



USE OF TEACHING MATERIALS (FILMS, SYBOLS, ETC.)TO TEACH INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract:

Film is a highly useful instructional multimedia tool for learning about and teaching cultural differences. As cultural documents, films give substance and meaning to intercultural communication discussions in the classroom. A film can be a veritable stimulus for other communicative language activities and strategies that can be practised in pre-viewing and post-viewing activities, such as improvisation, production, interaction, negotiation, and mediation.

Keywords: *multimedia, communicative language, mediation, communication competencies, mobile world.*

How do you teach intercultural communication? Some strategies and tools that can be used for teaching intercultural communication include film, cooperative learning, improvisation, inquiry-based instruction, task-based instruction, production, interaction, negotiation, mediation and role play. In today's mobile world, intercultural and interpersonal communication skills are of utmost importance, not only in the educational setting, but above all outside of this institutional setting and in particular, in interpersonal and professional life settings. Students who are encouraged to develop their intercultural awareness benefit from deeper learning. They are equipped with the knowledge, skills and methods they will need in their professional and civic life.

The Importance of Intercultural Communication Competencies

Since many students do not have the opportunity to travel across the globe, firsthand cross-cultural experiences may be difficult to share. Foreign films can fill this void, since they offer a unique window into the attitudes and behaviours of people from various cultural or linguistic backgrounds. By incorporating film and several simple teaching strategies into your lessons, you will create a more dynamic classroom. The use of film can assist learners in enhancing their reflection techniques while observing, analyzing, and eventually reformulating information they have seen, heard and understood. This reflection process is a part of a virtuous cycle that can motivate students to participate. There is more than one way to use film in the classroom. In this post you will find:

a list of 8 teaching strategies, for using film in the classroom, and for each one, an example and resource for using them effectively.

Classroom Teaching Strategies

The strategies below deal with the content of your lesson or course and will help you to answer the following question:



Which strategies can I adopt to facilitate the transfer of knowledge to my students? They also deal with the expected learning outcomes of your lesson or course, will help you to answer the following questions:

‘What do I want my students to be able to do after completion of this lesson or course?’

And ‘Which strategies should I adopt to achieve this?’

1. Promote Cooperative Learning

Break with the traditional classroom setting and rearrange your classroom environment. Encourage students of mixed abilities to work together by promoting small group or whole class activities while watching and discussing the film or series clip. The cooperative learning environment encourages students to actively assimilate and process the new information, while cross modeling it with fellow classmates (source: Barkley, Elizabeth F., Claire H. Major, K., and Patricia Cross. 2014. Collaborative Learning Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty, 2nd Edition. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco). Through verbally expressing their ideas and responding to others, your students will develop their self-confidence, as well as enhance their communication and critical thinking skills which are vital throughout their entire personal and professional life. For instance, you may ask your students to consider how they would react in an intercultural situation, such as welcoming a foreign student into their classroom. They could discuss and list the types of questions they would ask or how they would go about resolving an often intimidating and difficult situation for newcomers.

2. Utilize Role-Play Before and After Viewing

Have your students improvise and act out short drama sketches based on intercultural communication before viewing scenes from the film. After viewing, discuss and troubleshoot areas for improvement through constructive peer evaluation. A mock scenario is the safest place to make and learn from cultural mistakes, or as the French say « faux pas ». This is just one example of how role-play can be incorporated into classroom lessons. By solving problems, being creative and negotiating outcomes students can develop and enhance the soft skills revered by employers (source: Dana Di Pardo Léon-Henri, 2019, Going beyond words and actions: teaching metacognitive and soft skills to ESP communication students at the dawn of the fourth industrial revolution, See Appendix 1) In terms of cultural differences, these sketches or improvisations may be related to a variety of cultural differences such as language, clothing, food, traditions, music, or social norms and behaviour codes. You may even choose to integrate culture clash, stereotypes or clichés about culture (that beret –topped, cigarette-smoking, baguette-holding Frenchman riding a beat up old Peugeot basket-equipped bicycle comes to mind – although that still exists! Just kidding!).

Support Inquiry-based Instruction

Ask thought-provoking questions which inspire your students to think for themselves and become more independent learners. Encourage them to ask questions and investigate or research their own ideas. This will help them to improve and further develop their problem-solving skills, as well as gain a deeper understanding of intercultural issues and interpersonal concepts. Make a basket or box of questions and have the students pull out a question and work in discussion groups. Depending on the level of the



students, inquiries can be of an interpersonal nature such as ‘how does body language and culture differ from one continent to the next?’ or ‘do all French people speak the same French language?’ Based on the film, the questions may also be subjective and more open in nature to encourage students to express their unique views and personal or cultural experience, e.g. ‘which kind of foods are your favorite?’ or ‘would you try eating sushi?’

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