culture.
7. Attitudes toward other cultures.

This model provided valuable thinking and ideas for literature that followed. For example, as the foundation for her four categories of cultural understanding, Galloway (1984) used Seelye’s goals one, three, four, five, and six (detailed later in this chapter). However, Allen (1985) found that there were unresolved issues with Seelye’s model. She noted that Seelye’s model lacks both specifics related to sequencing the objectives as well as techniques for achieving them. Furthermore, specifics are lacking about how to incorporate skill building within the secondary curriculum in the U.S., where most foreign language teachers are not native speakers, and thus do not have similar experiences upon which to rely. Additionally, Seelye did not include details about how to integrate cultural skill-building into curricula which are traditionally based upon grammar teaching and learning.

Hanvey’s Stages
Although Hanvey’s (1979) four stages of cross-cultural awareness were written 17 years before the publication of the national guidelines, I found his model to be current, relevant, and to contain some similarities to the approaches emphasizing multicultural content integration (Banks, 2003) that I used in this study. Like Banks, much of Hanvey’s work has been directed at cross-cultural awareness within the social studies discipline, rather than the FL discipline.

Hanvey’s stages, as revised slightly by Galloway (1997), measure learners’ levels of cultural understanding: tourism and textbook stereotypes, culture conflicts, intellectual analysis, and cultural immersion. Hanvey believes that a cross-cultural difference or ‘conflict’ with trying to sift second-culture data through the first/native-culture framework is necessary for students to begin to make a personal investment in culture learning. Thus, learners need particular types of data to create the conflict, in order to help students move to subsequent levels of cross-cultural understanding. Each stage is qualified by the type of data or information learners need as well as descriptions of how learners may interpret the target culture.

- **Stage 1, Tourism and Textbook Stereotypes:** Data include information about superficial stereotypes; learners interpret the target culture as exotic and bizarre.

- **Stage 2, Culture Conflicts:** Data include significant and subtle contrasts between native and foreign cultures; learners interpret the target culture as unbelievable and irrational.

- **Stage 3, Intellectual Analysis:** Data include significant and subtle contrasts between cultures; learners interpret the target culture as believable.
• Stage 4, Cultural Immersion: Data provide awareness as insiders; learners interpret the target culture as believable from subjective familiarity.

(Galloway, 1997, p. 266)

Hanvey’s stages are distinct from other models in two primary ways. First, Hanvey’s stages serve as a scheme for measuring cross-cultural awareness, thus they form an assessment tool. Second, the intent of Hanvey’s fourth stage, cultural immersion, is that a level of empathy is achieved through living in and through the culture, thus precluding achievement for most secondary students in the U.S. who do not take advantage of study-abroad opportunities.

Galloway’s Framework

In Galloway’s (1984) work, she discussed other culture teaching and learning models (e.g., Hanvey, 1979; Seelye, 1984), as well as created her own framework. Her four categories of cultural understanding are based upon process skills; she suggests using these categories for organizing instruction. The following categories, with similarities to several of Seelye’s seven goals, consist of both factual and sociolinguistic content: convention, connotation, conditioning, and comprehension.

The goal of instruction within the convention category is to focus on everyday situations in the target culture (Seelye’s Goal 3). Galloway suggests clustering similar cultural topics, for example, cultural aspects that deal with food: mealtimes, types of foods, conventions of etiquette, making reservations, ordering a meal, etc. Therefore, culture-specific facts and behaviors are examined. In the second category, connotation, students are given opportunities to examine how the underlying meanings of words are derived by their cultural frame of reference (Seelye’s Goal 4) (Omaggio, 1993).
Galloway provides examples such as how time, beauty, food, and family may be viewed and understood very differently in different cultures. *Conditioning*, the third category, is based upon the notion that all people respond in culturally conditioned ways to basic human needs (Seelye’s Goal 1). Thus, in the FL classroom, students may have opportunities to learn to interpret behaviors that are different from their own, “without making judgments based on their own standards” (p. 370). Consequently, students may develop empathy for other cultures. In the fourth category, *comprehension*, students learn to attend to the sources of their information, examine their stereotypes, avoid generalizations, and learn conflict resolution through experience-based simulations (Seelye’s Goals 5 and 6).

Galloway’s framework of four categories is amenable to the FL classroom due to the range of culture-specific goals enacted through culture-general practices. However, Galloway’s framework of cultural understanding does not provide specifics about curricular integration. And, although it includes culture-general practices, it does not include specific expectations for learners to act upon their empathetic perspective.
Kramsch’s Framework

Kramsch (1991, 1993, 1997) has written at length on context and culture. One area of her work focuses on the concept of critical dialog—the need for students to interact with language and within different contexts between students and texts, students and teacher, and responses of students to other students. Rather than concentrate on listening, reading, writing, and speaking, per se, language learning is aimed at the integration and interrelationships examining multiple voices, interactions with texts, and the subjectivity of home and target cultures. Thus, as students learn about culture, there is a focus on their own individual experiences and perceptions. Therefore, as Lange notes when commenting on Kramsch’s orientation to the integration of language and culture, “there is a personal understanding of culture that cannot be given through transmitted information” (1999a, p. 124). The focus is learner-centered; Kramsch believes that if culture learning is to be meaningful, it must be about the learner developing meaning, rather than teachers giving meaning to what is taught. Kramsch calls this work critical language pedadogy.

Aligned with the work of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970) and critical applied linguistics (Pennycook, 1990; Kanpol, 1990), the personal meaning that students create for themselves, to make sense of the language and culture learning in their FL classrooms, is best conceived of as a third culture or a third “place” in the classroom (Kramsch, 1993, p. 257). In this third place, rather than become native Spanish speakers or ‘little Spanish speakers’, students are given opportunities to reflect upon the native and target cultures. “From the clash between the familiar meanings of the native culture and the unexpected meanings of the target culture, meanings that were taken for granted are
suddenly questioned, challenged, problematized” (p. 238). Thus, students “define for themselves what this ‘third place’ that they have engaged in seeking will look like” (p. 257). It is the critical nature of this pedagogy that may makes it less attractive to tertiary educators who may not feel comfortable encouraging problematizing and challenging discussions.

*M. Bennett’s Model*

M. Bennett (1986, 1993) created a model based upon developing intercultural competence, where students gain the ability to relate in a variety of cultural contexts. This model served as the major conceptual framework for Paige, Lange, and Yershova’s (1999) edited text, *Culture as the Core: Integrating Culture into the Language Curriculum*.

M. Bennett, J. Bennett, and Allen (1999) describe intercultural competence as “the ability to recognize oneself operating in cultural context, the identification and appreciation of cultural differences, and the development of general strategies for adapting to cultural difference” (p. 21). M. Bennett created The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) based upon this description of intercultural competence. This model is divided into two sets of stages, ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism. In the ethnocentric stages, “people unconsciously experience their own cultures as central to reality. They therefore avoid the idea of cultural difference as an implicit or explicit threat to the reality of their own cultural experience” (Bennett et al., 1999, p. 23). In the ethnorelative stages, “people consciously recognize that all behavior exists in cultural context” (p. 23) Therefore, they explore cultural difference as a means of broadening their own reality and as a means to understand others. Both ethnocentrism and
ethnorelativism consist of three stages through which students progress, from the ethnocentric stages of denial, defense, and minimization, to the ethnorelative stages of acceptance, adaptation, and integration. The model proposes that the goal of culture learning is not the acquisition of content, but rather the ability to shift cultural perspectives.

Based upon the DMIS, J. Bennett (1993) developed a formula for making levels of language learning parallel with the DMIS (Bennett et al., 1999). The intention is that when learners are examining a culture topic that is demanding or stretches them from their comfort zones, the teaching/learning activities are less complex, and vice versa. Thus, it is expected that teachers will consider the level of difficulty of the cultural content and balance it with an appropriate method for teaching that will equate to development of intercultural sensitivity.

The DMIS is complex and assumes that students are at a maturity level appropriate to transcend ethnocentricity. However, it has several advantages for culture teaching. First, by sequencing cultural topics, teachers can parallel culture and language competence. Second, the idea motivating culture learning is the development of an intercultural mind, not discrete facts. Third, because this model takes a culture-general approach to intercultural competence, students obtain more generalizable intercultural skills. Fourth, just as L2 learners often come to understand their L1 better while studying the L2, students become more culturally self-aware as they progress through the stages and better understand the inter-relatedness of L1 and L2 learning (Bennett et al., 1999, p. 28).
Summary

Throughout each of the chapters in this study, I refer to a popular food and festivals approach to culture teaching. Originally, I intended to show how the preceding theories/approaches departed from the food and festivals orientation, but some of the models contained an approach or level approximating a food and festivals orientation. However, each also extended well beyond surface level celebrations of culture that permeate the food and festivals approach (Fecho, 2001). Importantly, Lange (1999) posits that in spite of 40 years of valuable and rich writing and ideas on teaching culture, culture teaching still remains at a superficial level. Based upon my experiences, I suggest that secondary teachers are not familiar with the culture-teaching literature and methods beyond Big C and little c culture. Furthermore, Lange observes that there is very little research to help educators make informed decisions about the integration of these models for instruction, curriculum, and assessment.

To date, progress with integrating culture and language learning has been made, yet in most classes, culture learning still remains an “extra” (Mantle-Bromley, 1993, p. 209). For example, in a comparison of culture content, Rosenbusch (1992) found elementary- and secondary-levels very similar, both containing “holiday celebrations, games, folk dances, realia, foods, and simple craft activities” (p. 129). There is very little published research on teaching cultures in the secondary FL classroom; however, in the next section I highlight a few studies with relevance to the present study.
In the following section, I outline four studies representative of the most current research, all undertaken within the last twenty years. Since much of the research on the teaching of cultures comes from self-reported data, I include one quantitative study that examined culture-teaching practices. The second study is a well-known quantitative/qualitative research project that explored possible changes in college students’ perceptions and knowledge of other cultures in beginning level Spanish classes. The third study, undertaken in England, investigated an approach to French teaching and its effects on learners’ attitudes and knowledge of French culture. The final study examined the relationship between foreign language learning and issues of social justice. 

Moore (1996)

In a survey study conducted in 1996, Moore researched topics related to culture teaching: how high school teachers teach culture, how frequently they teach culture, which techniques they judged to be more appropriate for achieving stated curricular goals, and the constraints they experienced in their efforts to teach culture. Of the 210 secondary FL teachers in New York State who responded to the mail survey, she found that 86% stated that they taught culture in more than half of their lessons and that there was a significant relationship between training and frequency in teaching culture (p. 275). Of the most common techniques used were: students reading from the textbook; students getting information from authentic material; lectures; projects; and exposure to food, songs, dances, and celebrations. Less than 25% of the teachers stated that they brought speakers into their classrooms. Among possible factors related to constraints with teaching cultures, 40% of the teachers indicated they had insufficient time, 25% indicated...
they lacked adequate instructional materials, and 23% cited lack of training. In a similar 1981 study, Strasheim found that teachers only spent 10% of teaching time on culture. Thus, Moore’s study 15 years later may suggest that there has been a dramatic increase of time dedicated to cultural instruction. Moore’s findings also identified three factors that related positively to culture teaching: teaching experience, academic qualifications, and training in teaching culture (p. 281). As is often the case with research using short survey instruments, this questionnaire did not allow for teachers to elaborate, or provide clarification, and thus it is difficult to derive deeper levels of meaning from the results.

On the whole, this study supports other literature suggesting that little has changed with how culture is taught (e.g., Byram & Morgan, 1994; Galloway, 1984; Kramsch, 1993; Lafayette, 1997). Teachers continue to use culture as a pedagogic device to break up the language learning routine or as add-ons to grammar lessons, rather than as an important topic of its own. From these findings, Moore calls for: methods courses to include culture teaching, teachers to use authentic culture materials similar to the manner in which they use authentic language materials, teachers to use authentic forms of assessment. She believes that if emphasis were placed on testing/assessing cultural knowledge, teacher education programs would develop courses designed to prepare teachers for cultural instruction.

Robinson-Stuart and Nocon (1996)

A second study worth noting, a 1991 project undertaken in Southern California by Nocon and reported by Robinson-Stuart & Nocon (1996), examined 26 third semester college Spanish students’ attitudes toward speakers of Spanish. The students completed pre- and post-intervention surveys that investigated their attitudes toward the study of
Spanish and Spanish-speaking peoples. The intervention consisted of three 50-minute class periods of training in conducting ethnographic interviews as well as background readings on culture and ethnography. The authors describe an ethnographic interview as one in which the interviewer has no agenda, rather she begins with a general question and then subsequent questions build upon the interviewee’s responses. “The interviewer’s goal is to discover the natural categories of meaning within the interviewee rather than answers to preconceived questions (p. 436). As a term project, students located native Spanish-speaking interviewees (who were often fellow students), conducted two or three interviews over the semester, and submitted reports and gave brief presentations on their case studies. Students were expected to begin and end both their interviews and oral presentations in Spanish, but were permitted to use English in between “…in order to make the experience more intellectually and affectively relevant for language novices” (Robinson-Stuart & Nocon, 1996, p. 439).

The findings of this study strongly supported the use of ethnographic interviews as a means of positively affecting students’ attitudes toward the study of Spanish and their desire to communicate with local Spanish speakers. Also, although students responded negatively to the initial introduction of the ethnography project, the postsurvey findings showed that only one student responded that the project had not been valuable and over 50% found the project very valuable. More than 50% also agreed that the project had increased their understanding of Mexican people and Mexican culture and all recommended the project for future Spanish classes.

In 1992, Robinson-Stuart and Nocon replicated this study with 39 first-semester Spanish students and obtained very similar results. Nearly identical results were obtained
in another replication by Bateman (2002) in a midwestern college setting with second semester Spanish students. It is interesting to note the success these researchers/teachers had with developing opportunities for social contact and social practice for their language students. In comparison, Moore’s survey findings outlined earlier in this section showed that contact with a native speaker was one of the least utilized practices at the secondary level for teaching about target cultures.

*The Durham Project (1985-1988)*

A third study of note, entitled “The effect of language teaching on young people’s perceptions of other cultures,” also known as the Durham project, took place from 1985 to 1988 in England (Byram & Esarte-Sarries, 1991). This study examined culture teaching practices and students’ knowledge of and attitudes toward French people and French culture. The authors investigated the concern that English is becoming an international language and that, as a result, English-speaking children may believe they do not need to learn a foreign language or gain intercultural awareness (p. 21). The authors/researchers also wanted to study teaching practices and then attempt to relate them to their effects on the learners. Two hundred students in their third year of (compulsory) secondary French were observed over eight months. They completed questionnaires and one-half of them were interviewed. Furthermore, 200 students in their final year of primary school who had not yet begun their three years of required French were surveyed and interviewed and then were followed in their language study for three years. During those three years the researchers interviewed the students’ French teachers and observed their classes. The research methodology consisted of non-participant
observation of teaching, interviews, questionnaires, and pre- and post-tests at the
beginning and end of the school year (Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein, & Colby, 1999, p. 67).

Regarding students’ attitudes, the researchers presented three significant findings: the
girls generally held more positive attitudes toward the French, the “better” classes had
more positive attitudes, and younger students were generally more prejudiced toward
specific cultural groups than older students (Paige et al., 1999, p. 81). This last finding
may be in part due to the students’ immature level of psychological development.

Concerning teachers, the findings illustrated five important points. First, in general
teachers have similar beliefs about and objectives for the value of learning foreign
languages. Second, there is great variation in approaches to teaching about cultures, but
that teaching cultures is often used as a pedagogic device to insert fun into lessons,
capture students’ attention, and contextualize language teaching, rather than teach culture
as an important domain of foreign language learning. Third, teachers have minimal
experience with the target cultures. Fourth, the researchers found that the textbook
generally dictates instruction by determining the topics for and the sequencing of lessons,
and that teachers use the textbooks extensively. Finally, the teachers expressed an
ongoing awareness of culture in the curriculum and the importance of children becoming
more tolerant of other peoples. The results from this longitudinal study are representative
of the current literature and research showing that FL teachers are concerned about issues
of ethnocentrism, tolerance, and first- and second-culture awareness, and the general
nonexistence of published practices that effectively help students in those areas in the
secondary FL classroom. From their extensive research, the authors found that there is a
contradiction between the cultural content FL teachers believe is important and the actual
content that is taught. They concluded that the teaching of “culture remains didactic, oriented towards the transmission of information” (Byram & Esarte-Sarries, 1991, p. 118).

*Kubota, Austin, and Saito-Abbott (2003)*

A final study worth examining consisted of a two-page questionnaire and a follow-up survey given to FL students at a large university in the southeast region of the U.S. Two hundred forty-four students, ranging from beginning through advanced levels of Spanish, and beginning levels of Japanese and Swahili, completed the questionnaires. The researchers sought to explore relationships among diversity within the student population (from demographic information about gender, ethnicity, and race), former and current levels of FL study, and perceptions of cultural content. The analysis most relevant to my study focused on responses to the following questions: “Does foreign language learning invite you to reflect on issues of race, gender, class, and social justice? Why or why not?” (p. 16).

In order to code and understand the data, the researchers first divided students’ responses between yes/no (does FL learning invite you to reflect on issues of race, gender, class, and social justice?). They then categorized students’ open-ended answers to “Why or why not?” into various positive and negative headings. For example, if a student responded “no” to the above question, their answer to “Why not?” was placed into one of four categories, such as “focus on language and beginning level,” or “no need or relevance to focus on these issues” or even “lack of time to discuss these issues” (Kubota et al., 2003, p. 17). Interestingly, the researchers found that among all three beginning language levels, 39% provided no response to the question. Across all three
languages, the most common reason for a positive answer related to a focus on language learning and culture, meaning that students believed culture to be an important element of the FL class. The most frequent reason for a negative answer was a focus on grammar, vocabulary and basic communication (p. 18) In other words, when asked if sociopolitical issues should be included in their FL class, those students who responded negatively felt that the focus should instead be on grammar and vocabulary to improve communication in the target language. Importantly, the advanced students responded more frequently than the beginning students that FL learning invites them to reflect on issues of race, class, gender, and social justice, and the difference was statistically significant.

The findings from this study revealed important information about students’ perceptions of the connection between FL and sociopolitical issues. Most importantly, beginning university level FL students did not see a link between FL studies and sociopolitical issues, and some students resisted discussions of such issues. Based upon this study, the authors offer many suggestions for future research and considerations for pedagogy. One important concern they raise holds that issues of social justice are important for making FL education instrumental in creating a more informed and empathetic citizenry. However, if discussions and activities around issues of social justice are better suited to advanced level FL students, it is conceivable that many FL students, the majority of whom do not continue on to advanced study, will not have the opportunity to engage in such important topics. Thus, the authors advocate incorporating social justice issues into earlier levels of FL learning. An example they provide addresses socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural inequalities when discussing occupations:

“Possible discussion questions include: Do all occupations have the same socioeconomic
reward? What kind of images of various occupations do we have in relation to social status, ethnicity, and gender role? What about in the target culture?” (Kubota et al., 2003, p. 22). Such questions address issues of inequality based upon race, class, and gender and help students make connections among cultures as well as integrate language and culture.

Conclusion

Though there is much written about the teaching of cultures in general, there is a scarcity of research on teaching cultures in the FL classroom in the United States. An historical review of the theories and methods of FL teaching shows that it was not until the rise of the proficiency movement in the early seventies that teaching about cultures at a more profound level found a context in the L2 classroom. Since the publication of ACTFL’s proficiency guidelines in 1982 and the national standards in 1996, the belief in the importance of teaching culture and integrating culture and language learning has increased. This is largely due to the fact that culture permeates the national standards, as well as many states’ guidelines, such as Ohio’s FL Model. Since the development of the national standards, much of the literature has focused on intercultural awareness and teaching directed at culture-general skills. Models and frameworks for teaching cultures have been created, yet there is little research on their effectiveness. Studies examining culture-teaching techniques continue to find that little has changed at the secondary level over the last 20 years (Moore, 1996). And, although many teachers recognize the importance of teaching about tolerance and pluralism in the FL classroom, neither they nor their students may be equipped with sufficient preparation and materials to tackle such challenging endeavors.
The evolution of the theories, guidelines, frameworks, and research on the teaching of cultures in the FL classroom, as I have presented in this chapter, clearly demonstrates much progress in the thinking around the importance of culture in FL teaching as well as teaching culture integrated with the foreign language. Nevertheless, there are gaps and contradictions in the research I reviewed. One contradiction consistently found is that FL teachers generally believe that issues of social justice related to stereotyping and immigration are important areas that should be addressed in the FL classroom. The difficulty, however, lies in moving teachers from teaching culture in the traditional sense (culture as static and objective information to be memorized) to teaching cultures using transformative and social action approaches. In the next chapter I discuss the methods I used in this study in my attempts to add to our understanding of how culture is actually taught in secondary Spanish classrooms.
“Research approaches inherently reflect our beliefs about the world we live in and want to live in” (Lather, 1991, p. 51).

The overarching question of this research study was, how do successful teachers of Spanish who profess a commitment to culture teaching, actually teach it? The term ‘successful’ was defined by each participant’s achievements and accolades. For this project, the term cultures encompassed a postmodern, emergent view that embodies a new critical agenda and that subsumes the traditional notion of teaching culture in the foreign language (FL) classroom (elitist culture and everyday culture). This perspective views culture as a process for understanding contemporary global events and developing an awareness of issues that affect Spanish speakers in central Ohio and throughout the world. As such, the theoretical framework for this study, embedded in a critical perspective of FL education, served to help identify the problem under investigation. The specific research questions were:
A. National, state, and local guidelines for teaching culture

1. How do the ACTFL standards, the State of Ohio Foreign Language Guidelines, and the local district’s graded course of study present the teaching of culture?
   
a. Are teachers familiar with the culture teaching guidelines for each of these documents?
   
b. Which of these guidelines do teachers follow?

B. Resources for teaching culture

2. What culture-teaching materials are teachers currently using?

3. With what frequency do teachers use the materials for teaching culture?

4. How do teachers use the culture-teaching materials?

C. Teachers’ pedagogical self-descriptions

5. How do teachers describe the development of their views of the teaching of cultures in the FL classroom?

6. How do teachers describe their pedagogy of culture/cultural information/content?

7. How do teachers describe their pedagogy of linguistic content?

8. How do teachers describe the political approach they take (if any) in teaching foreign languages (particularly the cultural content)?

9. How do teachers assess cultural knowledge?

D. Teachers’ perceptions of culture in the classroom.

10. What are the perceptions of successful teachers of Spanish in central Ohio of the cultures they teach?

11. What kind of cultural knowledge do teachers of Spanish in Ohio perceive their students to be learning?
Research Design and Theoretical Framework

A proliferation of epistemologies and methodologies exists within which to operate in post-positivist social inquiry, including interpretivist, critical, deconstructivist, hermeneutic, constructivist, phenomenological, and many others (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Lather, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Patton, 1990). A post-positivist researcher may transcend sub-categorical approaches of each of the previous paradigms, thus research can be feminist and neo-Marxist and postmodern and Freirian empowering research all at once. Therefore, the result of each qualitative study, even if performed using the same methods, setting, and participants, will look very different. The paradigmatic assumptions, or the place where the qualitative researcher stands, dictate a great deal about the chosen methods for conducting and writing research.

In this project I was interested in understanding how successful teachers of secondary Spanish, who profess a commitment to the teaching of cultures, help their students construct cultural knowledge. I situate myself as an interpretivist and I seek to understand how others represent their worlds symbolically through language. Furthermore, I am committed to issues of social justice and thus, use this framework to understand the culture teaching of my participants. With the use of case studies, I aimed to gain an emic perspective of how those who value teaching culture actually taught it. Though there are many definitions of what it means to be involved in the process and product of case studies (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2000; Wilson, 1979), it is both the descriptive characteristic and interpretive intent that made case study research most suitable for addressing these research questions investigating teachers’ perceptions, beliefs, and pedagogical practices (Merriam, 1998). By adopting a case study
methodology, I was able to develop rapport and trust with the participants, and learn about their thoughts and feelings. Through thick description and the possibilities for comparison offered by two case studies, the result of these case studies was “a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon” (Merriam, 1998, p. 41). It was interpretive due to the theoretical orientation combined with extensive analysis.

This post-positivist research stance was self-reflexive and challenged the dominant position of the researcher “by making the ethnographer a visible partner in dialogue, a datum himself or herself” (Fontana, 1994, p. 212, as cited in Glesne, 1999, p.15). As a post-positivist researcher, I endeavored to create a polyvocal text by using examples directly from the participants so that their voices and multiple perspectives were present. One of my goals, as with much feminist work, was a “reciprocally educative process [that] is more important than product as empowering methods contribute to consciousness-raising and transformative social action” (Lather, 1991, p.72). Because of my assumptions, I aimed for catalytic validity in the hope that from the study the participants gained self-understanding and a re-energized self-determination for teaching cultures (Lather, 1986). Thus, I hoped that our interviews, informal discussions, and debriefings would contribute to their professional lives.

Billings chronicled the philosophies and activities of the teachers and, with their help, proposed a model for culturally relevant teaching (CRT). Her study was grounded both in critical theory and interpretivism. She identified the systemic reasons for the failure of African American children in public schools and was committed, through social action, to improve how they are taught. She sought to understand the teachers’ work without developing a prescribed formula for successful teaching methods. She employed ethnographic techniques including teacher selection, teacher interviews, and classroom observations. Ladson-Billings focused on the teaching pedagogies rather than the curriculum or the students, stressing that “it is the way we teach that profoundly affects the way that students perceive the content of that curriculum” (p. 13). She foregrounded her beliefs about the political and practical activities in teaching and examined those over the course of the study. Though the styles of the teachers varied greatly, each was perceived as successful with CRT.

I used Ladson-Billings’ text as a model for this study for several reasons, including: her choice of methods; the critical and interpretive basis she used to study successful teachers of African-American children; and her goals of examining both the political and the practical (p. 14). In addition to attempting to understand how teaching was successful, she sought to understand how successful teachers helped students make connections from
the classroom to the world, in order to work toward improving the world. Her philosophy
and their successful practices of continually extending the micro setting of the classroom
to larger community and world issues resounded with me.

Reagan and Osborn’s text, *The Foreign Language Educator in Society* (2002), was
instrumental in synthesizing my concerns about the study of cultures in the Spanish
classroom. Unlike other sources to date, it closely examines critical pedagogy and the
study of foreign languages within many contexts. Previous texts that focus on critical
issues are generally aimed at the study of English as a Second Language, without
addressing the concerns specific to FL educators in the U.S. This evocative text begins by
delineating reasons why studying a foreign language in contemporary North American
society is often a relatively unsuccessful venture. Over the course of two years of high
school FL study, most students will minimally achieve survival levels of competence in
the target language. In addition to this time-related constraint, there is little external
institutional support, there is bias inherent in the choice and dialects of languages offered,
and “we are profoundly a monolingual society ideologically if not empirically” (p. 5).
Even though large numbers of students study two years of foreign language, most do not
continue beyond the second level and few students, parents, and policy makers truly
believe that knowledge of a foreign language is necessary in the job market (Omaggio
Hadley, 1993). Finally, Reagan and Osborn state that the ultimate constraint that FL
study finds itself against is that “there is widespread and general social expectation of
failure […]. Foreign language education in the United States is clearly not successful for most students, nor could it be given the way that it has been, and continues to be, implemented in the schools” (p. 6).

Reagan and Osborn (2002) claim that the most common arguments proffered by teachers and academicians for studying foreign languages, are not that credible. These justifications for language study fit into three categories: cognitive, cultural, and pragmatic (p. 4). The cognitive arguments contain more empirical data to support them than the other two and emphasize that critical thinking, mental flexibility, and creativity are developed through language learning. The cultural arguments, often anecdotal and less strong, rely on personal experience to support FL study. The pragmatic arguments are generally of more interest to the public because of their concerns for national security and economic issues. They also argue that knowing a foreign language will make students more marketable for future employment. However, English monolingualism is still viewed as the norm in the United States. Nonetheless, they do propose compelling arguments for studying a foreign language. The final and most powerful argument addresses the diversity in how we construct and organize knowledge:

In studying languages other than our own, we are seeking to understand (and, indeed, in at least a weak sense, to become) the Other—we are, in short, attempting to enter into realities that have, to some degree, been constructed by others and in which many of the fundamental assumptions about the nature of knowledge and society may be different from our own. We are, in fact, creating new selves in an important sense. Such creation and recreation forces each of us to reflect more deeply on many of the core questions related to being an educated person, as well as requiring that we become not merely tolerant of differences, but truly understanding of differences (linguistic and otherwise) and their implications. The sort of humility that is learned from studying a language other than one’s own is a valuable possession in its own right. (pp. 12-13)
By redirecting the focus from linguistic competence to language/culture connections and critical language awareness, both teachers and students of foreign languages may find more success and the stigma surrounding FL studies may be lessened.

For the purpose of this study, Reagan and Osborn’s text is important because it helped me identify the nature of this research problem. Their critical perspective of FL teaching problematizes the traditional role of the FL educator by arguing for a language teaching perspective that is social, cultural, and political.

In Banks’ (2003) work with multicultural education he proposed four approaches for integration of multicultural content into the mainstream-centric curriculum. The approaches range from minimally inserting lessons on heroes and holidays through full integration of multicultural content where students take actions to help solve social issues. The approaches are called The Contributions Approach, The Additive Approach, The Transformation Approach, and The Social Action Approach (p. 229). Though this model was written for general education, I adopted it for this study of the teaching of Spanish as a FL because of its appropriateness to my concerns about teaching cultures. For example, when Spanish-speaking cultures and the Spanish language are taught as separate entities, students may compartmentalize the language, recognizing little or no connection between the two. Additionally, when the cultures of Spanish-speakers are taught from a trivia, or food and festivals approach, students fail to recognize both the contributions and similarities between the target cultures and their own. Both examples often result in an emphasis of binary differences and/or an affirmation of elitist views.

Banks’ model of integration of multicultural content is also fitting given the issues from Reagan and Osborn’s work that I addressed above. In their text (2002) they offer
much rationale for the adoption of a critical pedagogy in the FL classroom (2002). They stress the importance of teachers providing meaningful opportunities for students to reflect on matters of language diversity and critical language awareness. In their chapter “Foreign Language Teaching for Social Activism” they advocate:

…that language classrooms themselves become sites of challenging hegemonic ideologies, of liberating students from oppressive cognitive, intellectual, and sociological constructs that have thus far been created or reinforced in our context. We seek to deter the psychological violence inflicted on oppressed segments of our society for which we, ourselves, can be held partially responsible. (p. 90)

Banks’ model of integration of multicultural content is appropriate for examining the teaching of cultures in this study, most importantly, because the model extends well beyond the traditional view of teaching cultures to including and aspiring for teaching decision making and actions toward issues of social justice.

According to Banks, it is in the mainstream-centric curriculum where “…racism and ethnocentrism are reinforced and perpetuated in the schools…” and where a false sense of superiority is reinforced for mainstream students (p. 225). Absent from the mainstream-centric curriculum are the experiences, cultures, and contributions from a wide range of ethnic and language groups, all of whom have been important to the development of the United States. Banks’ model, detailed previously in this chapter, served as a framework to help reduce and organize the data. As a preliminary tool, I used it to compare emerging
themes and patterns from the data alongside each level/approach. With Banks’ model and grounded in the data, over the course of this study, I adapted Banks’ model to be more specific to the FL classroom.

The writings of Ladson-Billings, Reagan and Osborn, and Banks were instrumental to the theoretical and methodological framing of this study. I drew inspiration, rationale, and ideas from their work to better identify the nature of this research problem as well as demonstrate the contributions of this project. Byram and Esarte-Sarries’ (1991) ethnographic study of primary and secondary French classes in England, as described in chapter two, served as additional support for my methodological choices. There is a need for more empirical research that serves as discovery into aspects of secondary FL studies in the U.S. This research contributes to helping FL teachers and academicians improve their programs and extend their knowledge through discovery of data about teaching cultural issues.

Seliger and Shohamy (1989) describe the ultimate goal of qualitative research “…to discover phenomena such as patterns of second language behavior not previously described and to understand those phenomena from the perspective of participants in the activity” (p. 120). Though there has been much written about teaching and learning culture, there is little data to support most of the claims made, particularly from the qualitative perspective adopted in this study. How teachers of Spanish do culture is still unknown (Omaggio, 1993). The exploratory nature of this unique study will contribute much to the current scarcity of research in this area. The iterative and flexible qualities of doing case studies within an interpretivist framework--understanding, reflecting,
observing, questioning--is best suited to constructing knowledge, accessing teachers and information, and disseminating the findings in forms appropriate to all involved.

Site Selection

According to a 2002 U.S. Census Bureau report, there were over 229,000 people of Hispanic or Latino origin in the state of Ohio. Franklin County, which encompasses Columbus and most of its suburbs, had a population of slightly more than one million people, 27,500 of whom were of Hispanic or Latino origin. Other estimates put that figure closer to 60,000. In this study of how cultures are taught by excellent secondary teachers of Spanish in central Ohio, the location was of importance because although the Hispanic and Latino populations have increased a great deal over the last ten years, all of the teachers involved taught predominantly white students. The Hispanic and Latino communities were not yet so pervasive that they were generally seen as readily available local linguistic and cultural resources.

Participants

In education, it is difficult to rate or compare teachers based on objective measures, particularly in the area of foreign languages. To date, there are no standardized tests regularly used by which FL classrooms or grade levels or even buildings may be compared. In education, there is little opportunity for advancement, awards, different titles, or other means by which to search for excellent teachers. Thus, defining ‘successful with a commitment to teaching culture’ was an arduous task. The snowball sampling process (Patton, 2002) began by contacting experts who ultimately provided the names of several FL teachers throughout Ohio. These experts were a consultant for the Ohio Department of Education, a coordinator for Columbus City Schools, and a
secondary Spanish and French instructor in suburban Columbus. All were experienced and seemed to be well known by FL teachers in central Ohio and well regarded by their peers. They are/or have been both academicians and instructors.

The experts concurred on the talents of five teachers and described them as dynamic, empathetic, experienced, and knowledgeable. In a 1991 survey, Wolf and Riordan found that “today’s language teacher is likely to be a white, middle-aged woman who has taught for some twenty-one years and has earned both bachelor’s and master’s degrees” (Glissan, 1996, p. 59). The participants with whom I worked were all female, had more than 20 years teaching experience, and held two degrees each. I did not intentionally search for participants with such qualifications, however, these were the teachers whom I found were best suited for this project. Successful, as such, was defined by each teacher’s story—by her individual successes, titles, and accolades. Of the five potential participants, four were interested in participating but only three had teaching schedules that did not conflict with my own. Of the final three, I distinguished which two seemed to best integrate language and culture and elevate culture teaching to one of Banks’ higher levels/approaches. Ultimately, the interpretations seemed to be more compelling given more variation among the cases (Merriam, 1998, p. 40). However, as Ladson-Billings (1994) noted in her teacher selection process, it is not their personal idiosyncracies that I looked to emphasize, rather their pedagogies, beliefs about, and commitment to the teaching of cultures.

Observations and interviews with the teachers occurred in a two-phase process. In phase one, teacher-selection, I began studying the three teachers. In this process I engaged in informal discussions, one semi-structured interview, and classroom
observations with subsequent debriefings. The first observation was a general orientation to the teacher’s building, classroom, and pedagogical practices. Subsequent observations were scheduled around the teacher’s plans for teaching culture. This occurred over a two-month period.

In the second phase, I conducted observations of a minimum of three units of culture teaching over a four-month period. The participants were asked to alert me of occasions when they were involved in more cultures-oriented units. As described in chapter one, each unit consisted of one or more consecutive days when the participant was involved in teaching cultures, where the cultures element was central to the lesson/s. I conducted post-observation debriefings throughout and conducted interviews after each unit of culture teaching. Additionally, I interviewed administrators and department chairpersons (where applicable) from each teacher’s building to gain a greater perspective of the teachers as related to successful teaching and their roles in their settings. The interviews and some of the post-observation debriefings were tape-recorded and transcribed immediately for ease of analysis.

The participants were assured confidentiality. I did not disclose their names or school districts. However, because there are a finite number of school districts in central Ohio and from the thick description provided in the data analysis and discussion sections, it may be possible to locate the teachers if one were so inclined. The participants were made aware of this issue of anonymity and agreed to participate regardless.

Data Collection

I employed the methods in this project to help to begin the process of understanding how culture is taught in the Spanish secondary classroom. By providing data and
interpretation through empirical means, more was learned about how these teachers currently taught culture, how teachers assessed students on their cultural understandings, the materials teachers used, how teachers used national, state, and local guidelines for planning culture lessons, and the issues surrounding the difficulties with teaching this component of language learning. There is currently a dearth of research on teaching culture in FL classes at the high school level, particularly research that uses a multicultural framework for interpreting the data. By using multiple data collection sources (teacher-selection process, document review, teacher observation field notes, interviews, field journal) the trustworthiness of this study was increased.

The data was enriched through the following triangulated methods:

1. Teacher observation field notes: Observation involves a systematic note taking and recording of events. It assumes that behaviors are purposive in that they express deeper values and beliefs (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 79). As my primary source of data collection, I conducted a series of teacher observations over 6 months in a two-phase process. Phase one, teacher-selection, took place over two months. In phase two I narrowed down the participants to two, and participated in observations and interviews over a four-month period for each. The purpose of observing these teachers in their natural settings was to gather data on the nature of the cultural content as well as their pedagogical practices related to both linguistic and cultural information. During observations I sat in the back of each classroom, attempting to remain relatively unobtrusive. It was my hope that over time both the teachers and students would become accustomed to and comfortable with my presence.
I asked the participants to inform me when they would be teaching culture units. Thus, observations of those units allowed for more engaged and meaningful information. From taking quality observation field notes, I anticipated discovery of recurring patterns of behavior; I was reminded that it is what is recorded that would ultimately be available for analysis and interpretation. Thus, throughout the process I developed an observation log sheet to facilitate quality note taking. During phase one, teacher selection, I observed for broad description and a holistic picture. Over the remaining four months, phase two, I developed clearer concepts and more specific questions of teaching cultures. I focused the observations, the post-observation debriefings, and the observation note taking. The teacher observation field notes were typed following the observations.

2. Document review: I reviewed the resources used in each unit of culture teaching. These documents included stories and anecdotes from text or literary books, worksheets, quizzes and tests, written information about music and movies, and/or Internet sources.

For the purpose of this research, the observations and document review were insufficient to paint a portrait of how successful teachers of Spanish teach cultures. However, it was through the observation process (pre-observation discussions, observations, post-observation debriefings) that I was able to establish a rapport with my participants. This rapport was essential for establishing the relationship necessary for conducting the interviews involved.

3. Teacher interviews: Vygotsky (1987) claimed that the very process of putting experience into language is a meaning-making process. Through a series of semi-
structured interviews, I explored each participant’s life history, her contemporary experiences and perspectives, and her views about each of the culture units I observed. Specifically, I wanted to learn: how she progressed to her current belief system about teaching Spanish and teaching cultures; her views about the cultural knowledge she believed her students were learning; and how she assimilated guidelines from the local, state, and national levels. Serving as the primary data collection instrument, I was able to probe responses, thus allowing me to respond to the “emerging worldview” of the participant (Merriam, 1998, p. 74). Each interview was guided by a list of themes to explore.

4. Field journal: Throughout the research process I used my own journal to reflect on each step. I used it to document my early biases and document how they changed. The journal also served as an audit trail and a record of how, through the exploratory nature of the questions and objectives of this study and qualitative work in general, the data collection techniques and parameters changed and adapted.

Data management was facilitated by typing all notes from my field journal. I audio recorded the interviews and transcribed them following each session to aid the simultaneity of data collection and analysis. Additionally, the data collection process was iterative—each data set assisted in re/shaping subsequent data collection allowing for more focused data collection. I grouped, themed, and managed the voluminous data from the observation notes, interviews, and field journal with the use of Microsoft Word and my own coding system. After an initial coding of both sets of data I had more than 40 codes, which I subsequently categorized, followed by cross-coding according to research questions and dominant themes grounded in the data. Once I discerned the themes,
reduction and synthesis of the data were facilitated. I chose to report the data analysis and discussion in a structure amenable to a qualitative story of teaching cultures.

**Data Analysis**

The purpose of this qualitative data analysis was to increase my understanding of teaching culture so that I could offer what I explored to others. I used Banks’ framework of Four Levels of Integration of Multicultural Content (2003) to assist with data reduction and interpretation. Once the data were gathered, I took the following steps for analysis. I:

1. Entered all field notes and transcripts onto the computer software.
2. Read the data multiple times to search for themes and develop codes.
3. Created a codebook.
4. Marked the texts for retrieval and indexing.
5. Made contrasts and comparisons by clustering and distinguishing data.
6. Created conceptual models/theories based upon major assertions and evidentiary warrants grounded in the data.
7. Searched for negative cases that did not fit the model--evidence to disconfirm assertions made.

The primary tool of analysis I used was Banks’ Four Levels of Integration of Multicultural Content (2003). James Banks has written extensively on issues of multiculturalism and education (1981, 1994, 2003). I elected to adopt his levels of integration of multicultural content even though they were not specifically written for the FL classroom. They were, however, appropriate for teaching cultures, particularly in the Spanish FL classroom, where the content is clearly derived from and concerned with
multiple cultures. Additionally, Banks’ framework, unlike any others I located, was especially fitting for examining teaching about Spanish-speaking cultures in the United States due to the large population of Spanish-speakers. Other frameworks/classifications, as described in chapter two, were either specific to languages other than Spanish in other countries, were gathered based upon self-report data from questionnaires, and/or investigated cultural studies from a different approach, not necessarily focusing on those teachers who had been deemed successful.

These approaches were useful for reducing the data and interpreting the results. I refined them as necessary when patterns that did not fit into Banks’ approaches emerged. Banks’ four levels, designed to be increasingly complex, include The Contributions Approach, The Additive Approach, The Transformation Approach, and The Social Action Approach.

The first of Banks’ Four Levels of Integration of Multicultural Content is the The Contributions Approach. This approach is characterized by heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural elements. Examples for the secondary Spanish classroom include brief discussions of Miguel Hidalgo on Mexico’s Independence Day, piñatas, and making Pan del Muerto for El Día de los Muertos (November 1). The key characteristic of this approach is that there is no change made to the mainstream curriculum with regard to its “… basic structure, goals, and salient characteristics” (Banks, 2003, p. 231). This approach allows teachers to make quick cultural insertions without any discussion of meaning or importance. Demonstrative of this approach are the resources common to FL teachers that include quick daily cultural trivia questions or even student reports on countries where they are required to include facts such as population, flag, exports, and
important landmarks. The Contributions Approach is often the extent to which FL teachers are able to teach culture due to lack of knowledge and experience about the target cultures (Banks, 2003). It is my observation that most FL teachers, whether well traveled or not, unknowingly use this approach to teaching cultures. Though this approach is the easiest for teachers to use, it is also extremely limited because “…issues such as racism, poverty, and oppression tend to be avoided” (2003, p. 231). The focus is often on the successes of heroes, rather than the processes through which those heroes traversed. Finally, The Contributions Approach is limited because it does not address the institutional structures, such as racism and discrimination that keep certain ethnic groups powerless and marginalized.

The Additive Approach to integrating multicultural content is characterized by the addition of multicultural themes and content though still without substantial change to the curriculum. An example in the Spanish FL classroom includes reading a short story written about an immigrant child from Mexico. This approach may be the first step toward transforming and restructuring curriculum to multicultural content and perspectives. However, in this approach the perspectives are still mainstream-centric; lacking are the perspectives of how Mexico’s economy arrived at its impoverished state. “The additive approach fails to help students view society from diverse cultural and ethnic perspectives and to understand the ways that the histories and cultures of the nation’s diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, and religious groups are interconnected” (Banks, 2003, p. 233).

The third approach to integrating multicultural content is The Transformation Approach. In this approach the goals and perspectives of the curriculum are
fundamentally different. Students are given opportunities to view concepts and themes from different ethnic points of view. An example in the secondary Spanish classroom is to employ literature written by and/or about Mexican-Americans, Puerto Rican-Americans, and Cuban-Americans in order to better understand their plight as immigrants/citizens in the United States. The curriculum may be centered on this literature so that both linguistic and cultural content are derived from a variety of perspectives. One of the strengths of The Transformation Approach is that racial and ethnic stereotyping may be reduced. It does, however, generally require a complete curricular overhaul requiring time and funding for training and material development.

Banks’ fourth level, The Social Action Approach, subsumes the elements of The Transformation Approach and additionally incorporates helping students acquire the knowledge and skills needed to become involved in social change. This approach is contrary to traditional education where students are generally expected to be politically passive. By way of contrast, in The Social Action approach, students are empowered and are aided in becoming participants in social change. In this approach, teaching units consist of a problem, inquiries that provide data related to the problem, and opportunities to reflect on their values, attitudes and feelings related to the issues of discrimination and racial prejudice. Teachers are encouraged to use case studies or stories from newspapers and magazines, and to involve students in discussions and role-plays. An example in the secondary Spanish FL classroom includes reading an article from a local newspaper about the mistreatment of immigrant workers by local construction companies. The issues might involve the immigrant workers not receiving fair wages or not being provided with important information about benefits due them from being injured on the
job. Students may act by writing letters to the local construction companies and/or by brainstorming related issues that take place in other work or educational settings. Supported by the textbook literature and various perspectives, students may gain valuable insight into issues that are current, local, and important.

Banks’ model for integrating multicultural content was used in the content analysis of the data by identifying key themes in his approaches. Subsequently, I used those themes as preliminary indicators of consistencies, themes, and terms in the data. Initially, I examined the data from each cultural unit against Banks’ model. Emerging themes and patterns that did not fit neatly into one of Banks’ levels often became units that remained between two levels, within close reach of the more complicated of the two approaches.

Trustworthiness

Among the tensions inherent in post-positivist work is the issue of capturing the social reality that belongs to others and the concern for validity in the text as a form of authority. As Patti Lather recently shared, “If you can’t talk validity talk, you can’t claim science” (P. Lather, personal communication, 13 November, 2001). In education we have a great responsibility to our students and teachers to conduct research that is credible/valid/trustworthy, and to render it in such a way as to do justice to the lived realities of all involved. In this project, I had the unique opportunity to spend a great deal of time with two talented FL teachers. I am grateful for their trust, their willingness to open their classrooms to me, and their belief in this project. Therefore, I felt especially compelled to discard as many layers as possible of re-presentation and allow them to use their own words, actions, and reflections to re-present themselves.
The traditional notions of validity and reliability as used for judging rigor in positivist work are inappropriate for this project with methods and criteria imbued in post-positivist beliefs. By using multiple methods, I attempted to gain an in-depth understanding of how successful teachers of Spanish teach cultures. Triangulation, as an alternative to validation, enabled me to view many facets of the reality represented here—one that can never be objective (Flick, 1998). Thus, through techniques such as prolonged engagement, persistent observation, negative case analysis, and progressive subjectivity, the probability of a match between the lived realities and constructed realities/re-presentations was strengthened (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). My field journal served as an audit trail for tracking methodological shifts and changes; it was a means through which outside reviewers may judge my decision making about this project. To increase concerns of credibility, I built the following features into this study:

1. Prolonged engagement and persistent observation: I was involved in observations and discussions with my two participants over the course of six months. In that time per participant, I conducted 13-15 teacher observations, three or more formal interviews, several informal discussions, and numerous post-observation debriefings. During this extended time, I was able “…to overcome the effects of misinformation, distortion, or presented “fronts,” [and] to establish the rapport and build the trust necessary to uncover constructions” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 237).

2. Negative case analysis: I did not expect that all moments of teaching cultures and all actions would fit neatly into Banks’ analytical framework that I used. Once the patterns of data emerged and interpretation started to take shape, I looked for
cases that did not fit the model. “Negative cases either disconfirm parts of a model or suggest new connections that need to be made. In either instance, negative cases need to be accommodated” (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, p. 782). However, in this study, and with the leniency afforded me in the variation of levels at each extreme with Banks’ model, I was able to align each culture-teaching unit with one or between two of Banks’ approaches. Even the briefest culture unit aligned with his most basic approach, The Contributions Approach.

3. Progressive subjectivity and the researcher’s journal: I kept a field journal to document early biases and beliefs, track changes and adjustments to methods, and record observational notes. I continually remained aware of the importance of triangulated reflexivity: self-reflexivity, reflexivity about those studied, and reflexivity about audience (Patton, 2002, p. 495). I believe that credibility was increased through a review of the ongoing constructions, finding that the final interpretations were different from my initial expectations. For example, my early notions of Eva, my first participant, were that she was very traditional in her linguistic and culture teaching practices. As I described in great detail in chapter four, this preliminary perception of her was ultimately incorrect. Thus, this journal served as an audit trail to record those changes, my new understandings, and additional questions and concerns that grew from ongoing data collection.

4. Thick description: Guba and Lincoln (1989) posit thick description as “the major technique for establishing the degree of transferability” (p. 241). By providing much description about places, times, contexts, and cultures, the reader may be able to transfer some of the methods and information to his/her situations. Though
the processes and products of this study are not generalizable to other settings, it
is through providing a complete data base that the reader may construct his/her
own clear picture of the participants and contexts.

Timeline

**September 2003 – October 2003:** Teacher Selection Process, Interview #1, On-going
Data Analysis

**November 2003 - August 2004:** Teacher Observations, Document Review, Remaining
Formal and Informal Interviews, On-going Data Analysis

Conclusion

The purpose of this research project involving two case studies was to understand
more deeply the teaching of cultures in the secondary Spanish FL classroom. I worked
with two high school teachers of Spanish who others considered successful and who
themselves professed a commitment to teaching cultures. Using multiple data collection
methods including teacher-selection process, teacher observation notes, interviews, and
my own field journal, I obtained a wealth of information, both written and audio-
recorded. This data was interpreted using Banks’ (2003) Four Levels of Integration of
Multicultural Content. I used this framework to examine the teachers’ pedagogies of
linguistic and cultural content and their perceptions of teaching and learning culture in
the classroom.

I begin chapter four, data analysis, with the results of the first case study as it related
to Banks’ model of integration of multicultural content. Subsequently, I present the
second case and use it to make comparisons and contrasts from the first in relation to
Banks’ approaches.
In chapter five I organize the findings and discussion around the research categories, as it seemed more appropriate to address the questions within the broader context. Subsequently, I present the pedagogical implications that arose from this study and offer recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The overarching question of this research study was how do successful teachers of secondary Spanish, who commit to the teaching of cultures, actually teach about cultures? I regard cultures teaching as central to the language teaching and learning process, where lessons of cultural awareness are often acts of inquiry. For the purpose of this study, I used a more current view of cultures, one that seeks to understand contemporary global events and how these events affect Spanish speakers. I view the study of cultures as acts of inquiry that serve as a basis for understanding issues of social justice. The traditional notions of Big C and little c cultures are subsumed under this perspective. Cultural understanding is a practice that is socially constructed; it is about the process of discovery and meaning making. Goals for overcoming ethnocentrism and being able to make cross-cultural comparisons are at the core of this description.

At the secondary level, there are many ambitious standards and goals for teaching cultures in the foreign language (FL) classroom. The national, state, and local guidelines are examples of the ambitious standards that generally explain what to teach but not how
to teach cultures. Banks’ Four Levels of Integration of Multicultural Content (2003) served as a model against which I examined how two teachers taught cultures as well as alignment of their teaching and guidelines. These levels, detailed in chapter three, were originally increasingly complex in nature and consist of The Contributions Approach, The Additive Approach, The Transformation Approach, and The Social Action Approach. The Contributions Approach is generally the most common and easiest for teachers to use by incorporating discrete cultural facts and/or mention of heroes and/or famous personalities into the curriculum. The Additive Approach, without making significant structural changes to the curriculum, is characterized by the addition of a book, lesson or unit, allowing students to view concepts and issues from a variety of ethnic perspectives and frames of reference. In The Transformation Approach the curriculum is fundamentally changed; the mainstream-centric view is now seen as one perspective among many. Finally, The Social Action Approach entails all of the components of The Transformation Approach, but is enhanced by students discussing a question or social issue, examining data and resources from different disciplines, reflecting on their beliefs about prejudice and discrimination, and taking actions upon issues of social justice. Thus, they may empower themselves to act upon social change.

By using Banks’ levels throughout data collection and analysis, I was able to distill the data and view it through a lens different from other, perhaps more traditional, methods examining the pedagogical practices of FL teachers in the U.S. This is due largely to the fact that Banks’ model was not particularly intended for the foreign or second language classroom, but for general education. However, learning the Spanish language should inherently mean learning about multiple cultures and communities
where the language is spoken. Banks’ model was appropriate for this particular study, because, as Merriam (1998) suggests in her work on qualitative case studies, his categories/levels were well matched with the purpose and theoretical framework of this study. The purpose of this study was to examine and share how successful teachers of secondary Spanish teach cultures. The theoretical framework, was constructed from work of Reagan and Osborn (2002), Ladson-Billings (1994), and Banks (2003), and is both interpretive and critical. I endeavored to understand how successful teachers help students make connections from the classroom to the world in order to work toward improving the world; thus, I used Banks’ model as an interpretive framework. Additionally, I examined the pedagogies of my participants from a perspective that was social, cultural, and political. Consequently, Banks’ framework allowed me to view the teaching of cultures through a lens different from the other theoretical models described in chapter two.

For this study, I chose to work with expert teachers because the literature about how cultures are taught in the secondary classroom is virtually nonexistent. Thus, the information from this research project was a starting point in constructing a knowledge base on successful culture teaching. Given that many teachers struggle with and avoid teaching about cultures, I was pleased to find that my participants did teach cultures. In fact, I observed multiple instances of the integration of multicultural content that fit into different levels of Banks’ model and that were more than a statement of binary differences or comparisons.
Synopsis of Chapters Four and Five

The data analysis was primarily based on my field notes from observations of the teachers, interviews with the teachers, document analysis of the teachers’ materials, and my reflective journal. Data for both participants were collected over a six-month period. In this chapter, I introduce my participants separately and, through much description, share their stories of teaching language and cultures. I describe their backgrounds, experiences, and philosophies of FL teaching through details of their classrooms, daily routines, qualities of teaching that make them exemplary, and comments from others. I continue these portraits with examples of their methods, practices, and lessons as they relate to the four levels of Banks’ model. Additionally, I discuss the formal curriculum for their school districts as well as the curricula that they enacted during the 2003-2004 school year. Using indirect evidence from my observations and field notes, I discuss their students’ responses to their teaching. I highlight particular themes and issues with my first participant and subsequently use some of those same topics as points of comparison with my second participant. I provide a synthesis of the main themes of their teaching at the end of the discussion of each participant.

In order to maintain confidentiality, the participants were assigned pseudonyms. Their respective school districts within the suburbs of central Ohio were kept confidential as well. Whenever possible, I present direct quotations from the participants to support the analysis and let their voices speak for themselves. In the class discussions that I share, “S” signifies student; I do not differentiate among student voices. Any additions or replacements in citations were bracketed, this was done for clarification. Ellipsis points within quotations denote deletions or false starts. My participants’ lessons ranged in
length from one day (lesson) to months (unit), thus I often use the words *unit* and *lesson* interchangeably.

Because this study investigated the qualities of two women who were considered successful secondary Spanish teachers, there were, as expected, many positive elements of their practices to share. However, I include in the summary of each level, considerations for how some of the lessons might be modified to better reflect a transformative multicultural approach, based upon Banks’ model and current literature on culture teaching. As a final caveat to chapter four, Banks’ model is broad, ranging from minor insertions of multicultural content to acting upon issues of social injustice. Therefore, what might be considered as disconfirming evidence for other models of multicultural content integration is, in fact, appropriate for this model, particularly The Contributions Approach.

In chapter five I address the research questions through their overarching categories: national, state, and local guidelines for teaching culture; resources for teaching culture; teachers’ pedagogical self-descriptions; and teachers’ perceptions of culture in the classroom. Through the discussion of research questions, I present a cross-case analysis of my two participants. I then discuss implications from these cases for teaching cultures. In doing so, I wish to make no generalizations about teaching cultures. Rather, I hope the conclusions that I draw will transfer to other secondary FL settings. I also discuss limitations to the study and offer suggestions for future research, as I have become aware of many gaps in the literature and research on cultures teaching throughout the process of this study.
Part One: Eva

Background

Eva was born in Cuba and moved to the United States in 1961 at the age of nine, two years after the revolution. In that year, Cubans were still permitted to leave their country.

My parents had their visas waived for political reasons—refugee status. Most of my relatives left and went to Spain or are in Miami. On my father’s side, his sister-in-law and niece are still there. In that time they had already started programs of indoctrination. They were going to take my sister and me and put us in camps where we would have to pick sugar cane, all for the cause. My father wanted none of that so he gave all of our possessions to the government and then we left. We came with nothing. (Interview, 26 September 2003)

When Eva first came to the U.S. she lived in Miami, however, her father felt it was too transient of a community. She shared his sentiments, “If we’re going to be part of the United States of America we’re going to be truly a part of it,” (Interview, 12 February 2004). Eva’s father was an English-Spanish bilingual teacher in a private school in Havana. When he came to the U.S., he wanted to teach at the university level but his master’s and doctoral degrees were not recognized, requiring him to obtain his master’s degree again. Because he had a young family and a spouse who did not work outside the home, he did not have the time or income to obtain another doctoral degree. He recognized that Eva and her sister, who were totally immersed in an Anglo-community, were learning a great deal of English at school, from television, and from friends, so he insisted that she speak Spanish at home in order to maintain her first language.

Eva has lived in Ohio since 1967. In her graduating class of more than 400 students from a Columbus suburban high school, she was one of only two Cubans. She obtained a bachelor’s degree in Foreign Language Education from The Ohio State University, with
certification for teaching both Spanish and French. After graduating, she was a teaching assistant at the college level, teaching first and second semester Spanish. She then left her position to stay home and raise her children. After seven years she returned to teaching by accepting a part-time Spanish teaching position in a local suburban district where she taught for three years, two years at one of the middle schools, and one year in the high school. Because she was no longer certified to teach, she was hired on the condition that she would take courses to renew her certification. She continued to take courses beyond the re-certification and after seven years of part-time coursework earned her master’s degree in Foreign Language Education. Once her own children were in school all day, she accepted a full-time position in her current school district where she also lives, thus maintaining the same schedule as her own children.

_Eva’s View of Being a Native Speaker of Spanish Teaching Spanish_

Eva feels that being bicultural and bilingual is an advantage for her as a Spanish teacher. She shared,

I would say that being a native speaker helps me with the language that they hear. Even though it’s book Spanish, I think my pronunciation is not truly Cuban, but the accent, and culturally I have some advantages over a native English speaker. (Interview, 12 February 2004)

Those advantages include her first-hand cultural experience, even though it is that of a nine-year-old, she remembers much of her life in Cuba. Additionally, she shares personal
anecdotes with her students and participates in activities within the Latino community in central Ohio. I revisit this theme of native versus non-native speakers as teachers of Spanish throughout this chapter.

**Full-Time Teaching**

In Eva’s first full-time position she was hired to implement a middle school program at the only middle school at that time in her district. She was asked to write and prepare the Spanish curriculum while another teacher was asked to create the French curriculum. She was given few guidelines for her curriculum writing with the exception that the course would be one semester in length. She spent much of the summer preparing materials, “because being [a teacher] with three years experience, I foolishly thought that you needed a textbook or needed supplementals and needed all this stuff in order to be able to teach” (Interview, 12 February 2004). At semester time, her eighth grade students switched from Spanish to French, or vice versa, therefore each student had an in-depth taste of both languages. Since then, the district’s middle school FL program has gone through a number of iterations and generations of exploratory plans.

**Current Teaching Position**

Eva voluntarily transferred to teach at the high school level when a second high school in her district opened in the early 1990s. She has taught all levels of Spanish, currently teaching two sections of Spanish Four and two sections of Spanish Five (also considered Advanced Placement (AP) Spanish). Her Spanish Five students spend the year preparing for the AP language exam, but may choose whether or not they take it in the spring. Eva also spends one class period assisting in the library with FL students who need tutoring or who need to have a test monitored. That same class period may be spent
assisting in the FL laboratory, a small room near the FL classrooms on the second floor
that houses audio equipment and headsets for individual listening practice.

In Eva’s district, her graded course of study does not distinguish goals between fourth
and fifth year language learning. In order to better understand the skill levels expected of
her Spanish Four and Five students by the end of the school year, I list here some of the
goals and essential performances mentioned in her graded course of study:

Listening

• Students will understand the target language spoken in longer learned utterances
  with contextual support.
• Students will comprehend the main idea and most details of films, television
  shows, songs, etc.

Speaking

• Students will speak the target language with increased facility and spontaneity by
  making statements, asking questions, giving rejoinders, etc.
• Students will discuss global issues and current events; use a wide variety of
  tenses; use circumlocution effectively; support personal opinions.

Reading

• Students will achieve increased visual literacy by recognizing and interpreting
  authentic materials.
• Students will comprehend longer, more complex passages; read for details.
Writing

- Students will express ideas in writing about specific topics by incorporating learned grammatical patterns and vocabulary.
- Students will integrate culture, vocabulary, and grammar.

Grammar

- Centered on the sequencing of tenses with the present and past subjunctive.

Vocabulary

- Students will acquire a more active personal and social vocabulary in the context of reading and conversation, as well as increase passive vocabulary in areas of interest.

Culture

- Students will continue to pay attention to current events as reported in the media; and will focus on history, holidays, traditions, literature and art.

The ambiguous nature of the guidelines as laid out in the graded course of study for Eva’s district, allows her to have much flexibility with curriculum selection and the approaches she employs to teach her students. It appears she takes advantage of this ambiguity and flexibility by teaching different units from year to year.

Professional Development

Eva has participated in a variety of professional roles. She is a clinical educator in the M.Ed. program with the College of Education at Ohio State. In this program students who have already obtained a bachelor’s degree outside of education, for example in Spanish language or literature, do a one- or two-year internship and graduate with a master’s degree. The students are paired with a cooperating teacher for the entire school
year and are required to visit and observe for a number of hours prior to culminating in
their student-teaching experience. Additionally, over the duration of the program, they
take many courses, including methods courses, and work on a final project, called the
Capstone. This project consists of a synthesis paper, a position paper, and a journal of
video segments where students note the progression of their teaching. Students present
and defend their project to a committee of two clinical educators at the end of their
student-teaching experience. Though Eva did not work with a student teacher during the
2003-2004 school year, she was responsible for evaluating six comprehensive Capstone
projects in the spring. Her role as a clinical educator keeps her connected to the
university and may be one of the reasons why Eva stays current with FL educational
language/jargon and ongoing issues. She speaks eloquently and knowledgeably about
current research and classroom topics.

Within her own building Eva has taken on additional responsibilities. She served on
the Professional Development Team for two years. This group plans the professional
development sessions for her building. She attended a leadership conference with this
committee in preparation for the building–wide activities they were to oversee. She has
also advised the Spanish Club and continues to attend their meetings and events. Finally,
and perhaps most enjoyably, Eva has organized trips abroad over the last ten years for
Spanish students at her high school. At the end of this current year she and her
department
chairperson were taking a group to Spain for two weeks. She also regularly travels with family and friends to different Spanish-speaking locations, primarily in the Caribbean, Spain, Mexico, and Chile.

Outside of the classroom and her building responsibilities, Eva has attended professional conferences sponsored by the Ohio Foreign Language Association (OFLA) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). She has continued to take courses at the university, for example a semester course on Don Quixote, and recently participated in a summer seminar abroad where she traveled to Madrid to live with a host family for two weeks. While in Madrid she attended the annual conference sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP). Eva also worked several years for a publishing company. She was using their textbook and materials with her students when the company asked her to meet with other teachers who might be thinking of purchasing the books. She traveled with the company’s representative to share how she used the text as well as her likes and dislikes of the textbook series. Over the last few years, Eva has limited her extracurricular activities, to spend more time with her classroom responsibilities. As she shared, “I’ve done […] all those types of things. I mean I’m a classroom teacher, that’s my number one focus,” (Interview, 12 February 2004). Eva has just completed her 24th year of teaching.

Philosophy

In order to know Eva, to understand her philosophy and approaches to teaching language and cultures, I felt it important that the reader be permitted to see her in her classroom and to vicariously experience her setting as she goes about her daily teaching rituals and practices. Therefore, the following description of her classroom is quite
detailed. I feel that, in most cases, teachers control their environments, and a teacher’s classroom, particularly Eva’s, is telling of her teaching philosophy and personality. This section will allow the reader to become better acquainted with Eva, to learn why others consider her an outstanding teacher of Spanish, what her colleagues have said about her, and to begin to understand how she teaches cultures in her secondary classroom.

Eva’s Classroom

In Eva’s high school of more than 2000 students, the foreign language classrooms are all within close proximity on the second floor. The walls and bulletin boards outside the foreign language area are colorful, informative, and filled with student work. Over the course of many visits within a six-month period to her building, I noticed that the artwork and student work were changed and updated several times.

Eva’s classroom is a clean and comfortable square-shaped room of average size, arranged with five rows of five desks. The desks appear to be new and have a metal shelf under each where a class set of Spanish 3 books is kept.6 The walls are covered with posters, realia, and student work. The front wall is painted pale yellow and is dominated by a green chalkboard. Written on the top of the board each day are the daily activities for both levels Eva teaches; below the activities are the homework assignments. Above the chalkboard are FL classroom posters of popular cartoon characters imparting to students the benefits of knowing a second or foreign language. There are laminated maps of Central America and the Caribbean, South America, and Europe to the right of the chalkboard. In

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6 Eva completes the last four chapters of the Spanish 3 text with her fourth-year students.
front of the posters rests a podium that Eva uses occasionally, primarily as a place to hold her notes, flash cards, grade book, etc. A television and VCR are mounted on the wall in the left front corner. Below the video unit is a table holding a computer printer and requisite art supplies or supplementary teaching materials. On the left brick wall there are two bulletin boards, each covered in paper to replicate the flags of Cuba and Puerto Rico. Lush photos of natural landscapes of the countryside of Cuba and Puerto Rico adorn each board. The right wall of the classroom tastefully overflows with posters, pictures, and realia from Spain. A soccer banner from Real Madrid is draped across the top of the wall. In front of this wall is Eva’s desk, which is quite neat and organized, particularly for teachers’ standards. On her desk is a MacIntosh computer that she uses to record attendance and participation each day. Next to the computer is a small desk lamp, always lit, it is reminiscent of being at home rather than in a classroom in a large public high school. Near Eva’s desk is a bookshelf holding teacher resource books, a door length window allowing for some light from the hallway, and the classroom door. Across the top of the back wall are windows and below, student work. During my first visits to Eva’s room there were students’ stories on large pieces of rolled-paper on that wall. Later in the semester, students’ poems replaced the rolled-paper stories. Finally, there is a second door, opposite the main door, allowing students to enter and leave to a different hallway. Above the door hangs another soccer scarf from Spain.

I found the importance that Eva places on multiple cultures evident in her classroom. It is decorated with a mix of her treasures from travels to Spanish-speaking countries as well
as commercially-produced educational materials. Where other language classrooms often have grammar related posters used as educational aids, she has chosen to focus more on the cultural aspects, including flags, pictures, and realia.

Though I often asked Eva about the activities and lessons she covers with her AP Spanish students and her other Spanish Four class, I made a point to observe her during the same class period each visit. By doing this, I was able to better understand her daily routine, lesson development, commitment to teaching cultures, and the rapport she has with students. In the Spanish Four class I repeatedly observed, there are seventeen students, eleven females and six males. Two of the male students are of middle-eastern descent, the fifteen others are white; most of the students are juniors. The students sit in the same seats each day, and often when working in small groups or in pairs, work with the same partners. Based on my multiple observations, I saw a daily pattern emerge during her class periods, which I describe below. Because this is a representation of her ongoing practices, it is written in the present tense, however, I support the general description with specific examples from certain visits, written in the past tense.

**Routine**

At the beginning of each 55-minute class period Eva briefly chats with the students about issues they entered her classroom discussing. The language of discussion changes from English to Spanish, though students often interject English when the Spanish word is absent from their vocabulary. Next, Eva begins discussion of homework; students are almost always assigned something to reinforce classroom work. To review homework answers, Eva puts a transparency on the overhead projector, and students generally work individually. Meanwhile, Eva walks through the room, grade book in hand, noting credit
or no credit next to each student’s name, patting them on the back, and chatting individually with them. When the homework requires answers that are not clearly right or wrong, students are given other activities to work on while Eva checks for homework completion. For example, during their unit on *Con los Ojos Cerrados* (With Closed Eyes) (1972), a story by Cuban author Reinaldo Arenas, the homework assignment had been to practice inversion of questions by writing five questions related to the assigned paragraphs to read, and to note five vocabulary words unknown to them but necessary for understanding the story. While Eva checked their work, students were expected to practice asking and answering questions with a partner.

During homework review, Eva frequently writes on the board to allow students to see sentence structures. She also jokes with students, and allows them to interrupt with humorous comments and questions outside of the particular topic in question. For example, one afternoon she called upon a student and after he responded to her question, she teased him about having a “bad hair day.” This particular student’s hair seemed to be the topic of frequent comical discussions for him as well as the class.

Finishing the homework review often blends in with vocabulary practice. During most of my class observations, students practiced vocabulary through drills or manipulating words and phrases in some fashion. For example, to break up long lists of vocabulary, Eva used large flashcards that were color-coded to distinguish parts of speech. All students were expected to be on task and to respond with the correct Spanish/English word. Another example of vocabulary activities included brainstorming vocabulary students already knew from past Day of the Dead discussions, listing the words on the board, adding a few new words, and expecting students to use some of the words and
expressions in a short written and oral project to celebrate the Mexican holiday. On other occasions, in order to practice manipulating the vocabulary, Eva distributed worksheets with activities for students to use the vocabulary to complete cloze exercises and sentence writing, reviewing both the meaning and the spelling of the words.

The daily classroom routine continues, generally, with either an introduction to a new grammatical structure or verb tense, or with a continuation of the stories, as was often the case because students read several pieces of authentic literature during the length of this study. Finally, Eva directs attention to the bottom of the board where the homework is listed. With any remaining class time, students usually approach Eva to ask questions or get clarification on the homework assignment. The language of instruction is almost all Spanish, however, when joking with students and answering clarification questions, she often speaks in English. Students speak both Spanish and English. It is evident they are encouraged to speak in Spanish, but students are not admonished for speaking English. Throughout the 55-minute period, students are engaged but not hurried. Eva and her students seem relaxed, comfortable, and free to stray off topic. Though this might generally be disruptive in other classes, because much of the discussion is in Spanish and students are often initiating, it is appropriate in her room. However, it does cause Eva to regularly rework her lessons to accommodate the missed activities for the following day.
Connections

One of the seemingly defining elements of Eva’s teaching and philosophy is her ongoing work with making connections. Through multiple visits to Eva’s classroom, discussions with colleagues in her building, and many readings of the data, I noted many instances of connections being made; connections between and among cultures and cultural lessons, grammar, vocabulary, and with other disciplines. Connections, as discussed at length in chapter two, is one of the Five C’s, or Five Goal Areas, used as the basis for ACTFL’s national standards for FL learning. Connections, regarding Eva’s teaching, were a common thread sewn throughout, and interestingly there were often connections with all of the above areas to pop culture. When students were asked to write ‘calaveras’ (poems lampooning someone or some subject) for the Day of the Dead celebration, they were expected to base them on some subject of interest to them, for example, famous television, movie, or athletic stars; infamous teachers within their building; and friends. In order to practice vocabulary on prejudice and stereotypes, Eva created a worksheet to follow the American movie *James and the Giant Peach.* After reading excerpts from *Don Quixote,* students watched parts of the original Peter O’Toole and Sofia Loren movie, as well as the more contemporary John Lithgow film. Finally, in preparation for the AP Exam, fifth-year students completed activities created by Eva to review the long and short form of possessive adjectives, agreement, and demonstrative adjectives in conjunction with the 2003 movie *Finding Nemo,* dubbed in Spanish. Pop
culture topics continually emerged as topics of target language conversation, as a means of personalizing assignments and presentations, and in discussions of current events and politics.

As I elucidate in chapter one, little value is given to FL learning in the U.S. Thus, making connections among languages, cultures, and with other disciplines is especially important for many reasons including the notion that it allows students to personalize their work. By personalizing it, language learning becomes more meaningful, which often makes students more likely to remember it, and to continue in their language studies. An ongoing issue with FL learning in the U.S. is that at the secondary level, generally it is an elective course. If a student is not interested, challenged, comfortable, or not enjoying her foreign language class, often she will elect out of it after completing just two years. In the national standards, the two specific standards under the Connections goal stress the importance of making connections to other disciplines and the world outside the classroom (1996). This may be accomplished by allowing students to personalize activities in order to link Spanish to other classes and examine linguistic and cultural similarities and differences.

**Balancing Language Components, Activities, and Resources**

In addition to the cultural component, Eva places importance on practicing all four language skills. One of her assistant principals shared Eva’s emphases with cultures as well as the other language learning components:
[Eva] does a superior job of infusing Spanish culture in her foreign language classes. Not only do the students learn the mechanics of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in Spanish, but they learn a great deal about the culture and the differences with our own culture. (Assistant Principal, Personal communication, 10 May 2004)

I found, however, as with much FL classroom practice in the U.S., that Eva emphasizes writing in homework and assessments. Nevertheless, unlike other teachers, she consistently includes activities to practice the other language skills, overlapping and combining skills practice frequently. For speaking, students receive credit or no credit for participation each day. They are often involved in frequent mini-presentations and are then asked to react orally to their classmates’ work. For listening practice, students are often involved in listening exercises from the ancillary materials (e.g., video, DVD, CD, etc.) with the classroom textbook. They are expected to respond or react either in written form or verbally. For reading, with each unit that I followed over the course of the study, students practiced with a variety of sources: short stories, poems, and music lyrics. Consequently, their test questions for each unit as well as the semester exam were in Spanish, requiring proficiency with reading and writing to answer them correctly.

Eva also uses of a variety of resources and activities to practice the four language skills and discuss cultures. Among the many resources and activities gleaned through visits to her class and discussions with her, I noted: authentic short stories, textbook readings and exercises, poetry, authentic songs, classic movies, contemporary movies, educational videos, skits, presentations, art, the Internet, PowerPoint, journaling, concept mapping, defining constructs in the target language, and even requiring students to visit local Mexican markets. She has found that children who are less likely to participate will join in when provided with unique opportunities. For example, when discussing her use
of concept mapping with the class, she shared, “Little children, who never, who hardly ever say anything, participate” (Interview, 5 November 2003). Eva’s ability to help her students make connections, to take knowledge learned or understood in one setting, whether it be in another discipline, at home, or work, and help students apply it in her setting, or vice versa, is supported by many including Gardner (1993), Banks (2003), and *The Standards for Foreign Language Learning* (1996). Within the five organizing principles of the national standards, also called the 5 C’s, the connections standard emphasizes the importance of connecting FL learning to other disciplines, thus providing learners with skills and interests that extend beyond the FL classroom as well as their formal educational experiences. This strength of Eva’s is a recurrent theme throughout the remainder of this data analysis.

*Use of National, State, and Local Guidelines*

During my discussions with Eva, she seldom referred to the local and state guidelines for FL teaching and never mentioned the national guidelines. At one point, she acknowledged that she had not looked at her district’s graded course of study for a long time, but was aware that the cultural aspect was written in very general terms. Rather than being directly related to a specific textbook, her district’s guidelines were written for generic use. Interestingly, during the previous year, she and her department members closely examined the state of Ohio’s standards and objectives to judge whether their curriculum, guided by their current textbook, was aligned with the state. Thus, rather than revisiting the graded course of study, each language area compared their actual curriculum to the state’s standards. This was accomplished through a professional development goal aiming to verify alignment with coverage on the Foreign Language
Component of the Ohio Graduation Test. In doing so, the teachers noted the areas that required more teaching focus, but overall they found that they teach most of the things expected to be on the test.

It seems that for Eva and her colleagues, the formal curriculum, or graded course of study, has little to no relevance to the enacted curriculum which, primarily, appears to be guided by the textbook and an agreement among the teachers about what they will cover. Interestingly, Eva’s graded course of study was approved in 1994, thus the document is 10 years old and out of date. Eva noted that they (a committee of FL teachers) are supposed to examine it every five years but for whatever reason it has not been studied. Since 1994 both the National Standards (1996) and two iterations of the state of Ohio Content Standards (1996, 2003) have been approved, thus, the graded course of study in Eva’s district is clearly outdated.

**How Others Perceive Eva’s Teaching**

In Ohio, each school district has its own policies and procedures for observations and evaluations of teachers. Though there generally seem to be systematic processes for this, having building administrators evaluate teachers from each discipline is problematic for several reasons, three of which I include. First, building administrators generally are not familiar with the curriculum and instruction for each particular discipline. Second, there is high turnover in these administrative positions, thus making consistency a problem. Third, building administrators are too busy and beleaguered to take the requisite time to evaluate effectively and provide quality feedback. For example, as a former administrator with a background in foreign languages, I did not consider myself qualified to effectively evaluate math and science teachers. I understand classroom management, good teaching
practices, and professional issues, but I was clearly not the best-suited person to help improve teaching and learning in those areas. As a researcher, this topic became problematic for me when I attempted to locate administrators who could speak about the cultural approaches of my participants. The administrator with whom Eva recommended that I speak was quite knowledgeable about Eva’s character, reputation, and commitment to cultures. However, she did not seem to be familiar with the FL curriculum or Eva’s different cultural approaches. As I explore with my second participant, Melanie, there was not a current building administrator who had ever been in her classroom for observation or evaluative purposes.

The assistant principal who Eva recommended to me has known Eva as a colleague for four years and has had many opportunities to observe her informally. This assistant principal described Eva’s practices as multifaceted, “[being] hands-on, using pictures, role-plays, and having a cultural emphasis” (Assistant Principal interview, 27 April 2004). Additionally, the assistant principal’s own child was in Eva’s classroom two years ago, and speaking from a parent’s perspective, she raved about the incredible impression Eva left on her child. Her daughter, who planned for years to study engineering in college, is now a Spanish major. She attributes her daughter’s love of the language and cultures to
Eva, the opportunity she had to travel abroad with Eva and other students between her junior and senior years of high school, and “the joy and excitement in her classes” (Personal communication, 10 May 2004).

Eva employs much fun and humor in her daily teaching. She is quick-witted and current with knowledge of her school building and student issues, pop culture, as well as national and international politics and news. Her department chairperson describes her as having a great sense of humor and she and I concur that there is a tremendous amount of laughter in her classroom, with Eva often laughing at herself more than at anything or anyone else.

This preliminary introduction of Eva would be incomplete without a description of her rapport with her students. In addition to the laughter that fills her room, she seems to know her students well, and genuinely cares for them. Her department chairperson spoke at length about this quality of Eva’s,

One of the things that she has taught me is that what we do (…) we’re providing a service for the kids. (…) When I began teaching I thought that everybody was going to leave my room fluent and that I had to teach them everything I knew. …She has helped me see that (…) you teach them bit-by-bit, you increase what they know (…) You’re providing them a service, you’re expanding their horizons, and they’ll maybe appreciate it later. (…) It’s a life skill that they can use. She is also wonderful about providing that service to all levels of kids.

…If a kid is willing to sit in her class everyday, even in an honors course, if he’s willing to sit there she will make sure that that kid achieves, somehow. She will work with that child so that they, whatever they’re doing, they’re going to make it through that class. And that’s another thing that I like about her because I don’t like for it to be elitist. Language study should not be just for the very intelligent. (Department Chairperson interview, 19 February 2004)

It is important that her students succeed and that they gain skills that will be beneficial beyond learning Spanish in a classroom. Thus, Eva believes it is essential to help students
develop intercultural understanding, and therefore, attempts to place cultures and the introduction of different Spanish-speaking countries at the center of her lessons. In the following section, I elucidate Eva’s teaching of cultures and share how I found her cultural content to relate, or not, to Banks’ Four Levels of Integration of Multicultural (2003).

Summary of Eva’s Culture Teaching Units/Lessons for Spanish Four

Over the six months that I observed in Eva’s classroom, I had the opportunity to view part or all of six different lessons/units. Some of the lessons were derived from the textbook, others were based on holidays and/or literature from Spanish-speaking countries. I list each lesson below and provide a brief summary of the main points, including the culture and grammar topics of focus.

- Cuba
- El Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)
- Las Apariencias Engañan (Appearances Are Deceiving)
- La Riqueza Cultural (Cultural Richness)
- La Navidad (Christmas)
- El Mundo en que Vivimos/Costa Rica (The World We Live In/Costa Rica)

**Cuba:** Students read a short story by Cuban author Reinaldo Arenas entitled *Con los Ojos Cerrados* (With Closed Eyes) (1972). They compiled a vocabulary list, summarized sections in English, and took a quiz covering vocabulary and reading comprehension; there was no grammar focus. They then watched the movie *Guantanamera* (Gutiérrez Alea &
Tabio, 1995), a black comedy about Cuban life and death. Students answered a 12-question video guide during the movie and discussed parallels between the story and movie.

**El Día de los Muertos (The Day of the Dead):** Students were introduced to Mexican ‘calaveras’; a term generally meaning skulls, around the time of Day of the Dead, it also refers to imaginary obituaries of individuals who are alive. In groups of two or three, students were asked to write a calavera. Their rubric included use of: direct and indirect object pronouns with one and two verbs, affirmative and negative commands, a past tense verb, appropriate vocabulary, adjectives in appropriate form, creativity, originality, and fluidity.

**Las Apariencias Engañan (Appearances Are Deceiving):** Based upon their textbook chapter, students were expected to learn and manipulate more than 50 vocabulary words and expressions related to stereotypes and discrimination. Students reviewed affirmative and negative words as well as the future and conditional verb tenses. Students then watched the movie *Jaime y el Durazno Grande* (James and the Giant Peach) (Selick, 1996) and completed a movie guide where they were to fill in blanks with more than 30 of their new vocabulary words.

**La Riqueza Cultural (Cultural Richness):** Based upon their textbook chapter, Eva gave students a list of more than 50 vocabulary words and expressions on cultural diversity, talking about accomplishments, and talking about future plans. Grammar focused on specific uses of the subjunctive mood. Students used answers to personal questions on stereotypes as a springboard to prepare a short group composition/role play to be presented to the class using a school development activity called RAFT (role, audience,
format, topic). The rubric included a minimum of 100 words, 10 of which were to be vocabulary words from their last two chapters, use of the present indicative, present perfect, past perfect, and at least two examples of affirmative and negative words.

**La Navidad (Christmas):** Guided by a rubric containing poetic elements such as assonance and similes, Eva asked students to write a short poem about Winter Vacation in groups of two or three. The week before winter break, Eva used a short story by Julia Alvarez, *Del Niño Jesús a Santicló* (From Baby Jesus to Santa Claus) (n.d.), that she and a coworker adapted for their students to compare Christmas in the U.S. to Christmas in the Dominican Republic. Students read, summarized, practiced vocabulary, made comparisons, and answered questions; there was no grammar focus.

**Costa Rica:** Students learned about Costa Rica based upon their textbook chapter entitled, “El Mundo en Que Vivimos” (The World in which We Live) (Humbach & Ozete, 2000). They watched an educational video on Costa Rica and were expected to answer questions in Spanish. Vocabulary in this chapter dealt with pointing out problems and their consequences, social problems, talking about how to solve problems, and talking about hypothetical situations. Grammar covered *se* + verb constructions, and the past subjunctive in contrary-to-fact *si* clauses.

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7 A cultural aspect that students often learn is that Hispanic countries and communities are predominately Catholic, thus readings with religious content are part of the cultural experience of the Spanish classroom.
In the following section I present how, and at what levels, Eva’s practices of multicultural content integration align with Banks’ theory/model. The lessons I present are drawn primarily from those that I observed first-hand, but a few are lessons from her fifth-year Spanish classes that she discussed with me.

Examination of Eva’s Lessons with Banks’ Model

While examining the lessons of my participants, both in-person as well as retrospectively through notes from my research journal and transcriptions, I continually ruminated over Banks’ model as well as my research questions. The areas the research questions relate to are: national, state, and local guidelines for teaching culture; resources for teaching culture; teachers’ pedagogical self-descriptions; and teachers’ perceptions of culture in the classroom. Connections and examples related to the research questions and fitting the discussion of Eva’s lessons and Banks’ approaches are interspersed throughout the following sections.

Level 1: The Contributions Approach

The Contributions Approach, as adapted for the Spanish language classroom, is characterized by inserting discrete cultural elements of a particular Spanish-speaking country or community, such as music, dance, or food. Lessons within this approach generally give little attention to the importance of these aspects within the respective communities.

From my many visits and discussions with Eva over a six-month period, I found two lessons appropriate for The Contributions Approach. It is likely that there were more examples of this approach, for instance whenever she inserted a brief discussion about a holiday, a famous Hispanic, or cultural element without examining multiple perspectives
related to those cultural elements. In fact, there were activities within all of her lessons where there were brief insertions of ethnic content, however, most of the activities seemed to be embedded within larger units characterized by Banks’ other approaches. Use of The Contributions Approach allowed Eva to include cultural elements when either she did not have the knowledge and/or resources to go into depth on a subject, or when time did not permit lengthy study of a cultural topic. The latter seemed to be the rationale for Eva’s use of The Contributions Approach with the following lessons.

*Three Kings Day.*

At first glance of the names I used to describe Eva’s cultural lessons, it might be assumed that there would be several instances of The Contributions Approach. This approach is often marked by insertions of holiday information and celebrations. However, most of the holiday activities and discussions reached far beyond a brief infusion of information. An exception to this is the celebration of Three Kings Day. On January 6, in most Spanish-speaking communities/countries, families celebrate the arrival of the three Kings bearing gifts to Bethlehem by giving Christmas gifts to children. Traditionally, this was the day children received gifts, rather than on December 25. Eva and her students were in the middle of exam preparation during the week of this celebration so she chose to move a fiesta day to mid-February, after finishing a chapter test. She briefly discussed the holiday with them and distributed Cuban and Costa Rican recipes to students who wanted to make and bring in the food for a few extra points.
A second example of The Contributions Approach was the introduction to information on Costa Rica. As the basis for the cultural information presented in one of their textbook chapters, students were given the opportunity to peruse photos and read cultural notes introducing Costa Rica’s democratic history and its concern with ecology. Students also watched a movie in English on Costa Rica and answered questions in Spanish on a movie guide. On the chapter test students were expected to answer questions in Spanish on basic facts about Costa Rica. An example of a true/false question given during class for review was, “Soda se refiere a un refresco para el verano” (Soda refers to a drink for the summer) (The answer was false, it refers to a small restaurant.)

Though many lessons employing The Contributions Approach are brief injections of cultural information, this lesson on Costa Rica is an example of how The Contributions Approach may take place over several class days, without examining multiple perspectives or making connections between cultures. It served as an induction to basic facts and information about Costa Rica.

*Summary of the contributions approach.*

Within Eva’s instructional routine, The Contributions Approach plays an important role in that it allows her to provide a cursory introduction or review of cultural elements that she might otherwise ignore. Using this approach in the first example made it possible for students to revisit Three Kings Day, a holiday that they initially learned of in beginning Spanish. In the second example, they learned basic facts and were introduced to Costa Rica, a country that is gaining in popularity for tourism and travel.
During the six months of this study, Eva devoted a very small amount of time to using The Contributions Approach. From the two lessons I summarized within this approach, her attitude seemed to be that these insertions of cultural material were important and that it was not necessary (nor perhaps feasible) to develop them into multi-perspectival units due, primarily, to lack of time. From my classroom observations, her students appeared to enjoy these brief and entertaining lessons. Though they were less compelling than the lessons within Banks’ other approaches, her students demonstrated learning on their quiz questions over Costa Rica and they readily volunteered to experiment with the recipes for their classmates. Although this approach does not primarily depict Eva’s teaching of cultures, it seems that it was a useful pedagogical tool for presenting general cultural information.

Level 2: The Additive Approach

This approach is much like the Contributions Approach with the addition of multicultural stories or lessons to the curriculum. Several of the lessons that I observed with Eva and her students match this level. The lessons extend beyond a quick insertion and head in the direction of transformative curriculum reform, yet are limited because students do not have the opportunity to trouble the perspective from which the stories, etc. were written. From Eva’s Spanish Four classes, I present two cases that may be appropriate to The Additive Approach: El Día de los Muertos (The Day of the Dead) and Las Apariencias Engañan (Appearances Are Deceiving). I also learned of lessons Eva
conducted with her AP Spanish classes, and briefly present two examples here: El Día de los Muertos: Macario (The Day of the Dead: Macario Video), and La Noche Boca Arriba (The Night Face Up).

*El Día de los Muertos.*

The discussion and celebration of El Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) began at the end of the unit on Cuba. Students watched a movie with death as one of its themes, and Eva discussed with them the topic of death and how Cubans view death as compared to what they already knew from previous Spanish classes about how Mexicans view death. Eva then asked students to take out paper and write in Spanish what they remembered about El Día de los Muertos and any questions they had about the Mexican celebration. The discussion in Spanish that ensued touched on different important aspects of the holiday. As students volunteered ideas and questions, Eva wrote key vocabulary words and expressions on the board. One thoughtful notion that Eva pointed out among the discussion of spirits coming to visit their families, was that this holiday is “… a way of keeping track of your family and heritage” (Observation notes, 30 October 2003).

After this discussion, Eva introduced the calaveras assignment. She distributed an introduction sheet and read with students the four examples provided, explaining that this calavera, unlike the traditional definition of ‘skull,’ is an imaginary obituary. She shared, “It’s very much like what Jay Leno does and like Saturday Night Live. It’s a lampooning of public policy. They’re all saying no matter how much money you have, how powerful you are, you’ll end up like all of us in the end” (Observation notes, 30 October 2003). Eva continued to explain the guidelines for a group project, shared examples of calaveras written from previous years about teachers and television and movie stars, and allowed
students class time to begin the calavera. The following day, at the end of the class period, students presented their calaveras to the class. Prior to presenting, students were asked to take out a half sheet of paper and write their impressions of the calaveras as they were presented.

This short lesson/activity on El Día de los Muertos is a good example of Banks’ Additive Approach because Eva asked her students to investigate further the meaning of death and to play with it through their writing. Students participated in a traditional activity that some Mexicans partake in each year as well as responded to the calaveras that their classmates presented. They also drew parallels between two countries (Cuba and Mexico) and their beliefs about death and compared their findings with the dominant culture’s view of death in the U.S. Thus, this example extends beyond The Contributions Approach because, as an add-on to the curriculum, it allowed students to examine a cultural topic from the perspectives of different countries and cultures.

*Las apariencias engañan (Appearances are deceiving.)*

Eva’s school district uses the ¡Ven Conmigo! (Humbach & Ozete, 2000) textbook series. With her Spanish Four students, she finishes the last four chapters of the level three book. Of these four chapters, two focus on stereotyping and cultural richness/pride. Eva uses some of the elements of these chapters (e.g., certain vocabulary words, some grammar points, and cultural notes) as the foundation of her units, but uses the actual text sparingly. She spoke about the resources she uses on several occasions, including:
[A colleague] and I plan together. The book doesn’t go into depth on grammar so we do our own formalized reviews and grammar teaching. …we use no other formal text but we do some readings…like a Garcia Lorca poem …and we also read Con los Ojos Cerrados about Cuba.

We also bring in parents, for example, if we’re talking about Venezuela. We’ll ask them to prepare traditional dishes. We’ll do music, people, food, movies, whatever resources we can get because of the community we have. (Interview notes, 26 September 2003)

And that’s one thing that I like about Ven Conmigo is that I thought that some of the vocabulary, although I don’t really like the way the book presents things in little blurbs here and there. I mean essentially blurbs. I do like the choice of vocabulary. It is useful vocabulary. It is vocabulary that you hear if you travel somewhere, if you listen to native speakers, you do hear it, in actuality. (Interview, 5 November 2003)

In this lesson on stereotypes, she supplemented the vocabulary provided in the text, with a vocabulary list of more than 50 words, all in Spanish, that were separated by speech parts: sustantivos (nouns), verbos, adjetivos, and expresiones. Words and expressions included: attitude toward, discrimination, stereotype, lack of, ignorance, minority, majority, prejudice, respect, to make fun of, to be angry, to be frustrated, selfish, friendly, snobby, to deny having made fun of, etc. Because the vocabulary list was extensive, much of the focus early in the lesson revolved around learning, using, and manipulating the words and expressions. Eva used PowerPoint on the third day of the lesson to practice vocabulary and negative words, asking ¿Qué es un estereotipo? (What is a stereotype?). She showed English sentences and asked students to write the Spanish translations (e.g., I want to judge something. I don’t want to judge anything.) During this activity she encouraged students to practice more advanced verb tenses (future) and the new
vocabulary even though they were already familiar with some synonyms (students know pelear and luchar as words for ‘to fight,’ but she prodded them to use their new word ‘combatir.’)

There were many activities within this two-week lesson for students to practice vocabulary and talk about stereotypes. Eva shared:

The goal that I see in general is to make them think about stereotypes and how in [her school district] there are stereotypes within their community. And to make them aware and make them more tolerant. That is a topic, more tolerant of differences, and then specifically, my second goal would be the vocabulary. Acquisition of that vocabulary and being able to use that vocabulary to express themselves, you know, in as realistic a way as they can. (Interview, 5 November 2003)

The themes of stereotypes and tolerance are important in a multicultural curriculum. However, in order to be meaningful, they require activities and opportunities that allow students to reflect on the value of considering different perspectives. One example is the activity that Eva asked of her students after the PowerPoint review. Eva asked students again, “What is a stereotype?” With their responses she engaged them in concept mapping, used often as a pre-reading activity, it allows students to think about a concept that is important in the reading and helps them develop a framework to further the understanding in the reading. As they volunteered words and parts of definitions, she wrote and created webs on the board so they could see the concept being mapped and connections and parallels between and among their ideas. The all-Spanish dialogue that ensued has been translated into English.

Eva: What is a stereotype?
Eva: If we think about this word, what synonyms can we use to describe stereotype?
Student: It includes prejudices.
Student: Judging.
Student: Discrimination.
Student: Ignorance.
Eva: It can be the result of ignorance.
Student: Minorities.
Eva: It can include minorities.
Student: Making fun of.
Eva: It’s a form of judging.
Student: Lack of information.
Student: Gossip.
Eva: What are some examples?
Student: The ideal body image.
Eva: North American women are supposed to be tall, thin, and many have parts that aren’t real.
Student: Social classes.
Student: Foreigners.
Eva: What’s an example of Mexicans?
Student: Cheap labor.
Student: Short.
Student: Only work at Wendy’s.
Eva: And blacks? In Spanish the word ‘negros’ isn’t a bad word.
Eva: In [their community]?
Student: Blonde girls.
Student: Dizzy.
Student: Everyone has a BMW or an SUV. The bigger the better.
Eva: With this information, write a definition of what a stereotype is using all that we have talked about here.
Student: An image or a person or a group of persons.
Student: It’s when other people judge a stranger without knowing that first person.
Student: It’s when people judge you but they are missing information.
Student: It’s something that describes a person or a group without knowing him.
(Observation field notes, 5 November 2003)

Though it seems that Eva and her students could have gone into more depth with their description of a stereotype, this activity was undertaken early in the Appearances Are Deceiving unit. It did, however, offer students some time to reflect on stereotypes both locally and in general. By verbalizing their ideas about stereotypes, they were practicing the vocabulary, and as Eva noted in her goal for the students, using it in a meaningful fashion.
Eva led her students from the concept mapping activity into a listening (from a CD) and reading comprehension exercise (out of the textbook) dealing with the stereotyping of Asians, quiet people, band members, football players, and other ethnic groups. Of the exercises due for homework the next day, one of them asked students to choose from the vocabulary words and expressions offered and write a short paragraph about themselves. The expressions included: I have an open mind, I work a lot, quiet, friendly, I have a personality with many different facets, I am proud of what I do, and my grandparents have been prejudiced by others.

Another activity used later in this unit was manipulation of the vocabulary with a video guide while watching the movie *Jaime y el Durazno Gigante* (James and the Giant Peach) (Selick, 1996). Eva showed the movie two days before the unit test to allow students, again, “a springboard to express themselves… and work with the vocabulary a little bit more” (Interview, 18 November 2003). After the test and prior to Thanksgiving break, Eva introduced the students to a song by Chilean folk singer Violeta Parra entitled, *Gracias a la Vida* (Thanks to Life) (1966). Though most Hispanic countries do not celebrate Thanksgiving as we do in the U.S., this song was used to allow the students to think about what they are grateful for (e.g. parents, seeing, hearing, words, laughter, etc.), as well as not judging other people. Some of the vocabulary words from their stereotypes
list were found in the lyrics, thus it was another opportunity for students to express themselves because they had to react to the content of the song by answering five questions in their own words.

Eva incorporates her experiences as a Latina to further her students’ understandings. She often provides anecdotes derived from her youth as well as her travels to Spanish-speaking countries. With this unit on discrimination, Eva shared feelings from how she was treated as one of two Cubans in her class in a large suburban school system. One anecdote she recounted was:

…talking about novelty, a country 90 miles south of Florida, and people had no idea, people thought that we lived in trees or wore grass skirts, and in fact everybody has several earrings now. (...) When I came, I had my ears pierced when I was a few days old, that was the custom. And when we arrived, that was when I went to school, that was one of the things, “Wow, you have pierced ears, didn’t that hurt?” It was the strangest thing. We were really looked at in a very strange way. (Interview, 5 November 2003)

This work on stereotypes and appearances related to two chapters from their textbook dealing with prejudice and ethnic diversity. However, Eva adapted and enriched the units so that ultimately both were quite lengthy. Therefore, I examined each chapter/unit separately against Banks’ Levels of Integration of Multicultural Content.

The content that Eva added, in concert with the few activities she extracted from the textbook, made this *Appearances Are Deceiving* unit a good example of The Additive Approach. It seems that there was little restructuring of the curriculum with the activities she added, yet it clearly contains aspects that are more than just brief superficial contributions to multicultural content. Students engaged in opportunities that allowed them to listen, read, write, and speak about their notions of stereotypes and prejudice. In their concept mapping activity, they discussed issues of stereotypes related to their school
and adolescent experiences as well as different ethnic groups. It is clearly a unit that is on its way to being transformative, however this unit was limited to The Additive Approach because the activities did not delve deeply into the perspectives of ethnic groups, thus allowing students to differently understand their own culture, history, and society (Banks, 2003). Though students did discuss how Mexicans and members of their local community are stereotyped, they could have enriched this lesson by examining the reasons for these stereotypes, including historical, cultural, economical, and political reasons.

In our discussions, Eva mentioned that her primary goal for this unit was to have her students learn about tolerance. Even though this was not directly stated to them, after multiple activities attempting to examine this issue and practice the vocabulary, it seemed to be evident. They did practice vocabulary and they did review grammar, but those were necessary activities to help them communicate meaningfully about tolerance. Through my observations, I saw that Eva’s students were interested in the activities in this unit on stereotyping. Most of the students readily participated, largely to share an opinion or story about having been stereotyped. Though Eva’s students were not particularly challenged to extend their understanding, as in some of the following units, it seems this lesson may have been one of the most entertaining (through a variety of activities) and useful to them (in terms of the well-practiced vocabulary).

Spanish five lessons.

Over the course of many formal and informal discussions with Eva, I learned of several culture-teaching units for her AP Spanish students. Because I was unable to observe the following lessons, the descriptions as well as the discussions are brief and
less complete than those from her Spanish Four class. However, I felt it important to share these lessons for two reasons. First of all, by providing more examples, the reader may gain a better perspective of Eva’s teaching, thus adding to the portrait the reader is constructing of her. Second, the reader, particularly secondary Spanish educators, may gain more ideas for teaching units that involve multicultural content. These ideas may be catalysts for developing a transformative curriculum consisting of more complex units where students reflect and act upon issues of social justice. The following lessons have been subsumed under The Additive Approach because each is an example of a lesson with added ethnic content that has some depth to the perspectives studied: El Día de los Muertos: Macario (video) and La Noche Boca Arriba (The Night Face Up). As such, they draw further attention to how The Additive Approach operates in instructional contexts.

*El Día de los Muertos: Macario.*

To celebrate el Día de los Muertos (or Día de los Difuntos, as Eva calls it) (Day of the Dead) with her most advanced level of students, Eva shows a Mexican-made movie entitled Macario (Gavaldón, 1960). It is a 1960 award-winning movie about a poor Mexican man who at a greedy moment in his life, is confronted by the Devil, God, and Death, and makes a deal with Death that ultimately leads to his own death. This movie with English subtitles, employs magical realism and touches upon the Day of the Dead, visiting the cemetery, and the subject of life after death. Eva shared that the students consider it unusual and a real cultural experience in that it is more than 40 years old, it is black and white, and it is a movie about Mexico made with Mexican actors. After
viewing the movie, Eva asks her students to react to specific elements of the movie and the holiday and to offer their opinions through journal writing.

In this lesson on the Day of the Dead, students have the opportunity to trouble their own perspectives/understanding of this traditional Mexican holiday by seeing this Mexican movie. Unlike traditional commercially-produced educational movies, this movie and the activities surrounding it afford Eva’s most advanced students the opportunity to still celebrate and learn about this tradition, but in a manner appropriate to their level of language and cultural understanding. Additionally, having had opportunities to read authentic pieces dealing with magical realism in Spanish Four, they again have the opportunity to learn more about this genre of literature and movies.

An interesting characteristic of Eva’s teaching and philosophy is that she has sought after and familiarized herself with more advanced activities, literature, and movies for holidays. This contrasts with a more popular practice of focusing on holidays only at beginning language levels. Eva, however, offers students the opportunity to examine holidays from different perspectives and to go into greater depth on these themes usually considered more ‘fun’ by the students. The activities with both her Spanish Four and AP Spanish classes on el Día de los Muertos are good examples of how she develops units on holidays that continue to challenge her upper level students both with language practice and cultural understandings. As will be seen in the next section, she also extends the learning and comparisons about Christmas with her Spanish Four students. Holidays are not just for bringing in food nor are they just for beginning language students. Eva believes her fourth and fifth year students should know more about and understand
Hispanic holidays better than beginning language students; she is creative about finding ways to make this happen.

In Eva’s current graded course of study, there are two expectations listed for culture learning for Spanish Four and Five. The first relates to ongoing attention to current events from the media. The second expectation notes that students will focus on history, holidays, traditions, literature, and art. Although very general in nature, it is presumed that students will continue to deepen their understandings of holidays and traditions, even at the highest secondary language levels. Thus, it seems that although Eva stated that she is no longer familiar with the specific aspects of her formal curriculum, she and her students are meeting both cultural expectations. From my experiences as a researcher, teacher, and administrator, I find her commitment to depth of a topic (teaching about Hispanic holidays at a more advanced level) unusual and refreshing since upper level teachers tend to focus primarily on covering grammar and reading classical pieces of literature. Additionally, the in-depth study of a cultural topic allows students to move from viewing the traits of the Hispanic culture as odd and exotic to being more believable because it can be explained. Galloway (1984) notes that with this focus of study, “the individual can see things in terms of the target culture’s frame of reference” (as cited in Omaggio, 1993, p. 371.)

*La Noche Boca Arriba (The Night Face Up).*

In preparation for the Spanish AP Language Exam, Eva and her students spend much time learning and reviewing grammar and reading authentic pieces of literature. Toward the end of the school year, when her students are feeling much “senioritis” and complaining about the depressing nature of some of the literature, Eva introduces them to
a story by Argentinian author Julio Cortázar. The story, *La Noche Boca Arriba* (The Night Face Up) (1966), is a well-crafted story intermixing the tale of an Aztec being pursued through the jungle and elements of modern day Buenos Aires. Eva and her students generally read this short story to examine the Aztec culture, to practice reading comprehension and grammar, and to continue building up their Spanish vocabulary. Eva shared that her AP Spanish class has proportionately a large number of males, and that this story is very appealing to them because of the hunting and the pursuit that is described. It is a challenging story, one that is often studied at the college level. Eva added:

> If they go and take classes, a lot of them place into [an] upper level class where they will read that if not first semester then second semester. And then [they] email me, we read this in class and I knew all about it, this is great! Because it is a tough story but it’s really a good story. (Interview, 12 February 2004)

This unit on *La Noche Boca Arriba* is representative of The Additive Approach within Banks’ Model of Multicultural Content Integration. The story itself is written in the first-person, thus the students read what seems to be a personal account of a young man who is trying to decipher which of two dreams is reality: that of himself as an Aztec who is trying to stay alive in the jungle or that of himself surviving a motorcycle accident in Buenos Aires. The protagonist’s dual existence reveals elements replete for studying basic cultural aspects: geography, history, customs, and traditions. However, more than merely presenting information on Argentina, Eva’s integration of this story into the Spanish AP curriculum allows students to vicariously live the tangled and twisted life of this native South American, therefore allowing them to examine more than one perspective. This is where The Additive Approach is brought into play.
The use of *La Noche Boca Arriba* is another example of the flexibility that Eva has with her curriculum. The elusiveness in her graded course of study for AP Spanish allows her to use a story such as this with classes who are dominated by male students or who are interested in a different type of literature. Since I did not observe her AP Spanish classes, I was unable to ascertain the extent to which she integrated other cultural elements that she connected to this story, for example, history, Aztec culture, and geography.

*Summary of the additive approach.*

The Additive Approach, second in Banks’ (2003) hierarchical model of multicultural content integration, is distinguished by aspects or activities that offer students opportunities to view multiple perspectives on an issue or lesson. The lesson is generally an add-on to the curriculum, without changing it substantially. From Eva’s cultural lessons/units, both those I observed first-hand with her Spanish Four students and those she shared with me related to her AP Spanish students, there are four that I consider to be an additive of multicultural content. Each of these lessons offered her students opportunities to examine or read about issues from different perspectives, thus allowing them to gain a broader understanding of Hispanic people, customs, and literature. With her Spanish Four and Spanish Five classes, she extends the study of *el Día de los Muertos* (The Day of the Dead) in an attempt to further her students’ understanding of how different Hispanic cultures view death and to continue to draw connections between those cultures and their own. Based upon a textbook chapter on stereotypes called *Appearances Are Deceiving*, Eva involved her students in concept mapping and opportunities to verbalize their understandings of stereotypes. Students had several
occasions to use their new vocabulary in meaningful ways to talk about stereotypes and judging. In the final lesson examined within this approach, Eva employs a well-crafted authentic short story to keep her seniors focused near the end of the school year. While reading *La Noche Boca Arriba* (The Night Face Up), students learn about two different Argentinian lives. Both the story and the cultural and historical activities in which Eva’s students participate, allow them to view perspectives other than their own. In fact, in addition to the connections that Eva constantly makes, another theme that I found to be pervasive in her teaching, is that of helping her students see that there are always multiple perspectives and multiple truths. For example, in the stereotyping unit as well as in units described in The Transformation Approach, she continued to point out that the U.S. is just one country among many. With Eva, I think that this philosophy stems partly from her position as a FL teacher, but clearly it is characteristic of her personality, her bicultural and bilingual background, and her political stance. It appears she feels it is her job as an upper level Spanish teacher to challenge her students, by continually asking them thoughtful questions so they may gradually gain a more global view.

Based upon my analysis of observations and my field journal, students seemed to enjoy the activities within The Additive Approach. They were on task during class work, did not complain when asked to do a cultural project (the calaveras), and during their presentations of the calaveras they laughed and seemed to be at ease speaking in front of the class. They appeared to be genuinely interested in verbalizing their understandings of stereotypes. Though they were engaged in these discussions, they did not seem to be too challenged because they had their vocabulary lists at their disposal, and thus were given less stressful opportunities to practice piecing together coherent sentences. Overall, from
their comments and participation, Eva’s students appeared to be interested in making connections between cultures and better understanding their own cultures.

*Level Three: The Transformation Approach*

As adapted for the Spanish classroom, Banks’ third approach, The Transformation Approach, is different and more complex than the first two approaches in two significant ways. First, the goals and perspectives of the curriculum are changed so that the view that students generally have, the mainstream-centric view, is just one of several they may examine in the lesson/unit. These different perspectives may help students extend their “…understandings of the nature, development, and complexity of U.S. society,” and, for this purpose, Hispanic societies as well (Banks, 2003, p. 234). Second, I have adapted this approach so that in many cases, the curriculum is changed so that cultural goals, rather than linguistic goals, are at the center of the lesson. Taken from my observations of Eva’s Spanish Four classes, I present four units that may be appropriate for alignment with The Transformation Approach: Cuba, La Riqueza Cultural (Cultural Richness), La Navidad (Christmas), and Current Events. I then briefly discuss two lessons that Eva shared with me from her Spanish Five classes: *Cajas de Cartón* (Cardboard Boxes) and the Spanish Civil War.

*Cuba.*

One of the units Eva taught early in the school year involved a short story and a movie focusing on Cuba. Rather than just studying basic facts and geography of the country, as with the Costa Rica lesson, students had the opportunity to draw parallels and make relationships between the story and movie. Both involve magical realism in that people try to convince themselves that life in contemporary Cuba is not as bad as it really seems.
In the story *Con los Ojos Cerrados* (With Closed Eyes), by Cuban author Reinaldo Arenas (1972), students read about the life of a child who walks with his eyes closed in order to alter events and people around him to be happy. Students also discussed the author at length, the impact the communist government had on his life, his exile to the United States because of his writing about the Communist government, and the general themes and characteristics of his writings (e.g., graphic, grotesque, sad, tender). Eva shared that in the past, students used the Internet to learn more about the embargo issues with Cuba.

During the year of this study, Eva and her students spent more time with the story and working on reading comprehension, as that was a professional development goal for the building. Eva divided the story into sections of 5 paragraphs, read the sections with the students in class, discussed them, and then asked the students to read again at home. For each section they were then expected to select five vocabulary words that they needed to know to understand the story, write five questions in Spanish for reviewing and/or clarifying the story, and write a summary in English. Thus, working together, the students and Eva created a list of the most essential words to know. During review of the homework and discussion of the story each day, students asked interesting questions both in Spanish and English about the author and life in Cuba, in order, it seemed, to determine which elements were fiction and which were non-fiction. For example, at one point a student asked in English, “Why are there so many dead animals and little old ladies
begging?” (Observation, 13 October 2003). This allowed Eva an opportunity to review the characteristics of Arenas’ writing as well as chat about the growing levels of poverty in Cuba.

Following the story, and prior to watching the movie Guantanamera (Gutiérrez Alea & Tabio, 1995), students reviewed for and took a quiz over the story and the important vocabulary words and expressions. As was typical of all of the written assessments that I saw, this test was completely in Spanish. Students were expected to read through and follow Eva’s rendition of the story, and supply, when asked, the appropriate vocabulary word or element of the story. The second part of the quiz contained 16 questions asking students to match the Spanish vocabulary word to the best Spanish meaning for it. The final part of the quiz included two short-answer questions, asking students to offer their opinions.

The semester exam also included 17 multiple-choice questions over Con los Ojos Cerrados, examining comprehension of the story (and questions in Spanish) as well as questions about Cuba, its citizens, and its relationship to the United States. Eva mentioned, however, that she does not always formally assess cultural knowledge.

If it’s in their text, yes, they may have to know it. If it’s drawn from discussions or the web then I may not always assess it. It may not always require having an assessment. The experience of discussing what it is, is more valuable. (Interview notes, 26 September 2003)

Class discussion/participation is worth 20% of the students’ grades, thus there is an expectation that students will share their opinions and questions about cultural issues. The tests and quizzes over the units derived from the textbook almost always have a cultural component. Eva summed up her views about cultural assessment as, “Generally
the important thing is that there is a bringing of cultures together; it’s a less formal thing” (Interview notes, 26 September 2003).

After the quiz over *Con los Ojos Cerrados*, Eva used the 1995 Cuban movie, *Guantanamera* (Gutiérrez Alea & Tabio), as another resource for discussing contemporary Cuban life. This movie shows the life of an older man who closes his eyes to see things much different from the way they really are. The movie, however, uses different characters to show different perspectives/lives in Cuba. Along with the movie, students were expected to answer 12 questions, many of which asked, how? what do you think? and why? The last two questions asked the students to make comparisons between the movie and Arenas’ short story.

Together, the story, quiz, movie, and worksheet complete a unit on Cuba that Eva has herself assembled over time. Units consisting of authentic pieces, expressing different views rarely, if ever, come neatly packaged for teachers. Eva noted that she creates at least 75% of the cultural lessons for her students, including specific goals for Internet use, videos, newspapers, magazines, worksheets, discussions, etc.

This unit on Cuba is representative of Banks’ third level, The Transformation Approach, because, as an integral part of the first-semester curriculum for Eva and her Spanish Four students, it permits them to see Cuba from different viewpoints and resources. Whereas in The Additive Approach students begin examining different perspectives through a story or lesson that is an add-on to the curriculum, in the Transformation Approach, the curriculum is centered on culture and subsequently the linguistic and vocabulary goals are formed around it. Additionally, Eva developed and strategically sequenced activities in such a way that students begin to view the
mainstream-centric perspective as just one of many. Throughout this unit, students were involved in discussions and stories trying to convey and understand different perspectives about Cuba. Both elements of the unit, the short story and the movie, are authentic pieces, written and produced about Cuban life in the Spanish language. Eva’s use of multiple components to better understand contemporary life, while shedding some light on the history of Cuba’s progression, allowed her students opportunities to better understand the people and their reasons for risking their lives to leave or their decisions to stay in the communist country. The unit is focused on culture and improving reading skills, rather than introducing or practicing one or two particular linguistic elements.

La riqueza cultural (Cultural richness).

A second example of a unit that is appropriate for The Transformation Approach had attainment of specific grammatical aspects as one of its goals. However, completing the cultural activities and success with the project within the unit seemed to be at the core of the goals for teaching and learning. In this chapter, based in the textbook ¡Ven Conmigo! (Humbach & Ozete, 2000), Eva gave students a vocabulary list of more than 50 Spanish words, complementing the previous textbook chapter on prejudice and discrimination. New words and expressions included success, pride, race, goals, challenges, to assimilate, to achieve, to dream about, and to be thankful for. Through activities both from the book and created by Eva, students practiced reading, listening, speaking, and writing about culture. For example, in class, students and Eva created a concept map to describe the word ‘pride.’ I incorporate part of the class discussion below. Because the entire conversation was not in Spanish, I use italics to signify the discussion in Spanish that has been translated to English.
Eva: Who is a Hispanic?
S: You.
Eva: What makes me a Hispana?
Eva: My native language was Spanish. My parents were ‘Hispanos’ too.
Eva: What is pride?
Eva: What could a synonym of pride be?
Eva: This one is a little more difficult than the others.
Eva: If we feel pride, how do we feel?
S: Happiness.
S: Success.
S: How do you say achievement?
Eva: Logros; from lograr, remember?
S: Los logros “achievements.”
Eva: Is it just los logros or a sentiment/feeling for achievements?
Eva: What else?
S: Overcoming a challenge (un reto.)
Eva: A challenge (desafío.)
Eva: The feeling you have inside after you overcome a challenge.
Eva: What more can produce pride?
S: Arragonts (plural adjective.)
S: It is stuck up, conceited.
Eva: We’re now going to think of examples of pride. For example, the people of a state or of a country. Can they have pride?
S: For athletic achievements, athletes.
Eva: Like the [high school athletic team] who are the state champions. They and the school are proud. What else?
S: Of good grades.
Eva: Yes, for good grades. Another example?
S: Your family.
S: Yes, the achievements of a family.
Eva: Is pride related to love?
Eva: If you love your family, is that pride?
S: No, they’re not synonyms.
S: You can have love without pride.
Eva: True.
Eva: Anything else?
S: Your culture.
Eva: Yes, your culture, your ethnicity, your heritage, your customs.
Eva: Using these ideas, write a definition of what pride is, based on these ideas.
(Students spend two to three minutes writing a description of pride.)
S: It’s when special things have been fulfilled.
Eva: Does anyone want to add anything?
S: Pride is a happy feeling about the achievement of some goals.
S: Pride is a happy feeling when you overcome an obstacle.
S: You feel good about your individual successes.
Eva: Good job. (Observation, 4 December 2003)

As students volunteered information, Eva wrote on the board and drew lines and circles to connect elements that related to one another. Much of the description of pride that the students supplied involved putting together new vocabulary words and expressions. By steering the conversation, Eva performed error correction with incorrect vocabulary while helping her students examine the connections between pride and love as well as pride and cultures/ethnicities. This lesson was the first of many in this unit (built upon the previous stereotyping unit) to help students grow to a better understanding of their values and those of Hispanic cultures.

Following the concept mapping, students were involved with activities in conjunction with a video segment from the textbook ancillary materials. In the segment, eight Hispanics shared their sentiments about discrimination in the U.S. and defined themselves using eight different terms including americano, chicano, hispano, latino, etc. Students were also expected to write a few sentences about their own ancestry and who/how they consider themselves. For homework and as preparation for a project, students were asked to answer the following (translated) six personal questions:

1. For you, what does it mean to be a U.S. citizen/American?
2. How do people in other countries see Americans?
3. Have you shared your culture with Hispanic people? What customs or things have you shared or would you share? Mention at least three
4. By being American, what are you proud of?
5. What goal would you like to achieve in your life?
6. How do you plan to excel/to better yourself?

Through examining this rich list of questions, Eva and her students operated within The Transformation Approach. They reflected upon and discussed their own nationalities, a global view of Americans including both positive and negative stereotypes, and the pride they have as Americans. Important elements of this chapter included new vocabulary and the future and conditional verb tenses, however, the focus was on the cultural themes of appearances, stereotypes, pride, and pluralism.

Using ideas from students’ responses to the personal questions, they had two days to write a composition/presentation using the RAFT technique: role, audience, format, and topic. Eva instructed the students to work with one or two other classmates to write a composition in Spanish. The Role was that of a North American student in a university conversation class in Spain, Mexico, or other Hispanic country, with an Audience of Hispanic classmates. The Format was a persuasive writing or presentation and the Topic was ‘You should not stereotype North Americans. We are unique individuals and we don’t fit into the stereotypes that exist about us’ (Document, 9 December 2003). Eva distributed a 30-point rubric covering instructions, vocabulary, grammar, and persuasiveness and asked the students to: write a minimum of 100 words using vocabulary from chapters nine and ten; use the present indicative, present perfect, and past perfect tenses; and to use at least two examples of affirmative and negative words to convince the Spanish-speaking students they do not fit the North American stereotype.

On presentation day, students demonstrated that they reflected upon their own cultures. They used a great deal of vocabulary dealing with prejudice, discrimination, and
pride including the Spanish words for: stereotyping, fat, lazy, materialistic, rich, selfish, snobby, we watch violence, we eat at McDonald’s, imperialistic, different customs and different races, and we’re not all the same. Some of the persuasive comments they included were that stereotypes are not correct; the majority of U.S. citizens are not rich; the U.S. has maintained peace in the world; and we must combat prejudices. Students were given the opportunity to react to each other’s presentations by sharing what they liked and which of the presentations they thought were the most persuasive.

Eva shared with me that she incorporated this project for several reasons. First, it is another activity for students to manipulate vocabulary words and phrases. Second, it is an additional opportunity for them to practice listening comprehension, by demonstrating what they understood through their reactions and class participation. Third, the role-play is appropriate for these students who are juniors and seniors and soon may be spending a semester or quarter abroad, and will be in classes with Spanish speakers. Fourth, while learning about the stereotyping of different Hispanic groups, she wanted them to examine their own cultures, and how each of them does not fit the notion of the stereotypical North American.

I believe that one of Eva’s strengths is that she recognizes how powerful group work can be. By working in small groups rather than individually, students learned from each other by scaffolding cultural understanding and their linguistic knowledge. Additionally, they had support when presenting in front of the class, thus allowing them to be more comfortable and confident with oral assessments. Students also offered positive comments to one another when asked to provide feedback. For example, one student volunteered in Spanish that she liked that “Marta’s group said ‘we want a world free of
prejudice and we need to respect others and their customs”’ (Observation, 9 December 2003).

One of the final activities within this unit centered on the New Year. Eva asked her students to write a paragraph of six resolutions for the New Year. Three of the resolutions were to be written in the future tense and three in the subjunctive mood, but all were to employ vocabulary from their chapters on discrimination/stereotyping and pride. Though I did not observe on the day students shared their resolutions for the New Year, I assume that their comments reflected the deeper level of discussion and examination in which they participated leading up to this assignment. I hope that they resolved to improve issues of discrimination as well as to make attempts to understand others before judging them, etc.

In this unit on Cultural Richness, Eva’s secondary goal was to review the subjunctive mood (introduced to students in Spanish Three), practice some of the irregular subjunctive forms, and extend their knowledge by introducing conjunctions other than ‘que’ that require use of the subjunctive. During review and introduction to the new rules, she used much English with her Spanish Four students. While discussing her philosophy of the target language with grammar teaching she shared:

I don’t feel that (...) the initial presentation needs to be all or should be all in the target language. I’m not hard and fast that it has to be all in the target language. Although there’s a school of thought that says, especially in the upper levels (...) that you can teach it all in the target language. I think grammar is enough of a nebulous subject as it is, because grammar is really not emphasized so much in English classes, so their concept of what an adjective is, what a verb is, what an adverb is, is on enough shaky ground already that I’m going to try to teach this in
the target language. So I believe in them participating with me in the explanation of whatever it is, rather than reading it out of the text. (...) I draw on what they already know. (Interview, 18 November 2003)

Eva is aware that many of her students perceive grammar as being quite difficult. Whether it is very difficult for them or it is just the perception of being so, she does much of her grammar explanations in English. She keeps the explanations short and immediately involves her students in practice manipulating the forms through writing and speaking. She then assesses for comprehension of the explanation and grammar rules through different activities ranging from less realistic rote exercises (e.g., fill in the blank) to more personal and creative activities (e.g., predict how the movie will end.)

Though juxtaposed somewhere between The Additive Approach and The Social Action Approach, I included this unit on Cultural Richness within The Transformation Approach for several reasons. First, the activities are focused on important cultural themes that are meant to help students be open to and remove the negative perception of many Hispanic cultures. Developing units with culture at the core rather than grammar and vocabulary is a characteristic that differentiates The Transformation Approach from The Additive Approach. Second, this unit was an essential part of the Spanish Four curriculum, thus, it contained meaningful activities and utilization of resources that were not merely add-ons to the curriculum. In both The Contributions and Additive Approaches, cultural lessons are inserted into the current curriculum, rather than transforming the curriculum to be centered on multicultural themes. Third, it was clearly more involved than the units described in the previous section within The Additive Approach but did not directly contain the complexity of The Social Action Approach (e.g., involving students in acting upon social issues). I view it, however, as closely
positioned to The Social Action Approach because, it is hoped that the result of continued involvement in thoughtful cultural activities within The Transformation Approach, such as those within this unit, would be students with more global perspectives who choose to take a stance to improve issues of social justice.

La Navidad (Christmas).

The first part of Eva’s Navidad unit is not necessarily a multicultural activity, per se, though depending upon what students write, it could be. However, I have included it as another example of her ability to connect with other disciplines (language arts/creative writing) as well as with students’ interests and pop culture. Students were asked to work in groups of two or three to write a poem about Winter Vacation. Eva provided students with an example she had written and a rubric that included: a creative title; two different stanzas of four lines each; each stanza needed to have a minimum of two lines that rhymed, use of an alliteration or assonance, and a metaphor or simile. The final copies of the poems were written on construction paper, decorated, and used to decorate the hallway bulletin boards for the holidays.

Following the presentation of the poems, Eva used this current year, and has used at least once in the past, a short story by Julia Alvarez entitled Del Niño Jesús a Santiicló (From Baby Jesus to Santa Claus) (n.d.). Rather than watching a movie, giving a test, or having a free day, which are some of the usual options immediately before the holiday vacation, she used this story about the Dominican Republic to give the students an opportunity to closely compare two traditions and learn about its history with the Trujillo Regime. She and a colleague, who also teaches Spanish Four, have spent many hours adapting the story. They shortened it to make it suitable for two or three class days of
reading and they changed some of the vocabulary to synonyms the students already know so they do not get overwhelmed with unknown vocabulary words. They also created a short list of new vocabulary words supplied with their Spanish meanings as well as a worksheet of 12 essay questions.

The primary goal of the lesson, in concert with the multicultural theme of their Cultural Richness chapter, was to explore what different cultures do to celebrate Christmas, particularly the gift giving part of the holiday. Prior to reading, Eva and her students discussed and listed on the board all of the traditions with which they were familiar, including those that do not celebrate Christmas. When working with other students to answer their essay questions, students compared Santicló and el Niño Jesús by finding four or five aspects particular to each throughout the story (e.g., one is a big fat man bringing gifts or coal from New York, thus he only speaks English and does not understand the Dominican children; the other is sweet baby Jesus who, although he only gives each child one gift, would never let them down). This offered students the opportunity to look closely at their own U.S. cultures and the many traditions celebrated within their country.

The second goal for the lesson was to introduce students to the Dominican Republic, noting its close proximity to the U.S., and looking briefly at its history with the Trujillo Regime from 1930-1961. It was because of Trujillo’s close ties to the U.S. that Dominican parents told children that Santa Claus, rather than baby Jesus, would bring their gifts.
An ongoing goal for Eva’s students, and for their current year’s professional development, was to improve reading comprehension. On several occasions Eva reiterated, “…that’s one of the things we’re working on, how to be a careful reader in their own language, let alone in another language” (Interview, 19 December 2003). Eva’s pedagogy for reading comprehension consisted of the same steps with the many passages or short stories students read. Students reviewed the new vocabulary and then Eva read the first part to/with them in class, and checked to make sure students understood the main points of it. Then they reread and answered the questions on their worksheet or summarized in a paragraph in English. The next class period they reviewed their answers to the worksheet, Eva read the new section to them, stopped frequently to check for comprehension, and again they reread and answered questions. She felt that repetitive reading of short sections was the best way to help her students get through the readings without becoming overwhelmed and frustrated by difficult sentence structures and new vocabulary words and expressions.

This lesson, when held up to Banks’ model as an interpretive framework, fits within The Transformation Approach because Eva designed it to present the mainstream-centric view as just one perspective that students examine. Since this story is an authentic piece, students are able to read about a Dominican child’s attempts to understand a part of U.S. culture that almost all of Eva’s students have always known. Furthermore, the discussions and questions in which Eva involved her students lent themselves toward The
Transformation Approach by making comparisons, contrasts, and better understanding, though briefly, the elements of another Hispanic culture. Additionally, her students learned more about how North American Christmas traditions were viewed by a young Dominican child. A final rationale I used for including this lesson within The Transformation Approach was that this story presented (at least) two perspectives of a holiday and was taught within the Cultural Richness unit, also seen as being within this approach.

*Current events.*

I present this current events discussion as an example of another lesson that, when held up to Banks’ levels, is representative of The Additive Approach. The current events activities that Eva uses generally consist of discussions that arise serendipitously and constitute talking and debating that may take from five minutes to most of a class period. However, I felt that the discussions were powerful and thought provoking enough that they rendered themselves appropriate to this approach to integrating multicultural content.

My beliefs about teaching cultures include keeping abreast of current local, national, and global events that affect Hispanic communities, and extending opportunities to my students to participate in discussions of current events. Through my meetings with Eva, I found that she and the members of her department discuss global events and chat about how they communicate the events to their students. One of the goals presented to her colleagues this year in their inservice meetings was that of developing reading skills. Eva often touched on the importance of this goal through her teaching. Associated with current events discussions, she shared that her department is focusing this reading
development goal with their third, fourth, and fifth year students. “We’re trying to get a focus from outside. For example, the war in Iraq, how that news is presented in Spanish-speaking countries. We’ll read news articles, do pre-reading activities, etc.” (Interview notes, 26 September 2003). She added that occasionally she asks her students to use the Internet to do web searches on a current event in order to learn how the media portrays events in different Spanish-speaking countries.

In the current graded course of study for Eva’s school district, one of the expectations for studying culture for Spanish levels One through Five is that students will continue to pay attention to current events as reported in the media. For her part, Eva believes in doing current events at all levels of secondary FL learning. At the earlier levels, for example Spanish One and Spanish Two, she thinks it is important to keep the discussion in English, mention the event and point out the country where it is taking place. However, for the upper levels, depending upon their language skills and the political/historical knowledge of each class, she expects much more involvement from the students, and generally use of the target language. An example she provided from one of her classes was a recent free trade agreement that the United States was negotiating with several South American countries. However, Brazil was resisting the agreement. The topic clearly had multiple sides that Eva asked her students to ponder. Were the countries truly going to benefit from the agreement or:

…was this an example of the U.S. saying, ‘Do what we want you to do?’ Why would the Brazilians be against the free trade agreement? Wouldn’t it be beneficial to them? Now let’s examine, what it does for Brazil versus what it does for the United States. (Interview, 18 November 2003)
She noted that in both her Spanish Four and Spanish Five classes students produce quality discussions because they are already used to debating similar issues in their American History and U.S. Government classes. Occasionally, she shared, her students have to revert to “Spanglish,” or even a lot of English, but the discussion is very valuable. She continued:

Some years, overall, they are very willing to try it, to go out on that limb and try to say it in Spanish. And then if they stumble over a word, I’ll feed them a word or somebody else will feed them. To me it’s the ideal situation. Or even say it in English. Say that phrase in English but then go back to Spanish, because they’re expressing themselves. That’s happened other years, it’s happening this year. (Interview, 18 November 2003)

Eva draws on what the students are learning and their abilities to debate issues from their social studies classes to discuss current events. She noted that she attempts to “…get them to continue to have that dialogue, but let’s do it in Spanish this time and from a Hispanic perspective” (Interview, 12 February 2004). This view/approach that she takes with current events has evolved over her years of teaching. She feels that she used to be much more apolitical, presenting the information and allowing students to come to their own understanding of it. Though Eva did not note why her approach has changed, she mentioned that within the last five years she has become ‘looser.’ Now she shows her biases and allows students to do the same. She speaks out against prejudicial comments made in her class, and shared with me her feelings about those comments.

We can’t let it go. What you do on your time, somewhere I can’t hear it, I’m sorry that you’re that provincial, or you’re that racist, or that you stereotype, but my job is to break stereotypes. There’s enough provincialism in this country. (Interview, 12 February 2004)
If there is sufficient class time when students broach topics, Eva will discuss and debate with them. Issues deliberated over the last year or two include gun control/Colombine, religion, and President Bush and the war with Iraq. She shared,

And this is another function of the language. You can discuss politics in the language. You can do anything. Second language, first language, is a means to communicate how you feel. So, we can’t just have it here in the classroom with vocabulary words on food and that’s all we’re doing or vocabulary words on clothing. No, no, it’s a living, breathing thing, and you can bring in anything and I guess that’s my attitude now. (Interview 12 February 2004)

Though not always planned, in the current events discussions that Eva and her students participate, she encourages them to think beyond their Columbus suburban teen perspectives and attempt to investigate issues more in-depth. Eva explains that there is usually a group of students who are politically savvy and very vocal about their views. At some point, however, in many discussions almost every student will participate with an opinion or comment. She uses the current events discussions, as well, to inform her students about the political knowledge of teens in many Spanish-speaking countries: they are generally very aware of what is happening in their country and the world, they have formulated opinions, and they often try to begin a change process.

The planned and unplanned current events discussions reflect a great deal upon the commitment to teaching about multiple cultures that Eva fosters. Her department chairperson readily pointed out that quality of Eva’s teaching, “…with her it’s personal and she really wants her students to realize that they need to be open-minded and learn about something before they judge it…” (Interview, 19 February 2004). Layered one upon the other and revisited from time to time, the discussions of current events, different perspectives, politics, and history are examples of The Transformation Approach because
they allow for students’ perspectives to be enriched and expanded over time. More than brief insertions of information of world events, Eva uses these discussions as opportunities for students to consider their own and others’ values and beliefs. In the next section I briefly present two lessons from Eva’s AP Spanish classes that could be seen as belonging within The Transformation Approach.

*Spanish Five lessons.*

*Cajas de cartón.*

Of the many lessons with her AP students that Eva shared with me, the lesson on the short story *Cajas de Cartón* (Cardboard Boxes) (Jiménez, 2000) is one that I situate between The Transformation and Social Action Approaches. Based on information I learned about this lesson, it covers elements appropriate for The Transformation Approach, but it may be even more complex. This short story, written by Francisco Jiménez, is about a small Mexican boy and his family. They moved countless times throughout California, spending only a few months in each community where his father found work, before the work ran out and they left in search of a new home and job. If there was no work for the child, he was able to attend school. At one school, he connected with a sixth-grade teacher who spoke Spanish with him and who spent each lunch with him teaching him English. The teacher noticed that the young boy liked music and offered to begin teaching him to play the trumpet. When the boy excitedly returned home to tell his family, he found they had packed all their belongings, again, in cardboard boxes, and were leaving in search of more work and a new place to live.

After reading this story, Eva’s AP Spanish students were expected to visit a Mexican grocery store and return with a receipt from the store to show that they were there. Eva
was familiar with many groceries both close to their high school and near downtown Columbus. Students were to respond in their journal about the experience.

She noted that in the past students really enjoyed the opportunity to visit the store, make a purchase, and speak Spanish with the owners/employers. The use of this story and the activities surrounding it allowed students to learn more about the large Mexican population and the resources they offer in central Ohio. Students also had to use the target language with native speakers in a real-life situation.

*Spanish Civil War.*

Eva shared that she never teaches her AP students the same way year after year:

> You have to gauge what the students want; the grammar and whatever may be the same but the way I teach it, the way I present something, it sort of varies with the students. You have to keep them interested because they don’t have to take [Spanish] Five and I don’t want to lose them. (Interview, 12 February 2004)

In the past she has taught a unit on the Spanish Civil War, particularly with students who were interested in politics and history. This unit evolved after Eva visited her great aunt who lives in Madrid and had lived through the war. She shared:

> And it really impacted me how traumatized, how it was a traumatic experience, and how she really feels even in her late eighties, at her age, she would be walking in an area that had been under siege or something and it brings back memories and she still talks about it. And this was 1930 through 1939. So I thought it was important for them to know. (Interview, 12 February 2004)
In this unit she talks about Hemingway and shows the movie *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (De Sylva & Wood, 1943) in an effort for her students to see culture as historical background rather than customs. The unit focuses on Spain, its history, and how it has developed into the country it is today.

With this information on these two Spanish Five units, both may be interpreted as being aligned with The Transformation Approach. From Eva’s familiarity with the local Spanish-speaking communities and her experiences here and abroad with native speaking relatives, she has developed units for her most advanced students that give them opportunities to better understand and learn about multicultural perspectives, placing their culture as just one among many in the U.S. and the world. Rather than use a prescribed, preplanned curriculum, she feeds upon their interests and creates and uses units to keep them motivated. She uses a variety of resources and personal anecdotes to try to connect them to their learning. She maintains culture at the core of most of her units.

*Summary of the transformation approach.*

The actual transformation that takes place within The Transformation Approach involves examining the mainstream-centric perspective, among others, on the topic at hand. Whereas in The Additive Approach, more than one perspective is discussed, in The Transformation Approach, it is essential to find ways for students to attempt to distance themselves from their traditional notions, and examine what they have always considered as ‘the right way to do things’ as just one of many ways in the world.

The graded course of study for Eva’s district has been written in very general terms for Spanish Four and Spanish Five, particularly for the culture component. This affords
Eva much flexibility with planning and selecting resources. However, it was impossible to know how differently she, whom others believe to be an outstanding teacher of Spanish, transformed the curriculum compared to how others might enact the formal curriculum.

Within The Transformation Approach, I included four lessons from Eva’s Spanish Four classes and introduced two lessons from Eva’s Spanish Five classes. The first unit on Cuba contained general facts about the country, and a short story and movie that allowed the students to make connections and more deeply understand contemporary Cuba. Students discussed death, poverty, the theme of magical realism, and examined different perspectives of Cuban life compared to their own. Improving reading comprehension was a secondary goal for the unit. Though Eva does not always assess cultural understandings/knowledge, students were asked questions about Cuba on their semester exam.

The second unit presented within The Transformation Approach was La Riqueza Cultural (Cultural Richness). Derived from their textbook, this unit covered much vocabulary about assimilation, success, pride, race, etc. Students used concept mapping to define the word *pride*, examined Hispanics and discrimination within the U.S., and participated in a role-play on the stereotyping of North Americans. As a secondary goal, students reviewed and extended their knowledge of the forms and uses of the subjunctive mood.

The third unit for Eva’s Spanish Four classes within this approach dealt with exploring the Dominican Republic and learning how Dominican children first learned about Santa Claus as the gift giver at Christmas rather than Baby Jesus. Students briefly
learned about the influence of the U.S. during the time of the Trujillo Regime and discussed how different cultures celebrate the Christmas season.

A fourth example proffered for The Transformation Approach is the layering of current events discussions Eva’s students are involved in on an ongoing basis. In the discussions, both serendipitous and planned, Eva often asks her students to consider different sides of each event and to ask questions like “why” and “whom does this affect?”

From her Spanish Five classes, Eva shared with me two units that I have included with The Transformation Approach. The units examined the plight of an immigrant child from Mexico and the Spanish Civil War. Eva personalized both units and attempted to make them much more meaningful to students by including anecdotes and expecting students to become familiar with some of the local Mexican resources.

All six units that are illustrative of The Transformation Approach are different, but they have in common the cultural goal of examining different perspectives to the point where students’ own North American views surface as one perspective among many. In the Cultural Richness unit, in particular, Eva gave students several sequential opportunities to better understand their own frames of reference. Subsequently they used this understanding to re-view different ethnic groups and explore how North Americans are stereotyped by others.

As with the other approaches, students seemed to enjoy the activities in these units. They participated without complaint, asked questions, laughed, and were engaged during class activities. One of the strengths of The Transformation Approach is that the topics and themes are generally of interest to students, particularly upper-level students who
may have engaged in similar discussions in other disciplines. Whereas these types of discussions are virtually nonexistent with The Contributions Approach, and begin to surface within The Additive Approach, they are essential elements of The Transformation Approach. Students voiced opinions about topics such as illegal immigration, prejudice, and discrimination. Additionally, with the vocabulary and low-anxiety activities provided by Eva, they had the ability to discuss them in Spanish. The uniqueness of each of Banks’ approaches, as Eva employed them, afforded her students a variety of cultural and linguistic activities, as well as multiple levels of discussion, personalization, and complexity.

During my semester of observations, I found one of Eva’s fortes to be the way she teaches and practices reading comprehension with her Spanish Four students. As described above, she employs a routine that expects her students to read or review each required section at least three times, thus building their confidence with grammar structures and vocabulary expressions that are often challenging to them. She also uses entertaining and authentic materials that are written from children’s perspectives and therefore are enjoyable and lighthearted. The literature selections, however also contain deeper historical, political, social, and cultural themes upon which she draws for the discussions appropriate for The Transformation Approach, including communist Cuba and different perspectives of holidays. Both the class time that Eva devotes to reading comprehension and the ensuing discussions, are additional examples of the importance she gives to depth over breadth. The time consumed to improve reading comprehension and to
examine cultural issues is time that, in many other upper level classes, generally would be spent covering more material. I revisit both of these themes of depth versus breadth and the pedagogy of reading comprehension with my second participant.

**Level Four: The Social Action Approach**

The Social Action Approach is the most complex in Banks’ model. It entails the transformed multicultural curriculum found in the third approach but adds elements that ask that students make decisions and take action related to the concepts studied. Of Eva’s units, I did not feel that any rose to the complexity of this approach because, from my observations and discussions with her, none seemed to require that students go so far as to take actions toward social change. When discussing possibilities for extending lessons, it seemed that Eva would have liked to have continued in the direction of The Social Action Approach, but frequently expressed the issue of lack of time. Though her curriculum allows for flexibility, she still must meet goals for culture learning, vocabulary, and grammar instruction/review in order to prepare her students for the next level (either Spanish Five or the Advanced Placement test/university level courses).

In some of Eva’s lessons, for example Spanish Four’s Cultural Richness unit and Spanish Five’s reading of *Cajas de Cartón*, Eva and her students discussed issues of social justice and examined prejudice and discrimination. They had opportunities to role-play on the topic of stereotyping and to reflect upon their experiences with the local Mexican communities. Without the insight that Eva provided them and the opportunities to share their sentiments about their visit to a local Mexican grocery, for example, misconceptions and stereotypes could have been reinforced. It seems, however, that this did not occur. Yet, without attainment of the fourth step within this approach, decision-
making and social action, these activities fell short of allowing students to fully reach self and social transformation. Ideas for enriching these two units to be more appropriate for The Social Action Approach include having students brainstorm how they might fight prejudice within their school or city. Students could also list community service projects they could participate in to better understand and learn from local Hispanics. Examples of follow-up activities include journaling, small group discussions, and writing school and/or community newspaper articles to help inform the general public of issues of social justice and how problems can be ameliorated.

Summary of the social action approach.

In Reagan and Osborn’s (2002) chapter on social activism they note that “the emancipatory avenues of educational reform…will become the litmus test of any critical pedagogy’s ability to move from the margins to the mainstream in educational settings and dialogue” (p. 91). As an avenue, Banks’ approaches, though new to FL curriculum, may represent a good way to conceptualize and approach FL instruction; the use of his model as a pedagogical tool is addressed in chapter five. Additionally, his approaches provided a contemporary model to help me examine Eva’s cultural lessons. She is a successful teacher of secondary Spanish whose philosophy and practices lend themselves to being emancipatory. She offers opportunities for her students, in the Spanish classroom to explore and critically examine different Hispanic communities and reflect upon their own frames of reference.

From the lengthy description of Eva and her teaching units centered on culture, it is clear that she mixes and blends approaches, predominantly working within The Additive and Transformation Approaches. Culture teaching, as observed in her lessons, consists of
history, politics, current events, people, customs and traditions, food, music, and arts. Eva feels her culture teaching has changed dramatically from when she first learned of it in college. In her undergraduate program, her methods professor distinguished between Big C and little c culture. She shared:

I think what I used to do was more dry and distinct between the Big C, we’re going to talk about capitals and important buildings, and a certain country and then they eat, [and] their customs. But I think now I blend everything together. There is no Big C versus little c for culture. It’s everything. …I think it’s much richer, much more multidimensional now than it was. (Interview, 12 February 2004)

Eva now emphasizes the importance of her students gaining better-developed perspectives of others and themselves; strengths particularly found within The Transformation Approach. Eva herself described her view of cultures as “…a tapestry of everything that makes a group of people, an ethnic group, who they are” (Interview, 12 February 2004). It appears that many of her units have evolved over time. She has adapted readings and revised activities into being culturally rich; she has added activities that allow students to view multiple perspectives. Though lack of time is a significant issue for Eva, without too much additional time or work, some of her units could be expanded to align with The Social Action Approach. By stating a problem relating to social justice and finding solutions within the realm of possibility of her secondary students, Eva and her students could plan a course of action to implement change and improve their school, community, and society.

Eva’s Testing/Assessment Practices

There is ongoing debate, both in writings about culture and among classroom teachers, about the importance of assessing cultural understanding (Lange, 1999; Paige,
Jorstad, Siaya, Klein & Colby, 1999). It is difficult to assess, therefore it is generally not tested. Since culture is not necessarily tested/assessed, it sends out the message that it is not important (Lessard-Clouston, 1992). In Eva’s lessons, she used multiple-choice questions to test reading comprehension of the story and to test students on their knowledge of basic facts of Cuba. Following the movie, students were asked to compare elements of the story and movie, but that same notion was not carried out with assessment. It is possible that because Eva focuses on culture, her students find it important as well, and, as she noted, it is an informal thing. In the scant research on culture testing/assessment, there is some evidence to suggest that students recognize and value ongoing assessment during instruction that is integrated as learning exercises (Warren, 1987, as cited in Paige et al., 1999, p. 94). In Eva’s lessons these include the mini-projects, comparisons made between the story and movie, and ongoing current events discussions in which Eva involves her students. However, it is my belief that in most FL classrooms, if students learn that they are not being assessed on a topic or skill, they will not place importance on learning it. In the next section, I revisit the subject of testing/assessing cultural information with my second participant and compare both participants’ approaches.

**A Synthesis of Eva’s Major Themes**

After coding the data from observations, my field journal, interviews, documents, and what others have said about Eva, I conclude this section about her with a synthesis of the major themes in her teaching. Eva, an immigrant from Cuba, has been teaching for more than 24 years. She has traveled to South America, the Caribbean, and Europe, where in Spain she recently participated in a home-stay.
Eva’s teaching may be characterized by in-depth examinations of issues and topics, as well as much laughing and fun. In her upper level Spanish classes she focuses on improving reading comprehension as well as making connections to the community, pop culture, different Hispanic cultures, and other disciplines. She uses the textbook as a guide, pulling much of the vocabulary and a variety of activities from it to practice all four language skills. Regarding assessment, Eva evaluates speaking and participation on a daily basis, primarily uses summative assessment for writing and listening, and includes questions about basic cultural facts on quizzes and tests. Although she does not use her graded course of study as a guide, her teaching seems to be aligned with goals for culture and language teaching. She has some familiarity with the content in the state and national guidelines, but not necessarily with the cultural content.

Eva infuses discussions of current events regularly and encourages students to examine and debate different perspectives of topics. She expects her students to speak in Spanish all period but both she and her students code switch at will. Additionally, much of her culture teaching is focused on enriching what students already know about holidays and customs and extending it to be appropriate for their language and reading levels. Students participate in group presentations, role-plays, authentic literature, poetry, movies, and music, covering topics such as stereotyping, Hispanics in the U.S., Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Spain, and Mexico.

Eva’s overall approach to culture teaching is transformative; when examined individually, many of her lessons aligned with The Transformation Approach. Consequently, the lessons that I categorized within The Contributions and Additive Approaches support her overall transformative approach by serving to introduce and
review cultural information when there is not time to extend the lessons. While examining Hispanic perspectives at the center of learning, Eva provides opportunities for her students to trouble their own mainstream-centric perspectives and understand that their perspective is just one of many.

Part Two: Melanie

*Background*

Melanie grew up in a small community bordering Columbus where many Cuban families lived. She is the fifth of five children of an Irish Catholic family. She attended parochial schools and in high school developed a love and curiosity for the Spanish language, due in great part to a Spanish teacher she had for three years, Sister Margaret. Upon entering The Ohio State University, she knew that she wanted to pursue a major where she could use her Spanish and her mother encouraged her to study education. Early in her college career she met a professor in the Foreign Language Education department who influenced her a great deal and is still a lifelong friend of hers; the same professor who taught Eva about teaching culture. On three occasions, she shared the impact he made upon her, particularly with the teaching of cultures. While describing how her views of culture teaching developed, she referenced the work of this professor stating, “He used to talk with us about Big C and little c. I mean, he brought a great awareness about keeping culture. Whether it’s big culture about a holiday or whether it’s small little nuances that we insert in there. That’s when I became first aware” (Interview, 4 March 2004). While in college she dated a man from El Salvador and had two opportunities for extended stays with his family. She learned a tremendous amount about
the culture and language of El Salvador from her travels and his relatives. Both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees are in Foreign and Second Language Education from Ohio State.

Melanie’s View of Being a Non-native Speaker of Spanish Teaching Spanish

Melanie is a non-native speaker of Spanish who views having learned Spanish as a second language a positive aspect of her teaching. She shared:

It’s a very positive thing because I know the progression that needs to happen for them to learn. Then I try really hard to put them in a situation where they have to use the language. I think sometimes native speakers, who haven’t gone through the methodologies of teaching, like if I were teaching English, I don’t think I would be as effective as teaching Spanish because I had to go through it myself. And so I know what the problems are going to be. (Interview, 4 March 2004)

As a non-native speaker of Spanish teaching about Hispanic cultures, she feels that much of her teaching is through generalizations. When applicable, she inserts anecdotes and information based upon her own personal experiences. However, she feels that native speakers are able to provide more specific information about their native countries, and are able to stay abreast of grammatical and cultural changes from their countries. Thus, it seems, that Melanie believes Spanish teachers who are native speakers of Spanish from other countries to be more informed about specific cultural information from those countries and current issues with the Spanish language.

Middle School Teaching

After graduating from college, Melanie was working in a position outside of education. During this time she was asked by her former FL education professor to interview for a middle school teaching position at a foreign language emphasis school in the Columbus City Schools district. Each student in this ‘impact school’ selected one of
six languages (Spanish, French, Latin, Russian, German, or Italian) to study for three years, grades six through eight. Melanie was offered the full-time teaching position and stayed at this school for eleven years, when she felt that she needed to leave because she did not like the inappropriate behavior on the part of the students in the school. Subsequently, she was hired to teach part-time in the same Columbus suburban district where she lives and teaches today. She taught both part- and full-time at the middle school level for six more years before voluntarily transferring to the newer of the two high schools in the district.

Current Teaching Position

In Melanie’s high school of 1550 students, there are currently nine full-time Spanish teaching positions, one and one-half French teaching positions, one Latin teaching position, one part-time German position, and one part-time Japanese position. Clearly, a large portion of the students elect to study Spanish, with more than 100 of them studying through the fifth-year level (Advanced Placement). Her language department offers divergent strands of Spanish, Enriched and Regular, for Spanish Two, Three, and Four. Enriched Spanish is offered to students who have a facility in the language and are

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8 Due to budget cuts, the German and Japanese programs were being phased out of the curriculum.
motivated to improve their language skills. The curriculum for both the Regular and Enriched courses is the same, however in the Enriched courses students are expected to speak much more Spanish and, according to the graded course of study, do problem solving that is more complex with problems having more variables and open-ended solutions. Enriched Spanish students are expected to use the target language exclusively, to write with less-structured formats, and to read authentic materials followed by discussions of linguistic similarities and differences with English and Spanish.

Melanie’s high school also offers Spanish 1A and 1B for students who may need to repeat part of the Spanish course taken at the middle school, or for students who need a slower track to grasp the basics before advancing to the second level. Both are yearlong courses.

Of the ten different Spanish courses offered at Melanie’s high school, she has taught eight of them. The two courses she has not taught are Spanish 1AB (equivalent to first year Spanish) and AP Spanish, whose instructor has been teaching that course since their high school opened in 1989. During the 2003-2004 school year Melanie taught two sections of Enriched Spanish Three and three sections of Enriched Spanish Four. Though she taught Regular Spanish Four the previous year, she had not taught Enriched Spanish Four until that time. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, Melanie, like all full-time teachers in her building, was assigned a duty period. In Melanie’s two-story high school, the bulk of the classrooms are on the second floor. Her fourth period duty was near a stairway entrance on the first floor and involved ensuring that students who attempted to
use the stairs had a pass from a teacher so the classrooms would not be disrupted by wandering students. Generally, however, she used that time at the stairway to tutor and conference with students.

In Melanie’s district, her graded course of study does not distinguish the objectives for the four language skills between Spanish Four (Enriched or Regular) and AP Spanish, thus the Spanish Four students are expected to participate in skill development much like the students in AP Spanish. In order for the reader to be aware of the graded course of study objectives the students at these levels are expected to meet, I include them here.

Listening

- Students are expected to make inferences and sometimes comprehend complex and unfamiliar items from literary passages, speakers, and movies without subtitles.

Speaking

- Students will speak in Spanish at all times. They will be able to discuss global issues and current events, use some complex descriptions, and begin to use circumlocution effectively in order to express themselves.

Reading

- Students will read authentic, unedited, unsimplified texts, literary passages, and at least one unedited novel and seven to eight short stories.

Writing

- Students will write a minimum of two compositions per grading period of about one hundred fifty to two hundred words in length; they will use more creativity, begin to defend opinions, and demonstrate use of substantially more vocabulary.
Melanie’s graded course of study does distinguish, however, the grammar, culture, and vocabulary goals between Spanish Four and Spanish Five, the former which I present here.

Grammar

• Focus is on in-depth review/practice with the preterite versus imperfect tenses, the pluperfect tense, and sequencing of tenses with the present and past subjunctive.

Culture

• The two goals for Spanish Four list that students will learn more of the history, heritage and civilizations of Latin America; and students will continue an awareness of current events as reported in the media.

Vocabulary

• The goal is for students to focus on active vocabulary for personal and social needs, as well as understand low frequency vocabulary.

In the appendix to Melanie’s graded course of study there are lists of different resources and activities for the four language modalities and culture learning. There are also lists of films and literature for each language level and a lengthy list of web sites. Finally, her graded course of study offers long lists of assessment strategies for reading, writing, listening, and speaking, but none for cultural understanding and knowledge. The additional lists included in Melanie’s graded course of study offer a wealth of ideas and examples for all Spanish language levels.

In a comparison of the written curricula for Eva’s and Melanie’s school district, I found their content to be very similar. The differences are subtle, but worth noting.

Regarding speaking, Melanie’s graded course of study specifically states that “students
will speak in Spanish at all times,” Eva’s does not. Interestingly, Melanie’s students, as discussed in this chapter, speak Spanish all period, whereas Eva’s do not. Additionally, the speaking goals for both curricula mention that students “will be able to discuss global issues and events,” however, where Melanie’s students do discuss global issues such as immigration, they do much less conversing about current events than Eva’s students.

Regarding **writing**, Eva’s curriculum emphasizes culture as a topic, while Melanie’s does not. Finally, regarding **culture** goals, both curricula are quite similar, yet Melanie’s specifically mentions that students will learn about Latin America as a focal point, whereas Eva’s is much more general. Additionally, related to the culture goal, Eva’s curriculum states that “students will *pay attention* to current events” whereas Melanie’s says that “students will *continue an awareness* of current events.” I find the wording to be more than an issue of semantics. It seems that Eva’s curriculum places more emphasis on knowledge of current events than Melanie’s curriculum. Although neither teacher is very familiar with the specifics of the graded courses of study, the nuances of their culture teaching and their philosophies toward it, seem to closely reflect the importance laid out in the formal curricula.

As will be elucidated throughout this section on Melanie’s approaches to culture and language teaching, she has an ongoing concern to ensure that her students know their grammar in preparation for Spanish Five. Likewise, she is familiar with the grammar expectations in the graded course of study. However, just as her curriculum is vague about the cultural knowledge students are expected to know and understand, the culture that Melanie teaches is only loosely aligned with her graded course of study. She is unfamiliar with her guidelines, and although she teaches culture, much of it is derived
from the themes in the literature she chooses to teach, rather than units centered on the history, heritage, and civilization of Latin America as well as the currents events that are reported in the media.

**Professional Development and School Involvement**

At her high school, Melanie has worked on a variety of professional committees. She was a member of the committee that wrote the current FL graded course of study, completed in 1998. She also worked on committees for textbook selection, evaluation of homeroom use, principal selection, and an adhoc group to improve staff morale.

The majority of Melanie’s 26 years of teaching have been at the middle school level. Having taught part-time and full-time in inner city and suburban middle schools, she spoke fondly of the activities and her experiences at that middle level. In particular, she spoke of the amount of time she spent teaching culture. She commented, “…I used to teach much more culture then because we had so much more time to do it. We had two years to do one year” (Interview, 4 March 2004). While at the Columbus middle school, Melanie and colleagues organized a foreign language festival every three years. The all-day festival consisted of all of the students (from six different language studies) presenting their research projects including presentations of food, creations they built, and performing. Melanie shared, “it’s hard to remember all of this because it’s been several years but it was so elaborate, so wonderful” (Interview, 4 March, 2004). She and her colleagues presented their festival at the Ohio Foreign Language Association (OFLA) conferences. While working in Columbus schools, she also participated in action research, examining cooperative learning with the middle school French teacher. She shared how it evolved:
It was from the Columbus Instructional Model, and we decided we wanted to explore that a little bit more. So we went to a workshop on it, [...] and we did our own thing. But we would get release time, actually put it into practice, and it worked. (Interview, 4 March, 2004)

Additionally, Melanie worked with teachers in the high schools to demonstrate and help them use cooperative learning, and yet mentioned that she no longer incorporated this approach:

But when you’re teaching six classes a day, you can’t do it in all six classes, if you do it right. It’s not just pairing the kids up, it’s truly the whole concept of taking the kids, listing them, and then putting this kid with this kid (motions to lowest and highest achievers and putting them together.) (Interview, 4 March 2004)

Since Melanie’s first years of teaching, she has worked with a student teacher every two to three years. With the inception of the M.Ed. program at Ohio State, her role changed from cooperating teacher to clinical educator, working with the same master’s student for an entire school year. Like Eva, Melanie stays connected to the university and teachers in other districts via her participation in this program.

In addition to two trips to El Salvador, Melanie traveled to Mexico on two occasions with students from Columbus schools. In our discussions she revealed her passion for and knowledge of Mexican history and Mexican cultures. Most of her culture-teaching units are centered on Mexico, and/or holidays celebrated in Mexico and other Spanish speaking countries.
**Philosophy**

Whereas Eva’s classroom is telling of her teaching philosophy and personality, Melanie had the misfortune during the 2003-2004 school year of traveling among three different classrooms. Thus, the description of the classroom in which I observed Melanie is brief. However, Melanie’s positive attitude, her ability to maintain a great deal of organization, and her desire to cover large amounts of material, are reflective of her approaches to teaching high school Spanish. In this section the reader will become better acquainted with Melanie through description of her routine, approaches, personality, how she made the curriculum her own, as well as what other educators said about her.

**Daily Schedule**

In Melanie’s high school there are many more teachers than there are classrooms and full-time teachers instruct five of eight 47-minute periods. Therefore, all teachers share classrooms and some teachers travel among three or four different rooms. The foreign language classrooms (Melanie’s department chooses to call their discipline Global Languages) are located in the back hall of the second floor of their building. Throughout all of the second floor halls, framed posters and prints of famous paintings by Picasso, Dalí, Monet, among others, adorn the walls. Most of the foreign language classrooms seem to be brightly decorated with student-made and commercial-made posters. Though each classroom contains a teacher’s desk, all of the teachers in her building share an area of several connected rooms in the middle of the building as the teacher workrooms. This large area contains desks for each teacher, a photocopying and computer room, and a lunchroom.
During the year I conducted this study, Melanie had one of the most hectic schedules she had ever had as a full-time teacher. Though she rarely mentioned it, she did share that she requested to have less traveling and better sequencing of courses for the following year. During first period, Melanie taught Enriched Spanish Three in a classroom I refer to as Classroom A. Second period she had her preparation period where she returned to her desk in the teacher workroom to work and help her student teacher prepare. Third period she returned to Classroom A to teach Enriched Spanish 4. Fourth period she did her hall duty at the bottom of the steps. Fifth period she taught Enriched Spanish Three in Classroom B, a Spanish room that, unlike the others, was a hallway away from the other language rooms. Sixth period she returned to the teacher workroom for her lunch period. Seventh period, the period that I observed, she taught Enriched Spanish Four in her third classroom, Classroom C. Eighth period, she taught Enriched Spanish Three in Classroom C. Whereas teachers with as many years of experience as Melanie might complain about such a difficult schedule, she did not. She kept her files, books, and all necessary materials on a three-shelf metal cart that she pushed to each class and back to the teacher workroom every period. Hanging from her cart was a large handmade laminated sign declaring ‘no inglés.’ Traveling back and forth, Melanie often chatted with students in Spanish, other teachers, or her student teacher. She was perpetually in motion.

Melanie’s Classroom

The classroom in which I observed Melanie’s seventh period Enriched Spanish Four is located in the middle of the hallway that contains primarily math and foreign language rooms. This room is shared by four teachers, three of whom teach Spanish levels Two, Three, and Four, and one Latin teacher. The room is covered with Spanish and Latin
expressions; almost all of the Spanish decorations were hung by one of the other Spanish
teachers. Because Melanie was split among three different classrooms during her day, she
did not decorate any of them. This is a rectangular room with six rows of four or five
desks. On the back wall there are many colorful posters in Spanish: months, ¡Fiesta!,
¡Viva Méjico!, México (with an Aztec drawing), photos from a magazine of Ecuador,
Chile, Venezuela, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, and Colombia. There is also a colorful poster
of Costa Rica (from a travel agency). There is a Spanish map of Europe and three more
signs in Latin. The floor is carpeted a flat blue. Against the front wall, there is an
overhead projector on a cart, a large overhead screen that is always pulled down, and a
teacher’s desk that rests at an angle in the right corner of the room. Against the front wall
there is a black metal bookshelf where Melanie’s Enriched Spanish Four students keep
their red workbooks. Because the workbooks are rarely used, Melanie feels they are
better kept in the classroom where she can have students access them without losing or
forgetting them. On the left wall there are two windows, more Latin posters, and a
TV/VCR unit mounted from the ceiling in the back left corner (generally this does not
work well and is used only for school news shown each Friday at the beginning of third
period). On the right wall, there is a second TV/VCR unit on a large cart that sits against
the chalkboard taking up much of the chalkboard space near the door.
In Melanie’s seventh period Enriched Spanish Four class there are 22 students, 16 females and six males. Three of the females are of Indian descent, the remaining students are white. The students sit in assigned seats, with the six boys sitting toward the back of each row.

**Routine**

It is difficult to encapsulate a daily routine for Melanie, primarily due to her creativity and the games, gimmicks, and drama that she employs that will be described in the next section. However, she does maintain several basic activities during most class periods. Melanie is very organized and feels it is important to help her students stay organized as well. Since her early teaching years she has required that her students keep a separate Spanish notebook and that within the notebook the very first page is a notebook list where students list every page they add to their notebooks. Each paper is dated, assigned a number, and that information is included on the notebook list. At the beginning of every class period Melanie puts the updated notebook list (on transparency) on the overhead projector. Included on it is the homework due the following day. Students know they are to be prepared with their notebooks open and copying the information. If appropriate, Melanie explains the homework immediately; occasionally, however, she waits until the end of the period. For Melanie, the notebook serves three purposes. First, students stay organized. They are responsible for papers she gives them. Also, at the end of each marking period they are given a notebook quiz. On that quiz she asks them questions related to homework assignments kept in their notebook. For example, on (page) number 37, Exercise Two, write out the correct answer for number six. If students are organized, they should have that correct information. A second purpose for the notebook and
subsequent quiz is that students must make corrections on all homework assignments. If, for example, number six on the assignment just mentioned was not corrected when reviewed in class, a student may miss it on the notebook quiz. Melanie holds students accountable for correcting their homework, and often collects it after students reviewed it in class to make sure corrections were made. The third purpose Melanie has for requiring that students keep an organized notebook is that she considers the notebook their text.

Other than the individual literature texts, often paperbacks, Melanie rarely uses a textbook. She alludes often to her ‘files,’ where for more than 26 years of teaching she has collected and refined her teaching materials. Though both her Spanish Three and Spanish Four classes have textbooks that they pick up from the school’s bookroom each year, the students learn early on from her that the textbooks are generally used as a guide and resource. After many conversations with Melanie, it is apparent that her students rarely need to bring the texts to class. She is known to predominately provide handwritten copies of grammar rules or requires her students to take notes from the overhead. Over the course of one marking period, students may accumulate 30-40 pages in their notebook. After the notebook quiz, students purge all pages except for notes and vocabulary lists and start a new notebook list. Interestingly, from discussions with Melanie’s peers, many of them have learned this idea from Melanie, and are currently using it to help their students (and themselves) stay organized and to help hold their students accountable for homework corrections.

Following a brief discussion of the notebook information, Melanie reviews homework and/or collects the homework. Melanie’s students are involved in frequent small written quizzes to ensure that they have learned the material. The quizzes either generally cover
vocabulary (matching Spanish word to Spanish meaning/definition) or a particular grammar point (translation from English to Spanish). The quizzes are short, lasting no more than ten minutes.

After the quizzes, Melanie involves her students in a ‘pregunta del día’ (question of the day), to give them an opportunity to speak and share their opinions. The pregunta del día is also used to personalize the students’ work, reading, or homework; it affords Melanie the opportunity to get to know her students better. Students earn ‘pesos’ for speaking (explained in the next section) and are eager to volunteer. Articulating more than just a word or two, they often are involved in dialogues of several sentences with Melanie. She also uses the speaking to do more error correction and point out common grammatical issues. An example of a pregunta del día is, “Which parent spoils you more?” Students supplied answers entailing which parent, why, and why they are less or more spoiled than their siblings. This conversation gave Melanie the opportunity to discuss the difference between spoiling with material things and spoiling with the heart. It related to their work because ‘mimar = to spoil’ was one of their vocabulary words, and the long play they read dealt with a Mexican father who favored his light-skinned son. Interestingly, Melanie’s daughter was in the seventh period class and Melanie instructed her that she was not permitted to answer that particular question; her daughter, though frustrated, laughed along with the other students.

Following the day’s question, Melanie either reviews and/or introduces a new grammar point or continues with a reading. In the Enriched Spanish Four class I observed, students read several short stories, numerous poems, and one long play over the course of the school year. Students are generally expected to do their assigned
reading as homework. The following day they spend ten to twenty minutes of class time asking and answering questions about it, all in Spanish. With the students, Melanie rereads parts of the assigned reading, pointing out important details and developments.

Melanie generally allows for no free time at the end of class. Students are engaged and busy through the end of the period, often extending beyond the bell, when they may receive final instructions for their homework. If there is any remaining time, students are expected to be studying or working. Typical of Melanie’s final daily directions are (translated into English), “even though [the reading] is only two pages, it is homework” (Observation, 18 February 2004), or “I had only 47 minutes, but needed one, two, or three hours today with you” (Observation, 16 April 2004), or “do your homework, don’t socialize or have a party” (Observation, 5 February 2004). After the bell, or with the last moments of class, Melanie offers students the opportunity to earn a peso by continuing the discussion of the pregunta del día or chatting about their weekend plans, etc.

What students learn to expect in Melanie’s class each day is a great deal of respect and warmth. Though she is quite demanding and holds high expectations for student achievement and engagement in class everyday, she is very caring. She starts each class period greeting her ‘clase favorita’ as she calls each class her favorite. She also frequently uses the Spanish equivalent expressions of my dear, my love, wonderful students, smart students, etc. She smiles throughout the period, jokes frequently with students, speaks loudly and fast, and is very dramatic. During my semester of observations I saw her meet privately with students after class on many occasions to discuss (lack of) performance, poor test grades, and/or students’ personal issues with which she was familiar. She encourages her students, tutors them frequently during her
lunch, hall duty, or after school, and makes phone calls to the parents of any of her students who is achieving below ability. She seems to be very popular among the students and teachers. Her own three children are still attending or have graduated from the same high school, thus she is familiar with much of the student body.

Games and Gimmicks

The unexpected and unpredictable nature of Melanie’s teaching helps to make it very entertaining. What the students believe are spontaneous occurrences, are in fact calculated activities within Melanie’s planned lessons. I witnessed several of these incidences, but was privy to others from discussions with Melanie’s colleagues. For example, when reviewing use of the preterite and imperfect tenses, Melanie invites another teacher (often from a different discipline) to her classroom. The teacher approaches her, throws his arms around her, and pretends to give her a big kiss. Of course, the students are flabbergasted. Once the teacher leaves, Melanie uses the interruption as an appropriate example of how the preterite tense interrupts the ongoing imperfect tense in the past. Another example includes Melanie arriving to class dressed as a fortuneteller, crystal ball in hand, to tell fortunes in the future tense. During one observation, another Spanish teacher entered her room with a cup of coffee for Melanie, and the two conversed about it using and emphasizing the subjunctive mood.

Her dramatics are ongoing. When discussing the father character in their play, *El Color de Nuestra Piel* (Gorostiza, 1966), Melanie threw a picture of him on the floor and angrily asked (translated), “What kind of father is he?” (Observation, 9 February 2004). Due to her glances, gestures, and loud and expressive voice, she is both humorous and
entertaining. She grabs the students’ attention and holds it through the end of class. In order to prepare them for their homework reading, she provides just enough information to tease them into wanting to know what happens next, and always, the bell rings at just the right moment to dismiss them. In one instance while reading their play, Melanie introduced students to the next scene by describing how the youngest son grabbed the servant girl and tried to kiss her. Just as she detailed the servant’s struggle to get away, the bell rang, just as Melanie had planned.

In addition to humor and drama, Melanie incorporates many games, gimmicks, and mnemonic devices to help her students learn and remember. She is often asked by other teachers to offer ideas for teaching certain grammar points. She plays different versions of bingo (bravo) where students must walk through the room and find certain classmates who can attest to activities on different squares of their bravo cards. She plays games involving dice, flyswatters, coins, and bags containing words that students must assemble into coherent sentences. Students memorize the ‘Fabulous 14’ irregular preterite verbs and the ‘Great Eight’ irregular informal commands. They learn ‘this and these have the Ts’ (esta, este, esto, estos) and other simple rhymes and tools for easy remembering.

Specific to culture teaching, Melanie uses some of the same resources as Eva: wall maps, poetry, videos, newspapers for current events articles, and at the high school level, primarily literature.

Finally, in order to encourage her students to speak almost everyday, Melanie requires that her students earn a minimum of 20 pesos each marking period. The pesos are small photocopied Mexican peso notes, that once earned, students initial and guard them as though they were treasures. At the end of the marking period Melanie collects them.
Interestingly, the 20 pesos are equivalent to only 20 points, not percentage points; therefore, they generally make up approximately five percent of the students’ grade. It is not clear if these very bright students understand the low value that each classroom peso has. Nevertheless, because they are Enriched students, they tend to be driven to earn every possible point.

Use of photocopied currency is not an uncommon way for FL teachers to either reward their students or keep track of students’ participation. However, I believe the currency may be used appropriately and inappropriately. If the currency is also used as a lesson in and of itself, where students examine the historical figures present on the notes as well as understand current exchange rates, then they are gaining some insight into the respective country/ies. However, reducing and photocopying other currency may be offensive to others, particularly in the case of Mexico, where the North American view of the peso is generally negative. It may be seen as trivializing an important part of another country.

Though Melanie rarely formally assesses listening comprehension, she expects students to be listening to one another during pregunta del día discussions when they earn their pesos. Their discussions generally feed off one another, or, if they have incorrectly stated something, Melanie may use it as an opportunity to review grammar and vocabulary. Regardless, students must listen closely to her as she questions, discusses, and debates with them, and they must listen to their classmates to be prepared to speak in case they are called upon.

Language Production
One of the important themes in Melanie’s language teaching, accomplished through the gimmicks, games, and devices described in the previous section, is language production. Melanie does not formally assess speaking, listening, and cultural knowledge. However, she does emphasize abundant and correct production of the language through daily speaking and writing. Students are not permitted to speak in English, unless they ask, and they rarely make such a request. The class is taught completely in Spanish, using English only to clarify and, on occasion, to introduce new grammar points. Melanie believes that 85%-90% of the language spoken in class is in Spanish (Interview, 30 April, 2004). With the pregunta del día as a vehicle, students are given many opportunities to react to her, their classmates, the readings, or current events. Melanie poses thoughtful questions that both stimulate conversations and relate to their current piece of literature or topic of discussion. While talking about the emphasis she places on speaking she shared:

But I truly feel that there is no better feeling for them than to be able to speak and to truly be understood. And as you know as a speaker, when you finally were able to be understood by native speakers, it’s just the best feeling. And I truly think that’s the one thing they want to do. Even if it’s the one thing they fear most. […] And I had to tell them that not until you travel will you be proficient, because through their survey that was the one thing that came across. ‘I don’t feel that I can speak as well as I want to speak, it scares me to speak.’ It’s the one thing they want the most. (Interview, 30 April 2004)

Within this focus on language production, Melanie is involved in much error correction; there is little tolerance for mistakes in her class. This is evident through her oral corrections during discussions, the importance she places on correction of homework, the accountability she places on groups during games (they often have to write out the sentences they create and turn in one list per group for a grade), and her
emphasis on correct grammar on essay questions covering the content of their current readings.

*Use of National, State, and Local Guidelines*

In my conversations with Melanie, she rarely mentioned any of the guidelines directing her curriculum. As with Eva, Melanie’s graded course of study has little relevance to her daily practices, in spite of the fact that she was one of the members of the committee who wrote it. For example, when discussing the writing assignments for her Enriched Spanish Four students, she told me that her students write approximately 15 compositions of 150 words or more per year. She was surprised when I informed her that her graded course of study recommends a minimum of two per grading period, for a minimum of eight, half of her requirements. She added, “Really? I have to get them ready for AP; they’re writing all the time [in AP]” (Interview, 19 August 2004). When I asked about the guidelines for teaching culture, she was not familiar with them, or whether or not the local guidelines
consider literature as culture, the area of culture teaching that Melanie feels she does plan. When asked about the national guidelines and the goal areas known as the Five C’s, Melanie said she had heard of them but was not very familiar with them.

One difference between my two participants is their view of the state foreign language standards and the proposed FL component of the Ohio Graduation Test that students may be required to take in the future. Eva’s department took a proactive stance and had already examined the proposed state foreign language test and compared it to their current enacted curricula and textbooks. In contrast, a few of Melanie’s colleagues had familiarized themselves with the content standards, but Melanie had not. Without having seen the documents, she shared her strong feelings about the state guidelines and the test:

These are guidelines, there’s no money for it (allocating funds so teachers may devote quality time to understanding them and preparing accordingly). […] We’ve all been so successful for so long and for so many generations and now everything is coming down to this certain test that you have to take. I won’t teach to the test. And I’m glad I’m going to be out. I know that I’m teaching my students very well. I am. I really feel that I am. But I am not going to teach them for a test. I’m not going to do it. I’ve seen it just killing creativity. The elementary teachers have to teach for the test. I’m totally opposed to it. I know that we have to have accountability. But there was accountability. How are we all successful and our parents successful and their parents successful if we didn’t have accountability? Get people in here that have integrity and there are benchmarks. Do you know what I mean? […] And I don’t believe that every kid needs to take a test for a certain standard at a certain age. I’m sorry. I don’t believe it because kids blossom differently. And one example is my student who could not pass the math proficiency but we moved him from Spanish Two to Spanish Four because he was able to do the work. Does that mean that he had to meet that standard? […] Is education better now than it was when we went through? We demand more of them a lot earlier. But they’re saying that education is falling apart and that’s why we’re giving these tests. (Interview, 30 April, 2004)

In all of our conversations, this topic clearly stirred the strongest emotions for Melanie. She worked on the committee to write her district’s current guidelines that were approved and put in place in 1998, therefore at that time she must have felt them important.
However, with the surge in testing and published research on its effects, both positive and detrimental, she has clearly changed her views about the importance/reasons for the guidelines. It seems she views them as a tool for creating the test rather than a tool to guide curriculum development.

A Comparison of Eva’s and Melanie’s Approaches and Philosophies

Melanie’s approach to language production stands in contrast to the approach Eva uses, but both seem to be successful. It is clear that Eva expects her Spanish Four students to speak in the target language, but when they speak in English she does not necessarily challenge them to repeat it in Spanish. Conversely, Melanie rarely allows English. Eva’s students occasionally joke and make brief comments in English as well as verbalize their understanding of a grammar point or an aspect of a reading. Yet, I rarely saw them pull out their dictionaries to search for a word so they could speak in class. Melanie’s students, however, are expected to have their dictionaries with them daily, and use them regularly. By the end of Spanish Four, it is likely that Melanie’s students are more proficient with their speaking and listening skills. In the particular class I observed, Melanie’s Enriched Spanish Four, her students self-selected a more challenging track than the Regular Spanish Four students. However, Melanie shared that in the past she used the same approach to language production with her Regular Spanish Four classes. Thus, it is likely that Melanie’s former Regular Spanish Four classes were more proficient with speaking than Eva’s.

Another difference between Melanie and Eva’s approaches to language production, is also a major difference between their philosophies of language teaching, particularly as it relates to current events and culture. Whereas Eva feels that the Spanish as a foreign
language classroom is an ideal environment for discussing and expressing opinions about politics, if Melanie’s students broach such subjects, she requests that they not discuss them. “I always stay far away from discussions like that. I tell people, don’t open your mouth please; but the humanitarian piece of being respectful to people of other cultures, absolutely” (Interview, 4 March 2004). Though she has strong political convictions, she does not feel comfortable debating them with her students or moderating their debates. However, like Eva, Melanie noted that “…it’s my job to […] make the students aware and sensitive [to stereotyping]” (Interview, 4 March 2004). Thus, whereas Eva and her students may get into lengthy discussions about world events, the Iraq war, and other issues allowing opportunities to have her students examine different global perspectives, Melanie and her students are less apt to have those same types of discussions. This difference is essential in a comparison between the teachers and their approaches, where Eva uses those instances to teach from The Transformation Approach, Melanie and her students generally stop short of reaching that level. Throughout this discussion of Melanie, I revisit the apolitical stance she claims to take, and the actual posture that I believe is ever-present in her teaching.

How Others Perceive Melanie’s Teaching

In Melanie’s building there have been seven different principals and assistant principals in the last five years. Of the current administrators, none has formally or informally observed Melanie’s teaching. Therefore, I contacted Christine (pseudonym), one of Melanie’s administrators from her former district, a woman who is recognized in central Ohio as a foreign language expert. She has known Melanie for many years and, having recently taught the M.Ed. students at Ohio State, she again worked with Melanie
to place student teachers in her classroom. Additionally, I interviewed Maggie (pseudonym), Melanie’s current department chairperson, who has known Melanie for 15 years. During the year I conducted this study, Melanie and Maggie both taught Spanish Three, among other levels.

“You took my best teacher” is the comment told to Maggie 15 years ago when Melanie left her former school district to teach part-time in her current district (Interview, 19 April 2004). At that time Maggie was a teacher leader for the district and spent half of each school day observing foreign language teachers and planning and implementing the Spanish and French Advanced Placement courses. As a teacher leader, she had the opportunity to informally observe Melanie on several occasions.

When I asked about Melanie’s teaching practices, Maggie raved about Melanie’s ability to keep her students engaged, as well as her rapport with her students:

She’s so enthusiastic and she gets the kids involved. I think they’re fascinated with her. They don’t dare take their eyes off her because she’s going to call them back in. She makes them produce and keeps them going all the time. [...] And she’s loud too. She keeps the kids awake. [...] Even though she says ‘I’m losing my energy,’ uh-huh, I don’t think so. So I see that she does a lot of contact with the kids. (Interview, 19 April 2004)
Christine confirmed that notion by describing Melanie as a “magical teacher” (Personal Communication, 11 October 2004). Like Eva, Melanie maintains a good rapport with her students. Maggie credited some of that quality rapport to the fact that Melanie’s children attend her high school:

> You know the fact that two of her kids are here, has given her a lot of contact with kids. And they feel comfortable, maybe, like she’s the mom down the street. And I think that some of that kind of rapport is so important and that really has connected her very, very much with a lot of […] kids. (Interview, 19 April 2004)

Melanie and I discussed at length the importance of rapport and connecting with her students. She supplied several instances she felt supported her notion that it is not what discipline, language, or level you teach, but how you teach it and interact with the students.

Maggie’s feelings about Melanie’s language pedagogy are similar to the analysis I included in the earlier section in this chapter on language production:

> I think she’s a little more grammatically oriented rather than four skills oriented, although she does things the kids have to do, language production. And that’s the most important part so she gets kids to do language production as long as they produce, and to show it. Not just the fill-ins and stuff. (Interview, 19 April 2004)

Melanie does not formally assess any of the language skills other than writing, though it could be argued that in order to be able to write well, it is necessary to be able to read well. Nevertheless, in spite of not using formal assessment, Melanie motivates her students to use a great deal of Spanish in the classroom. Christine noted, “Melanie is highly interested in having her students communicate in Spanish and thus uses the foreign
language classroom to do so almost exclusively” (Personal Communication, 11 October 2004). As a result, I believe her students produce quality spoken Spanish in a greater abundance than in many classrooms.

When I asked Maggie about Melanie’s approach to teaching cultures, she began her response with some uncertainty. However, as she continued, she seemed to clarify for herself a definition of culture and then acknowledged Melanie’s abilities and practices with culture teaching:

I don’t know that she feels comfortable with culture like in her lessons, unless it has something to do with Mexico, and she knows Mexico and she knows El Salvador, she feels comfortable doing that. But in level three, we do Spain and she says, ‘I don’t know anything about that,’ so she’ll maybe do a little geography or something like that. I don’t know that she does incorporate it all the time. But of course language is culture. There are some things you can’t understand in the language if you don’t know the culture. […] And I know that she does incorporate to some extent language as culture, culture as language, but as far as the things she knows about when she lived in El Salvador, she’ll bring in, this is what we used to do. (Interview, 19 April 2004)

Christine and Maggie have differing opinions of the integration of language and culture that Melanie employs. However, Christine used a similar working definition of culture teaching that Maggie’s description evolved into. She shared:

In order to really learn another language, it is important to understand the cultural nuances and relationships that are so intricately woven into the words, the grammatical structures, and situational uses of language. Melanie is remarkable in her ability to make language and culture inseparable as she teaches. (Personal Communication, 11 October 2004)

From Maggie’s comments, it seems that she is disappointed with the fact that in spite of the graded course of study including the study of Spain and its cultures, Melanie does not teach it. It is not uncommon, however, for FL teachers like Melanie to shy away from teaching about certain cultures and countries with which they have little personal
knowledge. In fact, lack of travel and study abroad is one of the most common constraints found for avoiding teaching about culture (Moore, 1996; Omaggio, 1993). For example, Melanie’s Spanish Three students read a story called *La Gitanilla* (Cervantes Saavedra, 1966), about the lives of Spanish gypsies. Given my beliefs about culture learning being acts of inquiry, Melanie and her students could participate in a number of activities that would allow her students to take the initiative and discover insight into Spanish culture without Melanie having to be the “expert.” By brainstorming themes they want to learn about related to Spain and Spaniards, they could partake in ethnographic interviews (Robinson-Stuart & Nocon, 1996) and/or explore information on the Internet. I revisit this notion of Melanie’s culture-teaching fears later in this chapter.

Relative to the discussion of Melanie’s lack of familiarity and use of local, state, and national guidelines in the previous section, Maggie’s perception of Melanie was congruent with Melanie’s own comments. She concurred that Melanie has developed her own curriculum for culture, based upon the literature she teaches and extended to what she knows from first-hand experiences in Mexico, El Salvador, and central Ohio.

*Summary of Melanie’s Culture-Teaching Units for Enriched Spanish Four*

Over the five months that I observed in Melanie’s classroom, I had the opportunity to view part or all of six different cultural lessons. The first three lessons I introduce are very brief insertions of cultural information and fun. The final three are based upon literature, including poems, a short story combined with a movie, and a play that Melanie intertwined
with grammar learning over the course of four months. I list each lesson below and
provide a brief summary of the main points, including the culture and grammar topics of
focus.

• Three Kings Day
• Cinco de Mayo
• Man of la Mancha
• Immigration
• Chicano Literature
• El Color de Nuestra Piel (The Color of Our Skin)

Three Kings Day: Students listened to Melanie give a brief explanation/reminder of the
importance of Three Kings Day for Hispanic countries and ate traditional Kings’ Day
bread. There was no grammar focus.

Man of la Mancha: Students watched the movie Man of la Mancha (Hiller, 1972), and
asked clarification questions as a follow-up. There was no grammar focus.

Cinco de Mayo: To celebrate the Mexicans’ defeat of the French, Melanie and her
student teacher explained the holiday to their students and had the students reenact the
war to understand the tremendous imbalance the Mexicans faced. There was no grammar
focus.

Chicano Literature: Students read four poems written by Mexican-American authors,
all of which dealt with their ethnicity. Two of the poems were in English, two in Spanish.
There was no grammar focus.

Immigration: Students read a poem entitled El Otro Lado (The Other Side) (Lizarraga,
n.d.) the short story Cajas de Cartón (Cardboard Boxes) (Jiménez, 2000), and took a quiz
over the vocabulary and reading comprehension from the story. They then watched the
movie el Norte (The North) (Nava, 1983). The grammar focus for the story and movie
was a review of the preterite versus imperfect tenses. For their assessment, students researched a story about immigration, rewrote it in their own words, and correctly used the past tenses.

**El Color de Nuestra Piel:** Students read the 1966 Celestino Gorostiza play entitled *El Color de Nuestra Piel* (The Color of Our Skin). Melanie spread this three-act, 106-page play over four months, during which they learned and practiced much vocabulary as well as present and past structures with the subjunctive mood. Throughout this unit, they took an essay test and vocabulary quiz over each act, and had the opportunity to earn extra credit points by creating a video related to the play.

In the following section I present how, and at what levels, Melanie’s practices of multicultural content integration align with Banks’ model. The lessons I present are drawn primarily from those that I observed first-hand, but I reference additional brief holiday activities as well.

*Examination of Melanie’s Lessons with Banks’ Model*

Melanie’s lessons/units involving the study of culture, ranged in length from one day to several months, but the extent that she challenged her students to expand their cultural understandings covered much less of a range. Some of her themes, such as immigration and discrimination, are ideal topics for examining in the language classroom. However, when I compared them to Banks’ (2003) four levels of integration of multicultural content, it became clear that the units fell short of reaching The Transformation or Social Action Approaches. Throughout the following discussion of her lessons and Banks’ model, I continue the discussions of the major themes that are characteristic of Melanie’s teaching, as well as a comparison of the approaches both Melanie and Eva use.
Level 1: The Contributions Approach

In order to best use Banks’ model for examining multicultural content in the Spanish classroom, I have adapted it to be characterized by insertions of discrete cultural elements of a particular Spanish-speaking country or community, such as music, dance or food. Lessons within this approach generally give little attention to the importance of these aspects within the respective communities.

From my observations of Melanie’s Enriched Spanish Four class and from discussions with her, I found that each of her holiday celebrations appropriately fit within Banks’ first approach, The Contributions Approach.

Three Kings Day.

To celebrate Three Kings Day, Melanie asked in advance for volunteers to make Kings’ cake and hide a bean in it. Two days later, on January 6, the students ate the cake and the student who found the bean was awarded a paper crown to wear during the class period. While Melanie explained the importance of the holiday, she passed around an old newspaper article showing a picture of a small child sitting on a king’s lap, that stressed from whom children in Spanish-speaking countries generally believe they receive their gifts during the Christmas season. The celebration lasted part of one class period.

Cinco de Mayo.

When Melanie’s own children were in elementary school she used to take a piñata and sombreros to their school and help their teachers celebrate Cinco de Mayo. She uses the same activity, minus the piñata, with her own high school students. She divides the class into groups with three quarters of the class being the well-armed French, and the remaining students the poorly-armed Mexicans. Each side proudly carries their country’s
flag. From role-playing the imbalanced armies, students learn how it was a great feat for the Mexicans to beat the French and dispel them from Mexico. During this current year, Melanie decorated donuts with small Mexican flags and shared them with her students. Again, the lesson on Cinco de Mayo lasted only a portion of the class period.

*Man of la Mancha.*

After taking a two-day test over Act One of the play *El Color de Nuestra Piel,* Melanie showed the 1972 movie *Man of la Mancha* (Hiller). She intended to give students a quiz on the storyline after the movie, but grading the Act One exams took so many days that she felt she needed a reprieve from correcting. She provided very little information prior to the movie, informing the students that they needed to understand what it meant to call someone a don Quixote. She shared, “I basically told them that no student of mine was going to leave Spanish Four without knowing who Don Quixote was” (Interview, 30 April 2004). She also wanted to know if they thought he was crazy or not. After finishing the movie she clarified the dual roles of the characters and provided background information on Cervantes, the author. The students had many questions about the movie and through their discussions it seemed that some of the students thought he was crazy, others, “the deeper thinkers” as Melanie called them, did not believe that he was crazy (Interview, 30 April 2004). Melanie and I concurred that her students enjoyed the movie and the follow-up discussion.

*Summary of Melanie’s use of the contributions approach.*

The Contributions Approach is characteristic of Melanie’s approach to teaching about the holidays of Spanish-speaking countries and communities. Like Eva, she also uses this approach when there are cultural elements with which she wants her students to be
familiar, but does not have the time to explore in-depth, such as the lesson on *Man of la Mancha*. Through indirect evidence from my observations and field notes, it seems that Melanie’s students enjoy these very entertaining lessons; they usually involve food, silliness, and a few moments to relax in a class that usually requires high levels of engagement.

One of Melanie’s strengths is that she makes a point to celebrate most of the major holidays that are pervasive in Spanish-speaking countries. In addition to the holidays I observed, she shared that she also celebrates Día de Amistad (Friendship Day) as it is celebrated in Mexico rather than Día de los Enamorados (Valentine’s Day). For Día de Amistad this past year, she asked her students to write a letter to their parents in Spanish. However, she did not follow-up with the students or the parents to ascertain how many students actually shared the letters with their parents or how their parents responded to them. Additionally, every year on September 16, she reminds students of Mexico’s Independence Day by, in Melanie’s dramatic fashion, imitating Miguel Hidalgo and the famous ringing of the church bells shouting repeatedly ‘Viva la Independencia.’ She often brings in food for her students and spends a portion of each class period on that day telling them the story of Mexico’s long fight for independence from Spain.

An important difference between Melanie and Eva is their culture teaching philosophies as they relate to teaching about holidays. Eva believes it is important to extend her Spanish Four and AP Spanish students’ understanding and knowledge of Hispanic holidays through alternative cultural materials and assignments. Holiday lessons are often integrated with language teaching and may consume several class days per holiday. Conversely, Melanie stated on several occasions that she does not want to
retein something students learned at the middle school. She noted, “It’s more focused
on the people now than it is the holidays” (Interview, 4 March 2004). On another
occasion she stated, “In the middle school […] I used to do so much more of that but now
I don’t. I need to resurrect some of that stuff. I’m just worried about that kid sitting in the
back who isn’t feeling challenged” (Interview, 19 August 2004). In order to create richer
lessons around these holidays, Melanie could compile and coordinate multiple resources
and cultural elements that allow students to view differing perspectives, as well as help
them better understand their own perspectives of other cultures and Spanish-speaking
communities.

Level 2: The Additive Approach

As presented with Eva’s lessons, The Additive Approach is much like The
Contributions Approach with the inclusion of multicultural stories or lessons to the
curriculum. The remainder of the lessons I observed with Melanie and her students fit
this level. The lessons extend beyond a quick insertion of ethnic content and advance
toward transformative curriculum reform, yet are limited because students do not have
the opportunity to trouble the perspectives from which the stories were written, thus
maintaining the mainstream-centric perspective. From Melanie’s Enriched Spanish Four
classes, I present three units appropriate to The Additive Approach: Immigration,
Chicano Literature, and El Color de Nuestra Piel (The Color of Our Skin). In the
discussions of these lessons I expand upon the following areas and continue a
comparison with Eva: culture-teaching resources; perceptions of the cultures studied;
reading, grammar, and culture pedagogy; evaluation practices; and the notion of breadth
versus depth of material.
Immigration.

Most of the observations I did in Melanie’s classroom took place during second semester of the 2003-2004 school year. However, I observed some of her unit on Immigration early in the first semester. She used this unit to fulfill two goals: introduce the students to immigration of Spanish-speakers in the U.S., and review and test the students on use of the preterite versus the imperfect verb tenses. Melanie taught with three resources that imparted heart-wrenching stories of immigration, the poem *El Otro Lado* (The Other Side), the short story *Cajas de Cartón* (Cardboard Boxes), and the movie *el Norte* (The North). In this discussion of immigration, I revisit the theme of Melanie’s belief that she takes an apolitical stance to FL teaching. Through her resources and discussions with students, I tease out an important thread that runs through her culture teaching.

To introduce this unit, Melanie showed the poem *El Otro Lado* (The Other Side) (Lizarraga, n.d.) on the overhead projector. This 25-word poem deals with the hope for a better life on the other side as well as with the reality of misery, discrimination, and exploitation. She repeatedly asked students to read for understanding, not to translate it. Even though she reminded students that they knew much of the poem’s vocabulary already, several of her students took out their dictionaries and searched for the meanings of the few words they did not know. After three or four minutes, Melanie began a discussion with them by asking (each of the following dialogues has been translated from Spanish unless otherwise noted), “How do you feel when you read this poem?” (Observation, 7 October, 2003). She offered pesos to students who shared responses.
Melanie and her students moved through the discussion quickly, with students offering comments such as the following:

S: It describes the poor in the world.
Melanie: Have you experienced barriers and difficulties in life?
Students: Sí, sí, sí.
Melanie: What is this trip?
S: A trip in life.
Melanie: Not just a trip into the United States?
S: I think this poem is a description of general life.
Melanie: It’s not necessarily about a person that travels from one country to another? Let’s see, let’s see.

Subsequently, Melanie showed on the overhead projector a picture of the author of *Cajas de Cartón* (Jiménez, 2000) as a young boy standing in front of an old truck, and asked, “What’s he like?” Many students concurred that he looked sad. Interestingly, in the black and white photo, I believe he is neither frowning nor smiling, and does not look sad, but given the age and condition of the truck, he appears poor. I believe also that the students viewed him as sad because they saw him as an immigrant and it seems that her students may only understand the word immigrant to identify people who flee to the U.S. (not necessarily to other countries) as economic refugees. Melanie did not make any
comments contrary to their statements or to help them see the child differently. Melanie then wrote on the board the word ‘casa’ (house), prodded some students to participate, and asked:

Melanie: What do you think about when you see the word ‘house’?
Melanie: How do you feel about this word?
S: Comfortable.
S: Family.
S: People that give us love.
S: Love and stress and my dog.
S: A safe place.
S: A lot of noise.
S: How do you say excitement?
Melanie: For that you have a dictionary, love.
S: Support.
S: Yellow.
S: My own things.
S: Advice.
S: Rest.
S: In my own world.
S: Memories.

Rather than describe the word ‘house’ as a building or structure, most students supplied words describing their home. Next, Melanie drew a picture of a house on the front board and stated, “When I say ‘house’ you don’t think about what this is, you think about what’s inside.” She then picked up a cardboard box and asked:

Melanie: What is this?
Students: A cardboard box.
Melanie: If you had to move what would you put in this box? You don’t have to write anything if you’re going to be here in class to talk with us.

On the following day, students brought in an object, and when it was their turn, placed it in the cardboard box and spoke for less than one minute about the importance of the object. Examples of objects included, photos, stuffed animals, and jewelry from a special friend or relative. It was obvious that several students forgot and/or did not prepare when
they attempted to share the importance of their pencil, Spanish notebook, etc. Following
the brief presentations, the class divided into groups of four and began reading the short
story *Cajas de Cartón* (Jiménez, 2000) with one another. This story was new to Melanie,
recently introduced to her by one of her colleagues. It was the second story of the year
that her Enriched Spanish Four students read. Where normally Melanie expects her
students to do their reading at home, she generally provides class time and assistance
with the first two stories to help students learn skills for reading in Spanish. Students
spent one week reading the story in their groups and reviewing vocabulary. Interspersed
with practice of the imperfect and preterite tenses, Melanie reviewed important points of
the story each day.

After being quizzed on important vocabulary and the content of the story, students
watched the movie *el Norte* (The North) (Nava, 1983). This movie, with English
subtitles, depicts a Guatemalan sister and brother and their struggle to migrate to the U.S.
In the movie, the pair is seen crawling through rat-filled sewers and after crossing into
the U.S., being treated atrociously by North Americans. As their final assessment for this
unit, Melanie asked her students to research a story of immigration, whether it was from
the Internet or from a relative, and rewrite it in their own words, paying particular
attention to correct use of the preterite and imperfect tenses.

*Analysis of Melanie’s immigration unit.*

This unit on Immigration reveals the same perspective of immigration through four
different resources: a Chicana poet, a Mexican-American immigrant author, a movie
about two Guatemalan immigrants struggling to get into the U.S., and student-researched
immigration stories. However, the different resources did not help students to trouble the
mainstream-centric view of immigrants in the U.S. Each of the resources Melanie used presented a sad story of immigration. Even if the ending of the short story and movie were happy, the notion that only the poor and down-trodden are immigrants lends itself to perpetuating a negative stereotype of immigrants in the U.S. Rather than gaining a more empathetic view and fuller understanding of immigration, through my analysis I found that misconceptions may have been reinforced.

In our discussions of the Immigration unit, Melanie shared interesting insight. First, she noted that overall her students were unhappy with the unit because it was too sad; each resource had a sad ending. Nevertheless, she also mentioned that they were engaged with each resource. Second, the assessment was too difficult for them. She stated,

> It didn’t turn out as well as I wanted it to. It wasn’t controlled enough. I still believe, at level four, that I have to control their language, very much. And it was too wide open for them. And then I found a problem where they would use the Internet to locate a story and therefore they would try to use the Internet for the translation and that got them in trouble. So I won’t do it again, but I’m glad I tried it. But I learned that it wasn’t what I was hoping for. (Interview, 4 March 2004)

Third, during a different discussion, she mentioned that her students did not really seem to care about the topic of immigration. It is this third sentiment, in particular, that helped me question and trouble various aspects of this unit, including: her students’ previous experiences with culture learning, specific activities she could have used to help her students examine differing perspectives of immigration, and some of Melanie’s “sins of
commission” (Patrikis, 1988) within her culture lessons. I expand here upon these areas that, while lacking, make it difficult for Melanie and her students to work within The Transformation and Social Action Approaches.

Mantle-Bromley (1992, 1993), Lange (1999) and Galloway (1984) among others, have written about the importance of preparing students for meaningful culture learning. This entails helping students understand how their own behaviors are bound by their own cultures, thus, the need for self awareness. In her article, Mantle-Bromley includes lessons in which students should participate prior to classroom activities that provide target culture similarities and differences. The lessons cover the following topics: What is culture? What are the levels within culture? What do we look for when we study culture? What is our own culture? And which of our beliefs and behaviors may inhibit language and culture learning? (Mantle-Bromley, 1992, p. 122). She also provides activities to help improve students’ attitudes, modify stereotypes, and modify ethnocentric tendencies. Through my conversations with Melanie, it became evident that her students had not had the opportunity to examine their own cultures. Interestingly, she told me that one of her Enriched Spanish Four students expressed curiosity about what others thought of Americans. I was surprised that her upper level students had not already examined these topics.

Following the culture-learning preparedness activities and in concert with their Immigration unit, Melanie’s students could participate in activities to help pull the unit’s pieces together to make the topic important and relevant. Elements that were missing include a discussion of how immigration affects everyone, examination of immigration in central Ohio, exploration of the barriers immigrants in central Ohio face, and finally what
she and her talented Spanish-as-a-second-language students can do to help break those barriers. Robinson-Stuart and Nocon (1996) suggest ethnographic interviews with native informants to help elicit similarities between cultures and to make cultural learning more personal. Additionally, Omaggio (1993) recommends inviting native speakers into the classroom.

Finally, one of the themes in Melanie’s culture teaching is her preference to not become involved in political and uncomfortable debates and discussions with her students, thus attempting to not explicitly share her biases. The activities suggested above would help begin those discussions that could be hazy and threatening. Drawing attention to the practices, products, and perspectives, as considered with the national standards (1996) and conceptualizing lessons within Banks’ approaches would help to ease into the sociopolitical discussions that can be delicate such as race, class, stereotypes, etc.

Melanie demonstrated her interest and knowledge about this topic while teaching it, but she did not endeavor to explore students’ feelings of legal and illegal immigrants. She shared, “You know immigration is a touchy thing. You can’t just go to someone, immigrants don’t want to talk about it. It's not an open thing out there” (Interview, 19 August 2004). Equally touchy, it seems, are students’ opinions about the topic. Melanie’s goal was to make her students aware, and clearly she achieved that,

My thing is with the influx of Mexicans here in Columbus, I think it’s good that they see that movie so that when they want to try to make a judgment call on whether they should be here or not. I think they need to see the other side of the coin—where did they come from, why did they come, what was the persecution that was going on. (Interview, 4 March 2004)

However, there are many Mexicans and other Spanish speakers who are in the U.S. and central Ohio, who have not come as economic refugees. By repeating this notion of
having to flee their homelands rife with poverty and coming to the U.S., the land of opportunity, she perpetuates the binary differences that I discuss in chapter one. Reagan and Osborn (2002) caution teachers of this important issue when teaching about cultures. Included in Patrikis’ (1988) “sins of commission” while teaching culture are stereotyping, trivializing (with Mexican pesos), political bias, and dangerous incompleteness. Although it is impossible to remain objective, Patrikis reminds readers that, “Becoming aware of our own biases and helping students to recognize theirs are thus first steps in teaching for cultural understanding in our classrooms” (1988, p. 16, as cited in Omaggio, 1993, p. 368).

In Banks’ hierarchical model of multicultural content integration, I found Melanie’s unit on Immigration aligned within The Additive Approach, because the lesson is centered on developing an awareness of a cultural topic. However, although Melanie’s students may be much more cognizant of the topic of immigration, they clearly did not trouble the mainstream-centric view of this theme. In fact, I believe that their stereotypes of Mexicans were perpetuated. According to Lange (1999), there are other activities that may help students study this unit on immigration without perpetuating negative stereotypes. One idea is students should be expected to journal and/or reflect on multiple views of the topic. In this case, that means why the U.S., a country composed of immigrants from all over the
globe, might support or oppose the ongoing immigration from Mexico, Central America, and South America. Additionally, students could examine the (illegal) immigration to Spain by Africans.

The resources for Melanie’s unit on Immigration evolved over the last five years, from first showing the movie *el Norte*, and gradually layering the other two materials, along with the use of the Internet for the assessment this past year. While teaching at the middle school, Melanie sought out and compiled files of cultural information, as well as used cross-cultural mini-dramas from *Encuentros Culturales* (Cultural Encounters) (Snyder, 1984). Referring to her middle school festivals, she added:

> I would say, like when we did our festivals and I made up folders for the kids to choose from. Whether it was La Virgen de Guadalupe or whether it was Tapas or whatever, I would pull from those things [educational materials] and make up my own files. But I would say the amount that I actually made up was probably 20%, and then pulled from others to make my own. In other words, not redoing what’s been done. (Interview, 4 March 2004)

It seems Melanie has a rich collection of information on certain cultural topics, but it is her concern with covering much breadth related to grammar and vocabulary, as well as improving reading skills, that prevents her from recycling and enriching the middle school materials to be appropriate and challenging for Spanish Four students. At one point she thought she would pursue a cultural theme for her second semester exam, commenting:

> I expect to do something with the theme of Mexico. Whether I pull and update the thing that I already have and all the different things that they could explore but just do it a higher level because it was written for Mexico. That’s something we could do, it will just take some time to sit down and figure out what I want to do. But I maybe would like to pursue that, seeing as how we’ve been in Mexico all semester with this family [from the play]. (Interview, 30 April 2004)
Due to lack of time to prepare, the semester exam was a test over Act Three of the play, with a format consistent with their other tests over the play, including essay questions, character identification, and vocabulary.

For the purpose of this study, it is interesting that both Eva and Melanie taught the same story, *Cajas de Cartón.* Eva, however, used the story with her Spanish Five students and Melanie with her Enriched Spanish Four classes. Both classes seemed very capable of understanding the story. Nevertheless, the follow-up activities with which Eva’s students were involved extended her approach to be closer to The Transformation Approach than Melanie’s. In fact, I included Eva’s lesson on *Cajas de Cartón* in Banks’ Transformation Approach, because her students were expected to make connections between the story and the Mexican community in the Columbus area. Additionally, they were expected to journal and reflect upon the experience of exploring resources in the community. Thus, Eva used the story to create awareness, connect to Hispanic communities, and examine students’ and others’ views about immigration. Having been an immigrant to the U.S. from Cuba, clearly this topic was important and personal for Eva. Likewise, Melanie’s interest in Latin America, particularly Mexico and El Salvador, motivated her to make her students aware of this important topic.

*Chicano literature.*

The lesson on Chicano Literature was integrated into the unit described in the next section, *El Color de Nuestra Piel.* Melanie introduced both early in second semester of the Enriched Spanish Four class. ‘La Literatura Chicana’ consisted of a packet Melanie compiled of four different poems by Chicano authors relating to issues with immigration. Students read each short poem in class on different days and spent approximately five to
ten minutes discussing their significance. Melanie used them as introductions to the theme of skin color that was discussed throughout second semester. I present only the first poem here, with a summary and some of the discussion that followed. Students were not quizzed over vocabulary or grammar; the focus of the poems was to connect to the overarching theme of the unit, thus this lesson was used as an introduction to and ongoing validation for the subjects of immigration, skin color, and cultural differences.

Of the four poems in their packet, two were written in English, two in Spanish. The first poem by Demetria Martínez, entitled *Crossing Over* (n.d.), focused on hiding a baby in a basket who had just had the scum from the Rio Grande cleansed off him as ‘they’ crossed into New Mexico where the child would be given a name, date of birth, “singing rock-a-bye-baby in English, burying the placenta of his past.” The author included a note mentioning the sanctuary movement, which Melanie clarified for students. The following English conversation ensued, often with many students speaking at once:

Melanie: What is the word Chicana?
S: Mexican American.
Melanie: Spanish is usually spoken in the home, of Mexican descent, and an American citizen.
Melanie: The sanctuary movement is a belief that people coming across for humanitarian reasons should be helped. It’s a political thought. I’m not telling you if it’s right or wrong, and I can see by some of your faces your thoughts. It’s similar to the underground railroad because it was also illegal to help the slaves.
S: What’s the placenta?
S: It’s the way the mother gives life to the baby. It’s the sack you’re born in.
(Several students expressed disgust over the idea of the bloody sack.)
S: By saving him [the baby], they’re destroying him at the same time [refers to losing his first culture].
S: It’s a baby. He didn’t really have a culture.
Melanie: Did they really throw the baby in the river? Or is this a metaphor for literature?
S: What’s the scum?
Melanie: Is it the stereotype of the Mexican being dirty?
S: It just came out of the river.
Melanie: As you read *El Color de Nuestra Piel* you’ll see that same discussion.

In this dialogue, although Melanie has stated that she does not take a political approach to teaching, she is in fact telling her students what they think and what to think. She tells them, “I’m not telling you if it’s right or wrong, and I can see by some of your faces your thoughts.” She follows that with a comment about the underground railroad, which North American students are taught to understand as a way to free the slaves. Thus, by relating the two, she is telling them to believe that the sanctuary movement was a way to help those who could not help themselves.

Related to my belief that Melanie in fact reinforces the negative stereotype common in the U.S. of Mexicans, she asks later in the dialogue, “Is it the stereotype of the Mexican being dirty?” Although she is attempting to confront their stereotypes, she aids in solidifying the Mexican stereotype by presenting it in such a way. Melanie did not choose to engage her students in a discussion of stereotyping, particularly of Mexicans, following that comment. Had she been able to guide them through a conversation about stereotypes, her students may have gained a great deal from the lesson.

As with most days, Melanie offered her students opportunities to react in class to the readings and one another, often receiving pesos for their contributions. During the conversation, she refrained from explicitly expressing her stance on immigration, though by nature of her recycling this theme throughout Spanish Four, it is obvious it is important to her. Melanie and I agreed that her students liked the poems, and that the conversations were lively and interesting. She shared that she found it interesting that some of her students could not grasp the notion that it was sad that the baby in the poem had his first culture erased, however, she did not push the discussion much beyond what I
included. As examined in the previous section on Immigration, awareness is Melanie’s top priority, yet she does not allow her students and herself to get involved in discussions that deeply explore such issues. However, this does not seem to be uncommon. Kramsch (1993) notes that, “…teachers seem to pull the brake at precisely those points in the give-and-take of the lesson that could allow for a discovery and discussion of individual and social meanings” (p. 94).

Interestingly, Melanie has much knowledge of Mexico, its history, Chicanos, etc., that she chooses not to share with her students, due to lack of time and pressure to cover grammar. On different occasions when she and I met, she shared much background information about the term ‘Chicano’ and its development over the years. However, her goal for this lesson was to augment the theme of the play, and it seems her goal was clearly met; each poem was connected to the story in some manner and offered students opportunities to react in class.

Melanie covers a great deal of grammar and content in her classes and touches upon many cultural topics. Clearly, it is a daunting task to create in-depth, culture-centered units that challenge each language modality for every lesson. However, even in this brief lesson, which serves as a precursor and validation of the play about skin color, there are numerous activities that may help students reflect upon their own frames of reference as
well as enrich their understanding of other cultures. Banks’ model, as adapted for the FL
classroom, offers a framework of approaches to build upon one another to extend and
enrich cultural understanding.

*El Color de Nuestra Piel.*

For several years Melanie has taught the play *El Color de Nuestra Piel* (Gorostiza,
1966). She blends this play, based upon the theme of skin color and discrimination in
Mexico, with studying and learning present and past subjunctive verb structures, in
addition to other grammar review. At the beginning of each of the three acts, Melanie
distributes a lengthy vocabulary list to supplement the vocabulary supplied in the
playbook. Students also receive a list of more than 100 questions per act, listed according
to the page in the playbook. Throughout the three to four months spent on the play,
students are expected to answer many of the questions, some of which Melanie reviews
with them. Near the end of each act, she distributes a much shorter vocabulary list with
the words and expressions the students must know for the test.

*El Color de Nuestra Piel* was written to help make the Mexican people aware that
there is much discrimination in Mexico based upon skin color, and that it affects all
Mexicans psychologically. The play centers around an upper class family with three
children, two of whom are darker-skinned than the youngest, Hector, who is blonde and
blue-eyed. The father treats Hector better, and obviously favors him. The father, among
others in his upper social class, gives much recognition and respect to those people and
things of European descent, whereas the Indians and Mestizos (mixed breeds) are treated
poorly. After many events take place, it is revealed that Hector committed several illegal
deals, which prove to be fatal to others. Hector decides he cannot live having let down his father and the story ends abruptly and tragically with Hector’s suicide.

Over the course of reading the play, Melanie involved her students in several activities that allowed them to react to or participate in discussions of skin color. On the second day of the play, she asked her students to describe the word ‘mestizaje’ (mixed breeding), (translated).

Melanie: What is mestizaje? In Spanish for pesos, in English for no pesos.
S: When one person from Mexico and one person from Europe make a small baby and they are his parents. (Students and Melanie laugh at this definition. Melanie jokes that it is too graphic.)
Melanie: Mestizaje is the mixture of European and Indian. Because of that the children are ‘mestizos.’
Melanie: What do you call someone who only has European blood? Spanish blood?
S: Criollo.
Melanie: European blood is considered pure blood. This is very important in Mexico. Why?
S: What is sangre?
S: Blood.
Melanie: There are a lot of people who believe that the European blood is more important than the Indian blood.
Melanie: The Europeans, like Cortez, came and destroyed everything and built everything for themselves.
S: The people who want whiter blood are treated better than the people with dark skin.
Melanie: Good.
S: The people from Europe represent more advanced than the Indians.
Melanie: In Mexico, you don’t find small European children in the streets. The white children are at home with their moms.
Melanie: The Indians are intelligent but the Europeans are considered better. Why? The Europeans believe that they were more intelligent but the Indians built many temples to the sun and moon and nature.
Melanie: One more question/comment?
S: I have one. Is an Indian person less than a mestizo?
Melanie: Worse or less?
S: Less.
Melanie: It is believed that the Indians are of low society.
Melanie: What is the story about?
S: It’s about a family.
Melanie: Don Ricardo and his children.
Melanie: What are the children like?
S: Two of the children are dark skinned and the other, the youngest, has white skin with blue eyes.
Melanie: Open to page five.
Melanie: My question of the day is this, how many of you don’t have brothers and sisters?
(Two students, a male and a female, raise their hands.)
Melanie: Then this question isn’t for you, sorry. Maybe tomorrow.
Melanie: Do your parents treat your siblings differently?
Melanie: It says that Don Ricardo has more love for Hector.
Melanie: (to her daughter whose hand is raised) You can’t answer this question.
S: My dad treats us different but equal.
S: My parents tell me to cut (‘que corto’) the grass.
Melanie: You need the subjunctive ‘que corte’.
Same S: They don’t tell my sister to cut the grass because she is a girl.
S: My dad treats my brother better because he is a better student. He receives many A’s.
Melanie: So, it’s not the color of your skin but something different.
S: My mom is stricter with me because my brother is a boy and he is strong.
Melanie: Such is life. (Observation, 2 February 2004)

In this dialogue, Melanie is making judgmental remarks, although she believes she shies away from the political. For example, she said, “There are a lot of people who believe that the European blood is more important than the Indian blood.” In the very next line she stated, “The Europeans, like Cortez, came and destroyed everything and built everything for themselves.” Both comments are political in that they make a clear commentary on the Europeans: their blood is more important than the Indian blood, and that they are bad because they destroyed everything in Mexico. The comment about which mothers are able to stay home with their children is also political in nature.

Finally, when a student asks for clarification about social stature between the Indians and mestizos, Melanie clarified the terms and social hierarchy related to mestizos, criollos, and Indians. However, she did not take that opportunity to discuss the importance of
equality, or compare it to stereotypes of social classes within the U.S. The positive points of this conversation include the historical information she provided as well as using the pregunta del día to allow her students to comment upon how their parents treat them differently from their siblings, thus personalizing the introduction to the story.

Furthermore, as discussed in a previous section, she continued error correction while discussing the important themes of the play. Nevertheless, this brief dialogue provides an additional example of Melanie’s insistence to move quickly through the material, thus missing out on opportunities to engage in meaningful conversations with her students around culture-general themes.

The dialogue also is illustrative of the pre-reading discussions in which Melanie regularly involves her students. Each activity is purposeful; students are able to draw direct meaning from the activity to the readings due for homework. Additional cultural topics that arose from students’ questions or that were introduced by Melanie include: the difference with Hispanics using two last names, the level of respect shown by children to elders in different Spanish-speaking countries by the use of tú (you, informal form) or Usted (you, formal form), the importance of skin color in Middle-Eastern countries (described in the next section), and the use of skin color in the media. Another example of Melanie’s pre-reading discussions includes the use of a society page from a Cancún, Mexico newspaper to emphasize the skin color of those whose pictures appear on such pages. This correlated with Act Two of the play, when the family discussed the important guests they invited to their daughter’s wedding.

Once again, Melanie’s goal for her students was to make them sensitive to issues of skin color and discrimination, but in an apolitical way. During the second day of
discussing the play she shared, “My goal for you is, it [discrimination] exists in Mexico, and I want you to be aware of that” (Observation, 2 February 2004). Over the course of the semester, students shared anecdotes and observations they realized were related to skin color. One student of middle-eastern descent told how she felt she was treated poorer in one country she visited because her skin was darker than most, yet in another middle-eastern country she was very well-treated because her skin was lighter than most. Another student discussed how when her Puerto Rican grandmother had been hospitalized, she did not allow her darker-skinned grandchildren to visit her. Finally, toward the end of the semester, one of Melanie’s students saw a movie that had just been released that dealt with kidnappings. The student realized how the media helps to perpetuate discrimination based upon skin color because the kidnappers were dark-skinned Mexicans, and the kidnapped child was white.

On several occasions during our discussions of culture teaching, Melanie mentioned that the culture she teaches is an inherent aspect of the literature; she does not think of teaching culture in other ways. She noted:

…in the upper levels, knowing that they’ve already been exposed to so much through the years, the way I do culture is as it comes up. I do not consider that I write it into my lesson plans. I just do it as it comes up in the classroom or in the literature or in the stories that I tell them or whatever. But I couldn’t begin to tell you how I specifically do it. (Interview, 30 April 2004)

It seems that since Melanie has been teaching upper levels of Spanish at the high school, her pedagogy of culture has changed dramatically. Though she used to plan elaborate lessons around elements considered both Big C and little c culture, today her culture teaching comes from the literature she employs, the movies she shows, and ascertaining that everything has a “cultural overtone” (Interview, 30 April 2004). The cultural
overtone includes both Big C culture, for example familiarity with don Quixote, and little
culture, but today she no longer distinguishes them. She teaches to her cultural
strengths, and it appears, avoids cultural topics with which she is neither familiar nor
comfortable. She elaborated about her perceptions and understandings of Hispanic
cultures:

Mine are more the Latino culture because that’s what I know best. I’ve never
traveled to Spain so I don’t know intimately that culture. I tend to know a lot
more, I’m intrigued by Mexican history so those tend to be my focus, anything
Latin American. And more Mexico and Central America because that’s where
I’ve been. I guess I rely on the other teachers who have had their experiences in
other countries to round out the cultural experiences for the kids because I don’t
want it to seem it’s coming from a textbook or I’m following something that I’m
not very knowledgeable first-hand about because that’s not real. They could get
that out of a book or off the Internet. I want to bring to life for them something
that I’ve experienced for myself. (Interview, 30 April 2004)

Once again Melanie reiterated her sentiments about teaching cultures unfamiliar to her,
however, she made the assumption that her Spanish teaching colleagues are teaching the
cultural elements that she does not teach. Yet, it is my belief that generally, her
department focuses on grammar and language learning, and not necessarily the
integration of language and cultures. My data analysis shows that there are two main
forces driving the Spanish Four curriculum as well as conceivably the other levels of
Spanish: preparedness for writing and speaking in AP Spanish and the pressure Melanie
imposes upon herself to cover breadth over in-depth exploration of topics.

Over the months that Melanie taught the play, most of her students seemed to remain
intrigued by the story, but even more so by Melanie’s dramatics and activities
surrounding it. In fact, based upon indirect evidence from my observations and field
journal, Melanie’s students seemed to be very interested in the cultural topics she
introduced. Regarding her students, Melanie told me that she, as well, believes her students are interested in learning about cultures, and that they enjoy hearing personal stories related to culture and cultural differences. She feels confident that her students’ perceptions of Latin American cultures are different after the literature and discussions in Spanish Four, but did not discuss how their perceptions may be different.

Melanie also believes that much culture learning, perhaps related to her middle school teaching days, takes place through involvement in projects, and that her students have “zero interest” in doing projects due to inundation of assigned projects at the high school level. Interestingly, however, she offered an extra credit project to her students during this unit, allowing them to earn up to 30 additional points by making a video related to the play, giving them only a few guidelines. From her three classes she had 10-11 groups turn in videos (involving 20-30 students). Of the eleven videos, she noted that four were quality projects where students “…got real creative and used their own words and they were humorous and so cute” (Interview, 30 April 2004). Over the course of a week she showed each of the videos to her classes. It is not clear to me whether or not her students learned more about the play or culture from this specific project. Through my analysis, however, I concluded that students are not as opposed to projects as Melanie originally shared. In fact, many of her students who made the videos did not even need the additional points to bring up their grades.
Summary of Melanie’s use of the additive approach.

The Additive Approach, the second of four levels in Banks’ (2003) model of multicultural content integration, is distinguished by aspects or activities that offer students opportunities to view multiple perspectives on an issue or lesson. The lesson is generally an add-on to the curriculum, without changing it substantially. From Melanie’s cultural lessons/units, there are three that I consider to reflect The Additive Approach. In the first, her unit on Immigration, students had opportunities to learn about immigration from different resources: a play, a short story, and a movie. From these materials, students may gain a broader understanding of the conditions, and the tragic loss of first culture and identity that surrounds the immigrants who flee to the U.S. to find a better life for themselves and contribute financially to their families at home. In the second lesson, Chicano Literature, students read and discussed four poems related to skin color, cultural differences, and immigration. The poems were used as an introduction to the final unit, El Color de Nuestra Piel, a lengthy play that consumed most of their second semester. All three of Melanie’s lessons that align with Banks’ Additive Approach, are interconnected. Each is powerful, dealing with serious cultural topics that her junior and seniors may learn about in other disciplines in school. Thus, the topics of immigration, discrimination, and skin color are not specific to the Spanish classroom, but may be integrated with other courses, in particular in the social studies, arts, and language arts disciplines.

One of Melanie’s strengths is that she provides multiple resources for each topic. Like Eva, her curriculum is flexible at the upper levels, thus she chooses the literature and topics she teaches. Therefore, it is difficult to gauge to what extent certain units are the
basis for all Spanish Four and which she integrates to extend her approach beyond The Contributions Approach.

Melanie believes that issues of social justice should be discussed in the Spanish classroom. She also believes that she does not want to impose her opinions on her students. However, I found several instances when she in fact did impose her opinion, and/or stopped discussions before students could offer their own. This prevents Melanie, to a certain extent, from teaching these lessons within and reaching The Transformation and Social Action Approaches.

Overall, Melanie’s culture teaching may be characterized by a combination of The Contributions and Additive Approaches. Whereas all of her holiday lessons were representative of The Contributions Approach, the three lessons that aligned with The Additive Approach contained elements that served as the basis for most vocabulary and culture learning in Enriched Spanish Four. Her students were engaged in each of the activities, readings, and class discussions. They clearly demonstrated interest in the topics of immigration and skin color by offering personal anecdotes and insight. It is evident that these topics were interesting to them; by enriching and synthesizing the lessons more, students could be expected to discuss and develop plans to make a difference related to these themes in their school and communities.

Levels Three and Four: The Transformation and Social Action Approaches

In the previous section I introduced methods and techniques, based upon the literature, that Melanie could employ to extend her lessons to The Transformation and Social Action Approaches. Her units on Immigration and El Color de Nuestra Piel have the potential to become better aligned with The Transformation Approach. She uses multiple
resources that are current and historical as well as entertaining and tragic. She uses them to gain her students’ attention. However, Melanie’s students do not seem to be aware of some fundamental elements necessary for reaching Banks’ two most complex levels.

First, Melanie shared that her students are not aware of how others perceive them and their North American cultures; this is vital to being able to better understand the negative stereotype many North Americans hold of Mexicans. Second, although her students were expected to speak daily in order to earn pesos for participation points, they were not asked to synthesize their cultural learning and understandings and assess what their new knowledge meant for them, their community and school, and their futures. Melanie asked many thoughtful and intriguing questions, but stopped short of the deeper conversations to help students make a greater sense of their new awareness and understanding.

Melanie is an outstanding language teacher who chooses her resources carefully, making sure that each contains cultural aspects with which she is comfortable and knowledgeable teaching. This allows her to personalize her lessons and to be confident with the material. She feels, as Lange (1999) emphasizes, that this honors what she brings to the classroom, and that she may honor the knowledge and understanding that other teachers, with different travel and study abroad experiences, bring to their classrooms. For Melanie, grammar teaching is a priority. The culture lessons, whether they are small insertions of information and personal anecdotes, or recursive themes like immigration, are important and pervasive, because, as Melanie defines culture, “it’s a way of life, a belief system, a way of going about living, the way and the why that we do things” (Interview, 19 August 2004). By sacrificing some of the quantity of grammar material she covers, she could deepen the study of her major themes and enrich the
experiences of her students. Additionally, she could better integrate culture and language by using the themes as lessons of inquiry to explore and examine what students may do to be better citizens as well as improve injustices such as discrimination toward immigrants and Spanish-speakers in the U.S.

Melanie’s Testing/Assessment Practices

Participation in projects is one possibility for alternative and authentic assessment of cultural knowledge and understanding. However, Melanie’s testing practices may generally be described as traditional frequent paper and pencil quizzes focused on grammar and vocabulary. During the four months that students read the play, they took a vocabulary quiz over each act, consisting of approximately 20-25 words and expressions. Each vocabulary quiz supplied the Spanish word and students had to match it to a Spanish synonym or Spanish meaning. On the following class day, students took a second part of the test consisting of story content. Melanie permitted her students to bring in their own vocabulary sheet to use to write the answers to their essay questions. Most of their score reflected correct content, however, Melanie deducted points if students incorrectly used basic grammar structures. Students were given one or two opinion questions on each test, such as (translated), “In your opinion, is there someone [in the play] who is happy with the color of their skin? If not, describe how they show they are not happy” (Document, 3 March 2004). Although students had opportunities to discuss their opinions in class and share their personal observations of issues of skin color, they were not asked on any test or assessment instrument to make comparisons among cultures or to demonstrate that they better understood their own cultures. Additionally,
they were not asked to reflect either on their tests or in class discussions upon parallels and contrasts with this story and issues of discrimination in the U.S.

Much of Melanie’s testing practices reflect an emphasis on formative and ongoing assessment. From grading homework regularly, giving small quizzes frequently, and encouraging her students to produce verbally in class, Melanie is able to stay abreast of her students’ areas of proficiency and problems. Another example of her assessment approach was described with her Immigration unit where she either asks the students to write a story using the past tenses correctly, or, as in past years, she met with each student individually to have them retell the El Norte story to her correctly using the past tenses.

**A Comparison of Melanie’s and Eva’s Testing/Assessment Practices**

Traditionally, testing of cultural information has involved objective tests covering historical facts, trivia items, vocabulary, and familiarity with the arts (Seelye, 1994), thus testing for cultural knowledge rather than testing for aspects of intercultural competence (Paige et al., 1999). Close examination of the extensive literature about culture testing/assessment is beyond the purview of this study; although it is in and of itself overwhelming and much debated, there is still scant research on successful practices. Gleaned from the literature, I include ideas so the reader may be aware of alternative forms of assessment for culture: audio recordings, performances, written essays, group projects (Royer, 1996); as well as dialogue journaling, portfolios, and ongoing performance evaluations (Paige et al., 1999).

In comparison with Eva’s testing practices, Melanie quizzes over grammar and vocabulary more frequently, and collects and grades homework often, thus attempting to
keep abreast of her students’ learning. For each textbook chapter/unit, Eva generally gives a quiz over vocabulary and a unit test. She does not grade homework but does assign frequent mini-projects that usually involve small groups preparing and presenting materials integrated with language and culture. On her chapter and story tests, Eva generally asks some basic culture questions related to geography as well as practices and products of the Hispanic cultures. Although Eva involves her students in activities around gaining cultural awareness such as stereotyping and Hispanics in the U.S., she does not generally ask them on tests to explain, synthesize, or compare their (new) understandings. Although Melanie’s discussions and brief cultural insertions are ongoing, she does not test/assess cultural knowledge and understanding.

_A Synthesis of Melanie’s Major Themes_

Based upon my analysis from observations, field journal, interviews, documents, and discussions with other educators who know Melanie well, I include a synthesis of the major themes described in this section. Melanie, a non-native speaker of Spanish, has been teaching Spanish for more than 26 years. Although she has never studied or lived abroad, she has traveled to Mexico and El Salvador on several occasions. The majority of Melanie’s teaching experience has been at the middle school level where she incorporated a great deal of culture, including projects, readings, activities, role-plays, and organizing elaborate foreign language festivals. Today, teaching upper level Spanish classes at the high school, she feels pressure to cover much grammar and vocabulary to prepare her students for AP Spanish. She seems contextually bound to limit her cultural lessons and not expand upon those she believes students are learning in earlier language
classes (i.e. holidays.) Even though Melanie does not use local, state, and national standards as a guide, for the most part her teaching is aligned with the local goals.

Melanie’s classes are primarily teacher-centered and fast-paced; students are engaged all period by Melanie’s games, dramatics, and strong and expressive voice. She places emphases on grammar, language production, and culture as it is incorporated into literature, and uses a pregunta del día (question of the day) to involve her students in speaking daily. While the discussions pertain to class content, they are tightly controlled by Melanie who engages in much error correction and often stops the conversations before students broach political or hazy areas. Melanie expects her students to speak in Spanish throughout the period; students must ask for permission to speak in English. She rarely uses a textbook and considers the students’ notebooks as their texts. She expects her students to keep their notebook papers numbered to aid with organization and retrieval of important information.

Pertaining to assessment and testing, Melanie often grades homework, uses frequent small quizzes over vocabulary and grammar, incorporates individual and small group presentations, and employs tests over literature that cover vocabulary and story content.
She does not test cultural information or understanding. Melanie prefers not to teach about cultures with which she is not intimately familiar, thus much of her cultural focus is on Mexico and Central America,

Melanie’s overall culture-teaching approach is The Additive Approach. She contributes to this approach with celebrations of Hispanic holidays but largely adds cultural information and awareness through the literature students read. The topics Melanie chooses include serious subjects such as immigration and skin color. However, while Melanie attempts to make students aware of stereotyping, she incidentally marginalizes Hispanic cultures and peoples both through her comments and her avoidance of opportunities for students to reflect on the mainstream-centric curriculum and their own frames of reference.

Although it is not appropriate to generalize from just one or two cases, Melanie’s use of the first two approaches may suggest that Banks’ model is too challenging given her teaching practices. It certainly offers much for consideration regarding specific teacher characteristics, the suitability of Banks’ model for secondary teaching and learning, and/or goals to explore as educators become more familiar with the national and state guidelines that are centered upon culture learning. In chapter five I examine more closely these pedagogical implications, the appropriateness of Banks’ model, as well as several considerations for future research.
CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The fundamental belief that drives these classroom behaviors is that we must act; we must relate our teaching and learning to real life; we must connect our teaching and learning with our communities; we always try to learn and teach so that we grow and so that students’ lives are improved, or for self and social transformation… This new approach to teaching and learning challenges teachers to have complex pedagogical skills. (Wink, 1997, p. 118)

The urgency expressed by Wink in this quotation about critical pedagogy reflects my beliefs about the importance of teaching cultures in the foreign language (FL) classroom. In my view, cultural understanding and knowledge should be at the core of language learning, where connections to current events, communities, and other disciplines fit naturally with language learning.

In this study, I investigated how two successful teachers of secondary Spanish from suburban districts in central Ohio, who professed a commitment to the teaching of cultures, actually taught cultures. For this study, the term ‘cultures’ embraced postmodern, emergent views containing a critical agenda that subsumed the traditional notion of teaching culture (Big C and little c cultures). In this chapter I frequently use the
terms *culture-specific* and *culture-general*. The former refers to an emic perspective of specific nuances of particular cultures, the latter to an etic view of intercultural competence where students examine more general issues such as overcoming ethnocentrism and developing an understanding for their own cultures (Paige, 1999).

Even though there is a great deal of literature on teaching cultures in the FL classroom, there is little published research. Of the few qualitative studies that provide some information about how culture is actually presented, none deals with the secondary classroom (Lange, 1999; Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein & Colby, 1999). Moreover, Kramsch (1993) notes that language teaching has changed little over the last 50 years and that a recurring finding is that culture still does not play a prominent role in language instruction.

In order to gain an emic perspective of the teaching of cultures by my two successful Spanish teachers, I posed research questions within four categories: their use of national, state, and local guidelines; their culture- and language-teaching pedagogies; their culture-teaching materials; and their perceptions of culture in the classroom. I observed each participant while involved in culture-teaching units over six months. Additionally, I interviewed them on several occasions, maintained a researcher log, reviewed documents they used in class, and interviewed other educators who provided additional information about my participants. After data collection and while writing the analysis, it became clear that there was overlap among the research questions due to the large amount of data on my participants’ philosophies, pedagogies, etc. Therefore, I present the findings in this chapter in relation to the four research categories, yet refer to some of the specific research questions in discussion of the results of each area.
During data collection and analysis I used a model of multicultural content integration developed by James Banks (2003). Banks’ model of four levels of multicultural content integration was deemed appropriate for this qualitative study that was both interpretive and critical in nature for two reasons. First, though not developed specifically for use in the FL classroom, it provided me with a contemporary, alternative model with which to analyze and understand the culture-teaching approaches of my participants. Other models specific to the FL classroom, outlined in chapter two, are more complex or are generally more appropriate to post-secondary settings. Second, beyond a data analysis tool, it is a model that may be conceptualized appropriately for teachers who want to integrate language and cultures by comparing, connecting, and examining cultures beyond a superficial food and festivals approach, as was the case with my two “expert teacher” participants.

From the multiple data gathering techniques, I obtained a wealth of information that once coded, categorized, and synthesized, allowed me to describe the work of my participants in great detail. In chapter four, I included themes particular to each participant, as well as those that were evident in both their teaching. I explored their backgrounds, their philosophies about language and cultures teaching, their strengths, and the difficulties they encountered when teaching cultures. The detailed portrait I painted will help researchers and teachers understand why my participants were considered expert secondary Spanish teachers, and how, through their commitment to teaching cultures, they helped their students learn more about Spanish-speaking communities and
countries by integrating language and culture. This portrait will also provide much needed information, in qualitative form, for the existing gap in research on culture teaching at the secondary level.

The purpose of this chapter is threefold: (1) to discuss the findings in relation to both the literature and my research categories; (2) to help readers re-consider their own teaching in light of the role of Banks’ (2003) approaches to integration of multicultural content; (3) and to explain the value of Banks’ model in the development and exploration of multicultural curricula in the Spanish classroom.

**Banks’ Four Levels of Integration of Multicultural Content**

One of the goals of this research was to obtain a more informed knowledge base of how culture is taught in the secondary Spanish FL classroom. This information will be of particular use to FL educators because generally, secondary FL teachers approach teaching cultures with a ‘food and festivals’ approach or they avoid it for some of the following reasons: lack of experience in the target culture; lack of pre-service teacher preparation with teaching cultures; lack of instructional time in an already full curriculum; and/or lack of comfort with culturally-oriented conversations that may be challenging, particularly in the target language (Lange, 1999a; Moore, 1996; Omaggio, 1993). The findings from this research will also be of interest to faculty in teacher education programs, who are considering offering culture courses, or who are in need of revising current offerings. These courses, as noted in Lazarton (2003), should extend cultural content to dealing with learning activities of cultural awareness and issues of contemporary importance. This will require moving away from comfort zones and into dealing with students’ attitudes and perspectives, which may prove challenging.
As I discussed in chapter one, I am working with a certain assumption of how cultures should be framed/taught. It is my belief that lessons of cultural awareness should be acts of inquiry. Banks’ model is an alternative to other models that help teachers explore how to teach cultures. A fundamental feature of this model is the notion that there are many perspectives from which to understand experiences and cultures. Furthermore, students should ultimately have the ability and opportunities to examine the mainstream-centric perspective where “…racism and ethnocentrism are reinforced and perpetuated in the school” and where a false sense of superiority is reinforced for mainstream students (Banks, 2003, p. 225).

*Modifications to Banks’ Model*

Banks’ model is an appropriate guide to help teachers begin and/or continue teaching cultures in more meaningful ways. It presents teachers with four hierarchical approaches from which to teach cultures: The Contributions Approach, The Additive Approach, The Transformation Approach, and The Social Action Approach. Banks’ approaches, however, were created for use in general education. Based upon data analysis, I modified Banks’ model for the FL classroom. Where Banks uses the levels to describe a teacher’s overall approach, I applied a level/approach to each particular unit of culture teaching as well to describe my participants’ overarching approach. In doing so, I was able to locate and focus upon specific elements of teaching cultures in the FL classroom that align with each of Banks’ approaches. Furthermore, where Banks may not view the first two approaches as positive and/or necessary elements in the classroom, I believe that contributions and additions of cultural content are indispensable in the FL classroom.
However, I further believe that they are appropriate when subsumed under The Transformation and Social Action Approaches.

In addition to the overarching modifications, I adjusted The Transformation Approach in three ways. First, I emphasize at the core of the lesson cultural goals rather than linguistic goals. With The Contributions and Additive Approaches this is not a stipulation. Second, I amend the description of The Transformation Approach so that multiple perspectives that students examine may help them extend their “…understandings of the nature, development, and complexity of U.S. society” (Banks, 2003, p. 234). For FL purposes, I believe students extend their understanding of multiple societies where the FL is spoken as well their understanding of U.S. society. Therefore, the notion of a monolithic “Spanish” culture is challenged by presenting elements of a variety of Hispanic cultures. For the third modification, I clarify the difference between The Additive and Transformation Approaches to make clearer the type of transformation needed to take place. Specifically, the teacher consciously chooses to transform the curriculum and/or her pedagogy so as to include materials and opportunities for examining multiple perspectives, specifically the mainstream-centric perspective.

An additional aspect of Banks’ model that I considered adapting, but chose not to change, was The Social Action Approach. Through and after data analysis, I found that neither of my expert FL teachers taught with this approach. In addition, only Eva taught from The Transformation Approach. Even though these approaches seem more challenging, based upon my philosophy and description of cultures, I felt it important to keep them. Furthermore, one or more of Eva’s units was close to incorporating The Social Action Approach. I believe, like Reagan and Osborn (2002), among others, that
the FL teacher’s role in today’s society is to make cross-cultural comparisons, help their students examine different viewpoints, and teach for social justice. Ultimately, adopting The Social Action Approach could be one of the greatest contributions from FL classes that otherwise are often considered insular and elitist (Spinelli, 2004, Personal Communication, 15 October, 2004).

As adapted, this model may be appropriately incorporated into FL teacher education programs. Among the many models of cultures teaching described in chapter two, Banks’ model is helpful for a better understanding of how to teach cultures. Additionally, the national standards, Ohio’s own model, and local curricular goals generally focus on what to teach, but Banks’ model is instrumental in helping teachers decipher how to teach to those goals. The national standards are not an evaluative tool; they do not tell how to judge if teachers are teaching cultures so that they are acts of inquiry rather than random facts students are expected to memorize. Based upon my notions of culture teaching as current, emergent, exploratory, and meaningful, I explored my participants’ cultural content (standards and goals) as well as their pedagogies and practices using Banks’ approaches as a guide to understand them differently.

In summary, Banks’ modified model has enabled me to address the research categories in a meaningful way. By using this model to examine the teaching of cultures, I have discovered another means for looking at cultures. Additionally, FL teachers may find that with this model of multicultural content integration, they may better conceptualize their culture teaching and may begin the conversations on sociopolitical issues related to cultures that otherwise may be difficult to tackle. Using Banks’ approaches as I modified them, may allow teachers to ease into discussions of diversity,
pluralism, and stereotyping. By planning themes and units with an overarching Transformation or Social Action Approach, teachers may incorporate traditional lessons of holidays and heroes, while building upon culture-general themes around issues of social justice. As a result, over time teachers may adapt, integrate, and revise additional units as well as their philosophies about the importance of centering their curricula on the teaching of multiple cultures integrated with language learning. As Reagan and Osborn (2002) note, critical multicultural discussions are “actually a more educationally appropriate use of the time than much of what currently takes place in classrooms” (p. 74).

Summary of Results

My two participants had several areas in common. First, they both taught upper levels of Spanish in middle to upper class suburban districts in central Ohio. Second, both felt pressure to cover certain grammar topics and pieces of literature in order for their students to be prepared for subsequent studies in Spanish. Thus, both participants felt that curricular coverage precluded them from expanding their lessons, some of which were already quite lengthy and in-depth. Third, as I present in the following discussion of the research categories, although neither teacher was familiar with the specific cultural content included in her district’s curriculum, both seemed to be meeting the goals outlined.
Findings From My First Participant, Eva

In my qualitative case studies I found that each participant taught culture units that aligned with Banks’ model. My first participant, Eva, taught lessons that fit within The Contributions, Additive, and Transformation Approaches. Generally, her culture teaching was transformative. She infused her lessons with cultural content appropriate for The Additive Approach, but also significantly changed her Spanish Four and Spanish Five curriculum to include materials so that students were involved in reading, understanding, and dialoguing about multiple perspectives on issues. Her students examined the mainstream-centric perspective through thoughtful questions and activities led and coordinated by Eva.

Of the 12 culture-teaching units I observed and/or learned of from Eva’s Spanish Four and Spanish Five classes, many were transformative. None of the lessons I observed seemed to meet The Social Action Approach, however, Eva believed that the secondary Spanish classroom was an appropriate context for discussing such serious and thoughtful topics as immigration, stereotyping, and pluralism. When Eva and her students had time in class, she encouraged debates and discussions, particularly with her Spanish Five students. She explored culture-specific topics related to Costa Rica, Cuba, and Spain, as well as culture-general topics about stereotyping and pluralism. She used a variety of resources to teach about cultures: authentic literature including short stories and poems, movies made in Spanish-speaking countries as well as movies made for educational purposes, music, and materials for mini-projects.

The most salient themes that emerged from my data analysis that described Eva and her pedagogy and philosophy, included the following: her ongoing emphasis with
practicing all language components (speaking, reading, writing, listening, and cultural understanding); the connections she made from the Spanish classroom to other disciplines, pop culture, and Spanish-speaking cultures, as well as connections and comparisons among Hispanic cultures; and how her bicultural background and native Spanish language served her as a Spanish teacher. The culture-specific and culture-general topics she covered included different Hispanic holidays that she either covered briefly (The Contributions Approach) and/or enriched and explored at a level appropriate to her Spanish Four and Spanish Five students with authentic literature, movies, and mini-projects (The Additive and The Transformation Approaches). She also used two subsequent textbook chapters to examine stereotypes and the importance of pluralism and cultural diversity. Additionally, she maintained ongoing dialogue about current events, including events that affected Spanish-speaking countries as well as the U.S., with discussions about the war in Iraq and terrorism. During current events discussions and debates, she encouraged her students to speak only Spanish by supplying them with vocabulary words and expressions when needed. A final topic she reviewed was that of immigration. She and her students read a short story and then she asked students to visit a Mexican grocery in the area, speak with the employees and/or owner, purchase something, and return to class with a receipt. Students reflected both verbally and in journals about their experiences and what they learned.
Findings From My Second Participant, Melanie

My second participant, Melanie, used an overall additive approach. Of the six different culture-teaching units with her Enriched Spanish Four students that I observed, three aligned with The Contributions Approach and three with The Additive Approach. One of Melanie’s strengths was that she celebrated many of the more popular Hispanic holidays with her students. Each of those celebrations included a brief discussion, reading, or role-playing of the holiday as well as food and fun. As I adapted Banks’ model for the Spanish FL classroom, each of Melanie’s holiday celebrations, that were culture-specific, aligned with The Contributions Approach, a more food and festivals oriented approach to culture teaching.

Melanie’s three lessons that were more culture-general dealt with skin color and immigration and aligned with The Additive Approach. Through multiple resources, students had opportunities to examine these topics in film, poetry, and a play. It was important to Melanie that her students saw why others risked their lives to attempt entering the U.S. My analysis showed that what was lacking, however, were the aspects that were necessary for The Transformation Approach: ongoing discussions and reflections about the multiple perspectives and views, as well as discussions of the mainstream-centric views. Interestingly, Melanie did not want to directly impose her sentiments about immigration upon her students and steered away from cultural discussions about countries such as Spain because she was not intimately familiar with the culture.

The major themes I gleaned from the data analysis that described Melanie’s teaching included the motivational techniques she used in class to keep her students engaged, her
culture teaching at the middle school versus her culture teaching at the high school, the quantity of Spanish her students wrote and spoke, and her well-orchestrated lessons. Each class day was different, and because of Melanie’s dramatic fashion, entertaining. Almost daily they were given a *pregunta del día* (question of the day) that related to the current class content as well as to their lives. While speaking with students, Melanie was involved continually with error correction mainly by using students’ mistakes as opportunities to recycle and re-teach grammar and vocabulary.

*Research Categories*

In the following section, I address my findings in relation to the four research categories: use of national, state, and local guidelines for teaching culture; resources for teaching culture; pedagogical self-descriptions; and perceptions of culture learning.

*Research Category One: National, State, and Local Guidelines for Teaching Culture*

In chapter two, I outlined how the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages’ (ACTFL) (1996) *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century* and the state of Ohio’s *Foreign Languages: Ohio’s Model Competency-Based Program* (1996) presented the teaching of cultures. As discussed in chapter four, each district, through their graded course of study, presented the teaching of cultures in a very cursory manner. I present here a brief summary of the role of culture in all three guidelines and whether or not my participants’ enacted curriculum aligned with the guidelines.

*A. National Guidelines*

ACTFL developed eleven standards in an effort to create a guide defining what all students should know and be able to do as a result of FL instruction (1996). This guide
was the first of its kind in that it distinguished five goal areas, known as the Five C’s: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. These goal areas are interdependent and nonhierarchical as contrasted with the more traditional notions of language versus culture. There is a cultural orientation among the eleven standards, with cultures being a separate entity as well as intertwined with each of the other four goals. The following national standards, written in accordance with goals particular to the Spanish classroom, relate most directly to learning about Hispanic cultures:

- Cultures Standard 2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of Hispanic cultures.
- Cultures Standard 2.2: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the different Hispanic cultures.
- Comparisons Standard 4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons between the cultures studied and their own.

(National Standards, 1999)\(^9\)

The Cultures standards focus on how the target cultures’ perspectives relate to their practices and products, with products being both tangible and intangible. Neither of my

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\(^9\) In 1999 the National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project published *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century*, incorporating the original national standards (1996) with specific languages (Spanish, French, German, Italian, Chinese, Classical Languages, Japanese, and Portuguese.)
participants was familiar with the specific standards, thus neither had spent in-depth time working to align local curricula with the standards. Nevertheless, although there was little alignment with Cultures Standard 2.1, the culture teaching of both participants was reflective of Cultures Standard 2.2, as well as Comparisons Standard 4.2. Furthermore, my analysis showed that while helping students draw connections from Spanish class to other disciplines, pop culture, and between and among different Spanish-speaking cultures, Eva focused on Connections Standard 3.1, “Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through Spanish” (National Standards, 1999, p. 449). She made Spanish class relevant to many aspects of her students’ lives by the connections they continually made on homework assignments, during current events discussions, and through role-plays and mini-projects.

B. State of Ohio Guidelines

Based upon the goals of the national standards, in 1996 the Ohio State Board of Education adopted Foreign Languages: Ohio’s Model Competency-Based Program. This set of guidelines consists of the following four strands for organizing instructional and performance objectives: cultural knowledge; multidisciplinary connections, information, and knowledge; insights into the nature of language and culture; and participation in multilingual communities at home and around the world. My analysis of the eleventh grade instructional objectives for each of the strands (totaling 21 objectives written in the language of learner behaviors) showed a direct and explicit connection to culture and language learning. Additionally, all of the eight performance objectives for eleventh grade include culture and language emphases and connections between the two. An example particularly relevant to the culture teaching units of my participants who both
taught units on immigration included, “The learner will obtain information (via interview questionnaire, letters, e-mail) from people of the target culture(s) who have immigrated to the United States, and report on their experiences/feelings in the new culture” (Ohio Department of Education, 1996, p. 77).

With respect to my participants’ teaching and the state model, there seemed to be alignment to some extent. However, the model’s goals seemed quite ambitious, even when compared with the work of my participants, who were considered expert teachers. Ohio’s model did, nevertheless, provide creative and useful examples for units integrating culture and language. Although I believe that my participants’ eleventh grade classes would be capable of succeeding with the performance objectives, seven of the eight objectives required a research project that my participants’ current enacted curricula may preclude doing.

Eva was unfamiliar with Ohio’s curricular model, however, she was familiar with specific topics covered on the Foreign Language Component of the Ohio Graduation Test that may be offered to FL students in the future. She and her FL colleagues spent an in-service day examining them in relation to their curricula. Likewise, Melanie was unfamiliar with any aspects of Ohio’s model.

C. The Formal Curriculum for Each Participant’s School District

In the FL graded course of study for each of my participant’s school districts, the goals for all cultures learning, at every level, were listed on one page within documents running approximately 75 and 120 pages in length, respectively. The one page of attention devoted to teaching cultures was listed after the expectations for reading, writing, listening, and speaking. In Eva’s district, there were two culture goals that were
the same for Spanish Four and Spanish Five. These two goals were: to continue to pay attention to current events as reported in the media; and to focus on history, holidays, traditions, literature and art. Based upon my analysis, these goals were general and vague, to say the least. However, this vagueness afforded Eva much flexibility.

In Melanie’s district, the FL program goal specifically pointed out the expectation that Spanish culture will be infused daily and that students will use authentic print, auditory, and Internet materials as well. Like Eva’s district, the culture goals stated: students are expected to continue awareness of current events as reported in the media; and they will learn more of the history, heritage and civilizations of Latin America. Thus, their districts’ Spanish Four culture-teaching goals were the same, with the exception that Melanie’s specifically included Latin America (as opposed to Spain) as an area of focus. Although neither Eva nor Melanie was familiar with the specific national, state, or local goals, some of their culture teaching was aligned with their districts’ objectives because each teacher shared current events with her students.

C1. Eva’s use of local guidelines.

Concerning Eva’s local culture guidelines listed in the previous section, she stated that she had not looked at her graded course of study in some time and did not remember the cultural content. However, based upon my analysis, I found that her teaching was aligned with the culture-teaching goals. Her graded course of study was implemented in 1996, thus at the time of this study it was already seven to eight years old. In addition, it was
written prior to the first publication of the national standards in 1996, therefore it was not based upon the Five C’s or Ohio’s most current content standards.10

Although Eva’s formal curriculum (graded course of study) contained only two vague cultural expectations with no specific expectations of connections or comparisons, her enacted curriculum was transformative. She focused a great deal on making connections to other areas/cultures and compared and brought together different cultures based upon those two goals. In fact, she explored current events, holidays, traditions, and literature in-depth, so as to allow her students to move beyond the exoticness of the Hispanic cultures to be able to believe, understand, and explain different cultural aspects. I believe this was one of the greatest contributions of this study; it was one of the most important findings for me as a researcher and teacher. Eva took basic Spanish ‘food and festivals’ cultural topics such as Christmas and The Day of the Dead and enriched them so that her Spanish Four and Spanish Five students were learning about them at a much deeper level than when they first learned of them in beginning Spanish. She used less-traditional authentic movies and stories that she and a colleague adapted for their students. The stories, however, were not just about one cultural topic, but included cultural and political elements that Eva discussed as well. Even though her formal curriculum was not based upon the Five C’s, she already made connections and comparisons, used the culture to

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10 The Ohio Department of Education adopted a new set of guidelines, Academic Content Standards, K-12 Foreign Language (2003), after much of this data had been collected. The newer content standards are
more closely aligned with the national standards than the Ohio model (1996) I discussed with my participants.
communicate, and connected to her local Mexican community. Eva integrated language (vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension strategies, etc.) in a manner such that students were using it from basic rote exercises through higher-order questions and problems.

Eva did not consciously follow any of the guidelines, but seemed to have subconsciously aligned her teaching with her graded course of study. It was evident that after her many years of teaching, particularly teaching the same Spanish Four and Spanish Five levels, she was well aware of the knowledge her students needed to be successful in Spanish Five and at the college level. Furthermore, by maintaining contact with her students who continued with Spanish classes at the college level, she was familiar with post-secondary curricula.


Like Eva, Melanie was not familiar with the specifics of the cultural expectations for Spanish Four in her graded course of study. She suggested, however, that the cultural overtone in the literature her students read counted as much of their expected culture learning.

For the most part, Melanie’s culture teaching aligned with the two local cultural goals for Spanish Four: students will learn more of the history, heritage and civilizations of Latin America; and students will continue an awareness of current events as reported in the media. Latin America was clearly a focus for Melanie’s cultural information, much of it anecdotal that related to her travels to Mexico and El Salvador. Interestingly, although she was intrigued by Mexican culture and history, she felt too pressured by grammar and vocabulary teaching demands to share much of her cultural knowledge and passion about
Mexico with her students. Additionally, in Melanie’s immigration unit, the resources she used explored the lives of Mexicans and Guatemalans who came to the U.S. illegally for economic and political reasons, but neglected discussions of legal immigration. Furthermore, when she encountered newspaper articles about the Spanish language or culture, she shared it with her students. These brief current events discussions met the second cultural objective in her formal curriculum.

As with Eva, Melanie did not consciously adhere to specific national, state, or local guidelines. She was a seasoned teacher whose primary expectations for student learning involved a great deal of written and oral language production. Nevertheless, she spontaneously inserted brief cultural facts and frequently interjected language-as-culture information. In addition, her planned culture lessons consisted of either one-day fun and informative holiday celebrations or lengthy units based upon literature and deeper sociopolitical issues. Ultimately, Melanie enacted a curriculum based upon her teaching experience as well as discussions and feedback from the Advanced Placement Spanish instructor in her building.

That neither participant was familiar with national, state, or local guidelines raises some interesting concerns about the guidelines and educational policy. First, are any of the guidelines relevant? Each district’s FL curriculum was at least six years old and overdue for revising. Furthermore, the local guidelines did not seem to be based upon state or national standards, both of which are much more current, emphasizing culture at the core of learning. Second, since the current district guidelines were not necessarily aligned with state or national standards, teachers may have a formidable task of trying to incorporate and align their teaching with guidelines at all three levels. Third, whose
responsibility is it to make sure teachers know the guidelines? Is it the responsibility of
the state, the school district, or the teachers? Fourth, should it be expected that teachers’
culture-teaching practices would improve once the district’s graded course of study has
been revised? Kramsch (1993), for example, found that culture teaching has not changed
much in the last 50 years. Will teacher in-service work be sufficient to help teachers fully
understand the more current culture-teaching guidelines? Finally, since neither
participant was familiar with the guidelines, there is clearly no expectation that upon
being evaluated by building administrators, the teachers must demonstrate familiarity and
use of the districts’ formal curricula. However, it is likely that when the FL discipline
becomes a part of standardized testing, teachers will be expected to be much more aware
of their formal curricula. I hope it does not require preparing for a standardized test for
teachers to not only take ownership for writing guidelines and aligning them with the
national standards, but for teachers to regularly use them in planning and assessment.

Research Category Two: Resources for Teaching Culture

Over the course of this study, Eva used and/or told me about the following culture-
teaching materials: current events articles from local newspapers, readings from the
textbook, textbook ancillary materials (CD, video, and workbook pages), one subtitled
movie from Cuba and one from Mexico, one educational movie on Costa Rica, three
contemporary North American movies, several short stories by Hispanic writers, a song by a Chilean artist, Costa Rican and Cuban recipes, additional photocopied educational activities on The Day of the Dead, and the Internet.

Data analysis showed that generally, Eva used her culture-teaching materials to focus on cultural knowledge and understanding, to allow students additional opportunities to express themselves, to practice vocabulary, and to help improve reading and listening comprehension. She also used her current events materials to engage students in discussions about politics, the war in Iraq, and issues related to their school lives. She used multiple resources in her culture units to make comparisons between cultures and/or between the perspectives from which the resources were written or made. She also supplied anecdotes from her life in Cuba, as an immigrant to the U.S., and from her travels abroad. Eva’s materials were used to support units on tolerance and judging others, immigration, stereotyping, and holidays. As resources, she also used the local Mexican groceries as well as Hispanic parents of students.

Over the years she adapted many of the stories she used to make them more appropriate for her students and their reading levels. Through combining, adapting, comparing, etc., she felt that she created over 75% over her cultural units. Importantly, her culture-teaching materials seemed to be of interest to the students. They were often written from a child or adolescent’s perspective, and/or were foreign stories and movies created by and for audiences in Hispanic countries, not necessarily North American
classrooms. Additionally, by using her materials to support and integrate language and culture learning, she did not compartmentalize culture; it was an integral aspect of her Spanish teaching.

My second participant, Melanie, employed and/or told me about the following materials during this study: an article from a Spanish newspaper, a newspaper from Mexico, current events articles from local newspapers, one sub-titled movie from Guatemala, one North American movie, five poems by Mexican-American authors, one short story by a Mexican-American author, and one lengthy play by a Mexican playwright. Interestingly, many of the cultural contributions Melanie currently used were anecdotes from her travels rather than tangible materials.

Melanie used her authentic culture-teaching materials to discuss holidays and examine the topics of skin color and immigration, as well as to support grammar and language production. These topics prompted discussions initiated by both Melanie (for participation pesos) and by her students about the importance of skin color in different countries/ethnicities and in the media.

During our discussions Melanie lamented that she currently taught much less culture than when she taught at the middle school. She recalled fond memories of her middle school students’ productions, presentations, and cultural festivals. Melanie believed that her upper level Spanish curriculum precluded her from including similar projects and demonstrations of cultural knowledge and understanding. Of her culture-teaching materials from both settings, she felt that she only created 20%. However, at the middle
school she developed and used cultural files containing various published age-appropriate materials and activities. During this study, most of her cultural material was drawn directly from the literature students read in class.

Given that teaching culture beyond a basic ‘food and festivals’ approach may be quite challenging, I believe the choice of resources is very important. My participants used a wide array of culture-teaching materials; Eva shared at least 11 different types of materials that she currently used and Melanie told me of eight. Melanie shared several more that she used when teaching at the middle school level that she had not adapted for high school students. The fact that Eva believed that she creates at least 75% of her culture-teaching materials and Melanie believed that she creates 20% was evident in their culture-teaching units. Eva incorporated some very different videos, stories, and activities. It was apparent that she had spent much time accumulating, adapting, and developing materials to be more than just informative pieces. Her resources layered and blended in such a way that served her well in achieving her transformative approach. She used them for posing questions about pluralism, stereotyping, and pride, as well as for providing opportunities for her students to use important vocabulary in meaningful ways. Eva did not obtain these materials overnight, but over many years. Likewise, as discussed in the next section, she had probably not always taught with a transformative approach, but has evolved into it throughout her years of teaching and traveling. This may suggest at least two concerns for faculty in teacher education programs. First, teachers who practice a transformative approach and who are familiar with Banks’ four levels through their teacher education courses may arrive at a transformative approach earlier in their teaching. Second, the accumulation of appropriate materials and resources could be
facilitated by FL teacher education programs that provide examples of transformative culture units as well as lists of helpful resources.

Interestingly, although there is little research on culture teaching at the secondary level, there is a large quantity of culture-teaching materials available through educational distributors as well as authentic realia that may be obtained from travels to Spanish-speaking communities within the U.S. and Spanish-speaking countries. In chapter four I described how each of the materials was used for culture and language learning. The materials my participants used and the description in chapter four of how they were employed will be of particular use to practicing teachers and teacher education programs in search of unique, authentic, and entertaining resources. Minimally, they provide a starting point for exploring and comparing across and within cultures.

Research Category Three: Pedagogical Self-Descriptions

A. Culture-teaching pedagogy.

Two important research questions I explored were how my participants’ views of teaching cultures developed and how they described their pedagogy of cultural information/content. Interestingly, both teachers learned about teaching cultures from the same FL methods professor in their undergraduate programs. They both stressed their learning of Big C and little c cultures, that is, music, literature, and art as compared to everyday customs. Eva, however, described her notions of Big C and little c culture as having meshed and that she no longer differentiated the two areas. She believed that where she used to distinguish Big C and little c, at the time of this study her teaching was much more multidimensional with a melding of the historical facts and deeper cultural discussions. In fact, I believe the importance she placed on her students’ awareness of
history may have helped them develop a more keen understanding of current events and a deeper perspective of countries such as Cuba and Spain.

Eva’s views also developed from her experiences from life in Cuba, as an immigrant to the U.S., her Hispanic and Spanish relatives, and her ongoing travels. For example, she gained much insight into Spain and the Spanish Civil War from spending time with a great aunt in Spain who lived through the war and recalled specific traumatic experiences. These conversations with her great aunt left an impression on Eva that she, as well, wanted to make on her students.

Melanie’s views of teaching culture developed from her professor in her FL methods classes as well as her simultaneous experiences in El Salvador while in college. She was passionate about Mexico, having traveled there twice with students. She devoted much of her culture teaching to topics and issues related to Mexico and Central America. It is possible that the FL classroom may be the only area where students have the opportunity to learn of different cultures and to learn how to examine their own cultures.

Even though my participants had the same FL teaching methods professor, presumably within five years of one another, their pedagogies today are much different. I believe much of this is due to the amount and type of travel experiences as well as the fact that Eva was bicultural and Melanie was not. Eva had relatives in Spanish-speaking countries with whom she was still in contact. She traveled extensively and often, thus spending quality time immersed with families and living and learning a variety of cultural nuances. However, Melanie had never traveled to Spain and had not traveled to another Spanish-speaking country for at least 10 years. I believe this hindered her culture teaching, particularly of the Spanish culture. Regarding being a nonnative Spanish
speaker teaching Spanish, Melanie expressed the concern that she felt disadvantaged with teaching culture. She believed that native Spanish speakers had their own personal experiences to draw from, whereas she felt her knowledge and understanding of culture were much more general in nature.

The findings from this study support the notion that it is important for FL teachers to maintain ongoing travels and experiences to Spanish-speaking countries. I believe that FL teachers are much more apt to teach about multiple cultures and are more comfortable with teaching about cultures when they have frequent travel abroad experiences. Importantly, study abroad should be an integral part of each FL education program. Furthermore, the social action aspect of culture teaching may be better understood and facilitated by working abroad in a charitable role.

B. Political approach to culture teaching.

Reagan and Osborn (2002) note that teaching, by its very nature, is a political act. It seems to me that FL teachers should embrace this political element and use it in an explicit manner to help students be more tolerant and better prepared to act upon issues of social justice. Ultimately, FL teachers have a responsibility and an ideal context for helping their students be better world citizens.

Whereas Eva felt that she used to attempt to keep her personal biases separate from her teaching, her views had evolved to the point that she made her opinions known, and encouraged students to share theirs as well. She shared that language and culture learning were not just about food and clothing, but that second language learning was about being able to communicate how you felt (Interview, 12 February 2004). Her upper level Spanish students were often savvy enough with politics and talented enough with the
language to maintain debates and discussions in Spanish. Consequently, in addition to her bilingual and bicultural background, it seemed Eva’s philosophy and pedagogy of culture were equally driven by her political approach to teaching.

Melanie’s perceptions of culture were influenced by her desire to allow her students to come to their own understandings of sociopolitical issues such as stereotyping and immigration. Drawing awareness to culture-general topics was Melanie’s primary goal with the cultural material that she communicated from the literature. Melanie’s position of wanting to remain apolitical seemed to be directly connected to her overall additive approach to culture teaching. She introduced very important subjects to her students, such as immigration, and allowed them to briefly discuss them, but the discussions did not go further than cursory comments and anecdotes. Clearly Melanie had great intentions but it seems that a number of issues kept her from deeper exploration of the topics, including lack of time as well as avoidance of debates on challenging topics. This issue of the political nature of FL teaching suggests an important implication for teacher education courses: teachers need practice and resources before being expected to embrace this important but hazy area.
C. Planning for culture teaching.

Over the course of the study, findings from my data analysis showed that Eva clearly planned for culture teaching. In fact, cultural information and understanding were at the center of many of her units, particularly those I aligned with The Transformation Approach: Cuba, La Riqueza Cultural (Cultural Richness), La Navidad (Christmas), Current Events, Cajas de Cartón (Cardboard Boxes), and the Spanish Civil War. In these units, goals for culture learning were primary with linguistic objectives being secondary. These units were culture rich, with authentic resources and adapted materials from different countries. Based upon the materials and themes, students had opportunities to journal and discuss their understandings and their frames of reference.

Conversely, Melanie described her pedagogy as not planning for culture learning outside of the literature she chose for her students. However, I found that she did insert brief cultural lessons into her larger units. I believe, nevertheless, that she meant that teaching important language elements was her first priority. Her students read many stories and poems with a cultural overtone. However, it appeared that there were issues that prevented her from moving into The Transformation Approach, including: she did not bring the cultural elements together in order for her students to truly grasp the important understandings; students did not reflect upon cross-cultural comparisons; students did not reflect upon how their own cultures affected their behaviors, choices, and values; and often when trying to avoid political discussions, she in fact made statements perpetuating a negative stereotype of Mexicans and immigrants.

Based upon my experiences as teacher, administrator, and researcher, I found that both Eva and Melanie were outstanding teachers of the Spanish language. They made
language learning fun, interesting, and important by personalizing it for students. They were creative, dramatic, and exciting to watch. A cross-case analysis, however, found many differences among their pedagogies and philosophies of culture teaching. Whereas Eva’s culture teaching was generally planned, multifaceted, and layered for deeper understanding, Melanie’s focused on basic information about holidays and culture-general themes from her chosen literature. Melanie, a nonnative Spanish speaker, planned for grammar and vocabulary first; Eva, a native Spanish speaker generally planned for culture-specific and culture-general themes first. Again, it seems, that Melanie was more comfortable teaching language than culture. Although I know that she believed culture to be very important, her teaching was grammar and production driven. I do not believe that native versus nonnative Spanish speaker generalizations may be made from this study, but these findings do offer some important considerations. For example, are native speaking FL teachers better teachers of culture than nonnative teachers? Are they generally more comfortable with culture teaching? Do native speaking FL teachers believe culture to be more important within the curriculum than nonnative speaking teachers? Further suggestions for future research will be discussed in the final section of this chapter.

D. Assessment.

Traditional forms of culture testing included objective tests of history, familiarity with the arts, and trivia items (Seelye, 1994), that is, testing Big C and little c knowledge. One of my research questions specifically addressed how my participants assessed culture. I found that Eva included a few cultural knowledge questions on her tests, including basic facts about Cuba, Costa Rica, and specific authors the students studied. She asked
students to compare cultures and/or resources and perspectives on homework assignments, in group activities, and through current events discussions. Because class discussion/participation was 20% of students’ grades, Eva expected them to share their opinions about cultural issues. She felt, however, that for the most part it was not necessary to assess culture, but rather that the experience of discussing it and of bringing cultures together was most important and most valuable.

Melanie involved her students in a pregunta del día (question of the day) almost daily. In those discussions or often while introducing a piece of literature, she provided background information that regularly included cultural content. Although students were given time in class to discuss culture and were often rewarded pesos for participation, understanding/knowledge was not assessed or tested in written form.

In summary, Eva occasionally tested cultural knowledge (basic facts about geography, politics, customs, etc.) if it was derived from the textbook, but neither participant assessed cultural understanding (comparing, synthesizing, etc.), formally or informally. Neither Eva nor Melanie seemed to believe that it was necessary to assess cultural understanding; this is a finding from this study I consider to be an important contribution to the FL field. Two outstanding and experienced teachers of Spanish who committed to the teaching of cultures, participated in formal cultural assessment by testing over a few objective cultural facts, but ultimately felt that formal cultural assessment was not necessary. I believe many concerns and questions arise from this issue. Do they not assess because culture is a challenging area to test? Do they not assess because they are not familiar with specific guidelines (national, state, local), some of which offer assessment ideas and rubrics? It seems that testing may be facilitated by using a textbook.
that provides assessment questions. However, Melanie, for example, did not use a textbook. There is clearly much more research needed to flesh out this area of cultural assessment, to discern whether others test and/or assess cultural knowledge/understanding, whether or not they feel it necessary, and importantly, how they test/assess.

Research Category Four: Participants’ Perceptions of Culture Learning

My first participant, Eva, expressed a clear vision for her cultural goals for student learning in that she wanted her students to acquire the understanding that Spanish speakers both from the U.S. and other countries were a lot like her own students. She shared, “they’re people who eat different things, live in a different place, and have a different standard of living that is based on something other than what you [the students] hold to be a great standard of living, but there are more similarities” (Interview, 19 December 2003). She perceived that her students were in fact gaining this understanding over the course of the year. Devoid of a pre- and post-test or some other formal assessment, the perceptions and individual anecdotal comments that demonstrated growth seemed to be the basis for knowing whether or not students met cultural goals.

Melanie, my second participant, perceived that her students left her classroom at the end of the year with a more open mind about and an awareness of stereotyping and discrimination. She noted that students seemed more aware of how skin color was portrayed in the media, particularly after reading the lengthy play, *El Color de Nuestra Piel* (The Color of Our Skin) (Gorostiza, 1966). Additionally, her students often initiated discussions about their new awareness of issues of skin color through their stories of travels abroad and bothersome comments they heard from others. This awareness is an
important and necessary step toward Melanie using a transformative approach. Although during the study Melanie did not examine Banks’ Four Levels of Integration of Multicultural Content, I believe that given the opportunity to reflect upon her teaching as it aligns with Banks’ levels, she would be further encouraged to provide greater depth and multiple perspectives to her culture teaching.

An important contribution from this study stems from exploring both participants’ perceptions of their students’ cultural understanding. Eva and Melanie provided culture-general goals as their personal goals for students’ culture learning, as opposed to the more culture-specific goals dictated by district guidelines. Although they did not provide a large amount of information about what they perceived their students were learning, the knowledge they shared was congruent with the sociopolitical ideas that concerns much of the current literature on FL teaching and learning (Kramsch, 1993; Lafayette, 1997; Lange, 1999; Reagan & Osborn, 2002; Robinson-Stuart & Nocon, 1996). Additionally, the perceptions they had of their students’ cultural knowledge/understandings aligned very well with the philosophy behind Banks’ approaches to multicultural content integration, which at The Transformation and Social Action Approaches are much more culture-general. Therefore, it appears that to a certain extent, their culture teaching transcended their districts’ culture-specific curricular goals, again suggesting that each participant’s graded course of study has no relevance for her culture teaching. I believe that for students to have the opportunities to examine their own mainstream-centric perspective as just one of many perspectives--one of many truths in the world--is one of the most important lessons teachers can develop for students to discover and revisit in the FL classroom.
Implications

The findings of this study have implications for foreign language teacher education programs as well as FL teacher in-service education. Because I focused on two secondary Spanish teachers in this study, the findings and resulting implications represent tentative conclusions that may not be generalized to other settings. Nevertheless, this exploratory study may begin to advance our understanding of current culture-teaching practices by those teachers who believe culture an important aspect of FL teaching. Additionally, with the adaptations I proposed for Banks’ Four Levels of Integration of Multicultural Content (2003), the findings may also provide teachers a new model for approaching and conceptualizing FL Instruction. I address implications for the following three areas: guidelines, resources, and culture teaching pedagogies and perceptions.

A. Guidelines

Although one of my participants was familiar with the Five C’s around which the national standards were written, neither was knowledgeable about the specifics. In fact, my two participants were unable to provide details about any of the national, state, or local guidelines as they related to culture learning. Moreover, Melanie was one of the members of her curriculum writing committee (adopted in 1998), yet recalled little of the broad information of the document. It seemed that the driving force behind the teachers’ enacted curricula was not necessarily any set of standards. Rather, both participants created their own unofficial curricula in anticipation of their students’ future Spanish language classes based upon the textbook and literature they selected. The local curricular guides for both districts were in need of revising, thus it may be that the teachers already made the revisions for their levels and were anticipating committee work
to update their guidelines to include the expectations and objectives they currently felt most important. Nevertheless, it was an intriguing finding to learn that these two expert teachers, who committed to ongoing involvement with student teachers from the university and are therefore mentors and models for good teaching practices, did not readily ascribe to following any formal set of guidelines. This suggests that as experienced and expert teachers, they are aware of the skills and knowledge their students need to be successful at subsequent levels of FL learning and no longer need written goals to guide them. Furthermore, their responsibilities as model teachers are less theoretical and more pragmatic in that they help with classroom management, improving FL pedagogical skills, and surviving a full-time teaching position.

B. Resources

There are many culture-teaching materials available for Spanish teachers, both from educational companies and artifacts obtained while traveling. FL teachers are encouraged to use authentic materials for developing cultural lessons (Omaggio, 1984). However, teachers may be challenged both by time to sift through the large amount of materials and by funding to purchase and/or copy classroom sets of books, videos, activities, etc. Nevertheless, both of my participants developed units based upon movies they already previously owned or were able to borrow from local libraries. Eva, in particular, sought out materials used by other teachers in her district who were teaching the same levels and used her textbook as the primary resource for several of her lessons. Therefore, the perceived difficulty of choosing and obtaining culture-related materials may be lessened by closely exploring the following: material offered in current textbooks; resources such as videos from school and public libraries and the foreign films section of video rental
stores; photographs and artifacts obtained from travels; materials used by colleagues; inviting into the classroom parents, native speakers, and/or others who have traveled abroad; and using the Internet.

Another implication for use of materials surrounds examining the countries and communities upon which the materials focus. Melanie’s primary focus was Mexico, El Salvador, and the U.S.; Eva discussed aspects of Spain, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Costa Rica, and the U.S. Thus, where traditionally Spanish teachers emphasize information about Mexico and Spain (Moore, 1996), as both participants demonstrated, there were various resources appropriate for the secondary level that explored many different Spanish-speaking communities and countries.

Identifying appropriate culture-teaching materials is essential; just as important is how they are used. Although my participants used some of the same materials, Eva extended lessons of cultural understanding and awareness by layering materials and vocabulary that occasionally allowed students opportunities to view multiple perspectives of cultural
themes and sociopolitical issues, as well as compare across and within cultures. She also encouraged her students to participate in friendly debates over cultural and political issues about which they were aware and opinionated.

C. Culture Teaching Pedagogies and Perceptions

Banks’ Four Levels of Integration of Multicultural Content (2003) were instrumental in my examination of my participants’ pedagogies of culture. I used this model from general education to explore the levels with which each culture unit aligned. Subsequently, I adapted Banks’ model both throughout and following data collection to be more specific to the secondary FL classroom. From a review of the literature, it seems this was the first research study to adopt and adapt Banks’ model as an analytical tool in FL education. Pragmatically, Banks’ modified model has the potential to be a framework for classroom teachers to better conceptualize and plan their culture and language teaching.

It may be assumed that many FL teachers are not as accomplished as Eva and Melanie. Given the challenges my expert participants encountered with The Transformation and Social Action Approaches, it may additionally be correct that many would not teach beyond the first two approaches, particularly not new or recent teachers and/or those with little travel experience. Thus, I suggest that faculty of teacher education courses examine their pedagogy of cultural pedagogy/content. Given that the 10-year-old national guidelines were written with a culture emphasis, teacher education courses should follow suit. Therefore, I advocate teaching Banks’ model in FL education courses as a guide for planning and teaching culture. This model will be helpful for distinguishing between culture-specific and culture-general topics as well as for
incorporating with national and state standards. Thus, preservice teachers may be given opportunities to create units around cultural themes that are transformative, but that incorporate culture-specific contributions and additions. Banks’ model is helpful in understanding the importance of teaching culture at a deeper level, and how teaching solely from The Contributions and Additive Approaches may contribute to emphasizing binary differences and creating misunderstandings.

An additional implication for teacher education and licensure programs is the notion of assessing teachers’ cultural knowledge and understanding. Until the teaching of cultures becomes a focus area in pre-service education programs, it seems that it may not be logical or fair to assess pre-service teachers on their cultural knowledge. However, until that happens, should a new teacher today continue to be licensed if, for example, her views toward teaching culture are simply not effective? In the future, Banks’ model may be both a tool for conceptualizing FL teaching, as well as the basis for evaluating teachers’ culture-teaching views.

Both of my participants shared that they learned about teaching culture from their FL methods courses, travels, and friends and family who were Spanish speakers. Although they learned to differentiate Big C and little c culture, throughout each participant’s many years of experience, their pedagogies evolved into much more blurred and blended approaches to culture teaching. Since the role of culture in FL pedagogy has changed little over the last 50 years (Kramsch, 1993), it may be assumed that pre-service education
courses continue to focus on a Big C/ little c distinction as well. However, if experienced
eachers perceive the differences unnecessary, the approaches in pedagogy courses may
be in need of re-examination and change.

Along the same lines, I found that both teachers’ lengthier culture units focused on
culture-general themes, rather than culture-specific information. However, it is the
culture-general themes that tend to be more difficult to teach because of the seriousness
at the core of sociopolitical topics and the hazy area involved when evoking students’
opinions and emotions. Students in pre-service education would benefit from culture
theory and pedagogy courses offering practice with sociopolitical issues.

An important finding of this study was Eva’s philosophy, pedagogy, and materials that
she used to teach about some Hispanic holidays. Rather than allow students’ experiences
and knowledge of holidays to remain at the basic level learned in early language classes,
she developed enriched units on Christmas and Day of the Dead for her Spanish Four
students. According to Banks’ four approaches, I found both of these units to be aligned
with The Transformation Approach. For example, with her Day of the Dead unit,
students examined the view of death in Mexico as compared to Cuba. Additionally, they
watched an authentic Mexican movie about death, read about traditional calaveras that
were printed in newspapers, and wrote and presented their own calaveras that they
created in small groups. This multifaceted and multilayered unit allowed students
opportunities to view different perspectives of death, and to review their own North
American mainstream-centric perspectives. This unit is an appropriate model to serve as
the basis for teaching about culture-teaching pedagogy in pre-service and in-service
courses.
It stands to reason that if the teaching of culture has not changed much in the last 50 years, then surely assessment of cultural knowledge and understanding has not been revolutionized either. There is clearly insufficient research on assessment and testing of culture in the FL classroom. However, one of the important themes from this data was that my expert Spanish teachers generally believed that assessment was not necessary, and that for Eva, the important point was to bring the cultures together. However, national and state guidelines suggested that culture should be an inherent aspect of FL learning; it seems logical that it should be tested to assess for understanding, effectiveness of teaching, curricular modifications, etc. This is a large and complex area that needs to be examined through continued research and pre-service education courses.

*Reciprocity in Qualitative Research: A Follow-up*

In chapter three, I discussed the importance of catalytic validity within my research. One of my goals, as with much feminist work, is a “reciprocally educative process [that] is more important than product as empowering methods contribute to consciousness-raising and transformative social action” (Lather, 1991, p. 72). I expressed the hope that, from this study, my participants would gain more self-understanding of their teaching and a re-energized self-determination for teaching cultures, and that their commitment to this study would contribute to their professional lives in some way. I have maintained ongoing discussions with Melanie, my second participant. Without sacrificing the grammar knowledge she teaches, she is very interested in strengthening and integrating her language lessons with culture. I present here a brief discussion of our conversations as well as some of the modifications she has made since finishing data collection.
When Melanie was a middle school teacher, she taught a great deal of culture, and developed units around cultural themes, culminating with the presentation of students’ projects in a foreign language festival. Since teaching at the high school level, she has integrated less and less culture into her lessons, feeling pressured to ensure that her students are well-prepared for the grammar and reading challenges for subsequent years of Spanish studies. Throughout data collection to the present, I have had ongoing discussions with Melanie about ideas for integrating culture and language/grammar. We have met on several occasions to brainstorm and share ideas. I shared with her additional Chicano poems directly related to skin color to help connect the poetry to her play *El Color de Nuestra Piel* (The Color of Our Skin) (Gorostiza, 1966).

Most recently, Melanie began her unit on Immigration, but approached it differently this year from the year when the study was conducted. First, in this recent approach, she posted current events about immigration on a bulletin board in her classroom (she is only in two rooms this year rather than three). Second, she shared recent stories of immigration with her students, some of which I collected over the summer and gave to her. One story, in particular, told of a young Mexican immigrant who was transported through several states in the back of a cargo truck that had no air ventilation. Several of the immigrant’s co-travelers died from the extreme heat and he was badly burned, with the skin on much of his torso receiving third degree burns. The article included a large photo of the man, his burned chest revealed. Melanie, in her usual style of grabbing and maintaining her students’ attention, spread the details of the story over three days. She told me that her students were eager to know the outcome of the victim’s experience. She also noted how empathetic her students seemed to be this year, unlike other years,
because she shared more ‘actual’ stories this year than ever. Additionally, her Immigration unit coincided with the real-life tragedy of ten Mexicans, children and adults, living in central Ohio who recently died in an apartment fire caused by arson. An article written in Spanish, the first of its kind for Columbus’ major newspaper, inspired many letters to the editor from readers who were angry about the publication of an article written in Spanish in central Ohio, where English is the primary language. She and her students discussed the importance of this article to Columbus’ growing Latino population, as well as the necessity of making all readers aware of different cultures in the area. Third, Melanie and I chatted at length about the life of Francisco Jiménez, author of *Cajas de Cartón* (Cardboard Boxes) (2000). I shared with her the information I found after researching his life, accomplishments, and publications. She was as enthralled as I about his incredible experiences. She offered students extra credit to work together to email him, now a professor at the University of Santa Clara in California, to ask about any belongings that were special to him as a child that he was able to take with him from move to move. It is clear that Melanie is making more attempts to integrate culture at the high school level, culture that is current, related to her community, and that drew upon the feelings and emotions of her students. Just as exciting are the ideas that I have gained from her, both for future research as well as integrating language and culture.

*Limitations of the Study*

One of the limitations of this study is that I situate myself as a teacher committed to social justice. I maintain that the FL classroom is an ideal context for discussing issues of social justice and in this study used and modified an analytical tool that holds a social action approach as the ideal goal for multicultural teaching. Therefore, use of a different
analytical framework to examine my participants’ language and culture teaching may likely present different findings.

A second limitation involved my participants as experienced teachers who were considered by others to be successful FL teachers. I gathered a great deal of data to paint a portrait of their practices, philosophies, and pedagogies. However, I have no data on the teaching of cultures from new and/or recent FL teachers, who might not be expert teachers. Thus, the study may not portray culture teaching as practiced by typical FL teachers.

A third limitation of this study was my decision to study culture teaching from the teachers’ perspectives and not as well from their students’ perspectives. Although I used indirect evidence from classroom observations, teacher interviews, and my research journal to note students’ feelings, opinions, and cultural understandings, I did not obtain their direct perspectives on the cultural knowledge and understanding gained from their classroom cultural activities and materials.

Recommendations for Future Research

In this qualitative study I offered tentative findings on the teaching of cultures by two successful secondary teachers of Spanish. By exploring their pedagogies, perceptions, use of resources, and use of national, state, and local guidelines, I sought to investigate how they integrated the teaching of cultures with their FL teaching. Given the lack of published research on cultures teaching at the secondary FL level, this study was exploratory in nature. Drawn from the findings of this unique study of cultures teaching, and in response to the limitations I presented, I suggest additional areas needing research.
Both of my participants taught upper level sections of secondary Spanish. I felt that their participation would be best-suited to my study because of the flexibility they had with curriculum, because of the assumed level of discussion and understanding of other cultures older students may have had in their government and history classes, and because of the ability of the students to discuss other cultures partially (or completely) in the target language. I also chose these teachers because they were recommended by others as successful teachers of Spanish who committed to the teaching of cultures. However, it would be interesting to replicate aspects of this study with teachers of lower levels of Spanish and new or recent teachers, to examine their integration of multicultural content as well as investigate their perceptions and use of the guidelines, their culture-teaching pedagogy, as well as culture learning on the part of their students.

Throughout and after data collection I suggested modifications to Banks’ model to be more appropriate for conceptualizing culture teaching in FL education. As adapted, this model may be used both to describe teachers’ holistic approaches as well as for designing each specific culture-teaching unit. I believe FL education would be greatly served by future studies on this adapted model.

My focus in this study was to examine the work of two outstanding Spanish teachers, thus, I spent much time observing in their classrooms and interviewing them. I also interviewed their department chairpersons and the administrators (both past and present) who would be most likely to speak about the teachers’ pedagogies, etc. Though I did ask the teachers about what they perceived their
students were learning, I did not interview their students. However, based upon my observations, I incorporated into this study indirect evidence from the students. Future research may more directly investigate students’ cultural knowledge and understanding.

- Through my discussions and observations I found that neither of my participants placed much emphasis on formally assessing cultural knowledge. In reviewing the literature, it was evident that there is ongoing debate about the importance of cultural assessment as well as how to assess cultural knowledge and understanding. Future research should both survey and qualitatively explore secondary FL teachers’ pedagogies to ascertain whether or not they assess, whether or not they feel it necessary to assess, how they assess, and with what frequency they assess cultural knowledge.

- There is a large quantity of culture-teaching materials from FL educational companies and from travels to Hispanic countries and communities available to teachers of Spanish. In fact, through cable networks and the Internet it is possible to obtain a great deal of information about the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures. However, other than a few self-report surveys on teachers’ uses of culture-teaching materials at the secondary level, there is scant published research. Future research should examine both teachers’ and students’ perspectives of different materials, the frequency with which they are used, how they are used, and whether or not students primarily gain from them cultural knowledge (facts, places, customs) and culture-specific information or deeper understandings about culture-general themes.
• Although I did not set out to have a native speaker and nonnative speaker as participants, through cross-case analysis it seemed that some of the differences in their pedagogies and perceptions stemmed from the differences between their native languages and cultures. Studies of native and nonnative English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers are more common than studies of the native languages and cultures of FL teachers (Lazarton, 2003). However, this may be fertile ground for research, particularly as it relates to teaching cultures and integrating language and cultures. Future studies should explore native and nonnative Spanish-speaking teachers’ comfort with teaching cultures as well as their perceptions, knowledge, and understanding of other cultures. Multiple studies in this area with similar results may provide important information useful for FL teacher education programs. For example, if it is found that generally native Spanish speakers are more comfortable with teaching culture than nonnative speakers, FL education programs may need to implement requirements for study abroad experiences to help nonnative speakers better understand culture-specific and culture-general issues.
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APPENDIX A

EVA: INTERVIEW #5

Individual accomplishments, titles, talents, accolades, recognition by department chairpersons, participation in conferences, participation with pre-service teachers

1. How many years have you taught? In [her school district]? In this building?
2. Where else have you taught?
3. Do you have experience teaching at the college level?
4. Degrees?
5. Have you ever taken the role of department chair or other title other than teacher?
6. Are you a member of OFLA? Have you worked/volunteered for them or Central States or other organizations?
7. Do you attend conferences? Which? How often?
9. Do you participate with pre-service teachers? From OSU or other schools? How often?
10. Have you received teaching awards? Have you written grants and had them accepted? On what subject/s?

Materials

11. What percentage of your culture-teaching materials are self-made?
12. What percentage are from the text?
13. What percentage of your culture-teaching materials are from other sources and the textbook?
14. Are the movies you use for culture teaching made for educational purposes or entertainment?
15. How do you know/hear of the movies and other materials?
Culture teaching

16. How does being a native speaker and former Cuban resident affect your teaching of culture? Language?
17. How have your views of the teaching of culture developed? Have they changed over the years?
18. May I review your district’s curricular guidelines?
19. Describe your pedagogy of cultural content.
20. Do you take a political approach to teaching? For example, some believe that teaching should be apolitical—neutral; others believe that everything is political. Do you have a political stance?
21. What are your perceptions of the cultures you teach?
22. What kind of cultural knowledge do you think your students are learning/acquiring?
23. Do you believe there is a difference between language acquisition and language learning?
24. Do you believe there is a difference between acquisition of culture and learning of culture?
25. Regarding the guidelines for culture teaching at the fourth year level, which do you follow?
26. How do you define culture?
APPENDIX B

MELANIE: INTERVIEW #3

General Questions

1. How did you become interested in Spanish and education? What high school did you attend? Was your high school teacher influential?
2. When did you earn your master’s degree?
3. In your first teaching position, what buildings did you teach in and for how long?
4. You mentioned that there were six foreign languages taught in your middle school. What were they and did each student take just one language all three years?
5. Why did you change districts and take a part-time position?
6. Have you taught each of the classes in your current high school? Which level is your favorite?
7. On what committees have you worked here and in what capacity?
8. When you taught lower levels, did you use the textbook? Why or why not?
9. What are some of the games you commonly use? How often do you play games?
10. What was your teaching schedule and in how many different rooms were you?
11. When you grade participation, is it just with pesos that students earn?
12. How many pesos per marking period must students earn? What earns a peso or not?
13. What percentage is your participation?
14. What percentage is tests and quizzes count?
15. Do you formally assess listening comprehension? How? How often?
16. Do you formally assess speaking?
17. How many compositions do students write over the course of the school year?

Follow-up questions to culture-teaching lessons

18. What was the format of the Act 3 test?
19. Did you include any personal opinion questions?
20. Did students have opportunities to reflect on skin color and discrimination? In writing or orally?
21. How did students know which vocabulary words to focus on from the lengthy lists?
22. What was the format and content of your final exam?
23. What did you do with ‘Si Volvieras a Mi’?
24. For Three Kings Day, you had students bring in bread and the student who found the hidden bean received a crown. Were students well aware of the holiday?
26. For Cajas de Cartón, where did you get the photo that you showed on the overhead?
27. Did you tell students more about the author, Francisco Jiménez?
28. When you show ‘The Official Story’, what else do you do with that?
29. How did you incorporate technology with your teaching units?
30. How do you define culture?
31. Do you have plans for travels to Spanish-speaking countries in the near future?
32. What do you enjoy most about teaching Spanish?