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Interactive English Teaching: The Line of American Writers

La enseñanza interactiva del inglés: *La cola de los escritores de América*

Ensino Interativo de Inglês: A fila dos Escritores da América

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ABSTRACT

The teaching of English assumes today as objective the development of the communicative, interactive and intercultural competence. Both Interactive Language Didactics and Real English Use proclaim a kind of Interactive task-based teaching an essential component of this objective. They offer students opportunities to interact meaningfully with other people in cultural situations. The article aims at the

demonstration of how the Interactive Language Didactic focuses the development of the communicative, interactive and intercultural competence, and how activities like "The line of American Writers" can be made to archive this goal taking into account the real English use. As theoretical methods were used: the dialectic, the historical, the logic, the systemic and the modeling; as empirical methods were used: the class observation, the document analysis and the interview. The Line of American Writers is a technique for the interactive learning based on real English that can be used in the teaching of English at Foreign Languages Education Career. The strategy was implemented during two years with first year English students. Satisfactory results were obtained in terms of the English learning objectives, its linguistic and communicative dimensions, and the learning culture through reflection, the interaction and the language contextualization in different cultures fostering human values and positive attitudes toward the students' global formation.

Key words: Didactics; task-based learning; real English; foreign language; American writers.

RESUMEN

La enseñanza del inglés asume hoy como objetivo el desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa, interactiva e intercultural. La Didáctica Interactiva de Lenguas, junto al uso real del inglés, proclaman una enseñanza interactiva basada en tareas, las cuales son componentes esenciales para dicho objetivo. Estas ofrecen oportunidades a los estudiantes de interactuar significativamente con otros en situaciones culturales. El objetivo del presente artículo es demostrar cómo la didáctica interactiva focaliza el desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa, interactiva e intercultural y cómo se pueden construir tareas

interactivas, como "Los escritores de América", dirigidas al logro de dicho objetivo, teniendo en cuenta el uso real del inglés. Se emplearon como métodos teóricos: el dialéctico, el histórico, el lógico, el sistémico y la modelación, el análisis y la síntesis; como métodos empíricos: el análisis documental, la observación a clases y la entrevista. *La cola de escritores de América* es una técnica para el aprendizaje interactivo basado en el inglés real, que puede ser utilizada en la enseñanza del inglés en la carrera Licenciatura en Educación Lenguas Extranjeras. La técnica se utilizó durante dos años con estudiantes de inglés de primer año. Se obtuvieron resultados satisfactorios en términos del objetivo del aprendizaje del inglés y las dimensiones de habilidades lingüísticas y comunicativas, la cultura del aprendizaje mediante la reflexión y la interacción y la contextualización de la lengua mediante las diversas culturas. Así, se contribuye a la formación de valores humanos y actitudes positivas como parte de la formación integral de los estudiantes.

Palabras clave: didáctica; enseñanza basada en tareas; inglés real; lengua extranjera; escritores americanos.

RESUMO

O ensino do inglês hoje assume como seu objetivo o desenvolvimento da competência comunicativa, interativa e intercultural. A Didática Intercativa de Línguas, juntamente com o uso efetivo do Inglês, proclama um ensino interativo baseado em tarefas, que são componentes essenciais para este objetivo. Estes proporcionam oportunidades para os alunos interagirem de forma significativa com outros em situações culturais. O objetivo deste artigo é demonstrar como o ensino interativo se concentra no desenvolvimento da competência comunicativa, interativa e intercultural e como tarefas interativas, como "The Writers of America", podem ser construídas para alcançar este objetivo,

levando em conta o uso real do inglês. Foram utilizados como métodos teóricos: dialética, histórica, lógica, sistémica e modelação, análise e síntese; como métodos empíricos: análise documental, observação de aulas e entrevista. The American Writers' Queue é uma técnica de aprendizagem interativa baseada no inglês real, que pode ser usada no ensino do inglês no Bacharelado de Educação em Línguas Estrangeiras. A técnica foi utilizada durante dois anos com estudantes do primeiro ano de inglês. Foram obtidos resultados satisfatórios em termos do objetivo de aprender inglês e das dimensões das competências linguísticas e de comunicação, da cultura de aprendizagem através da reflexão e interação, e da contextualização da língua através de várias culturas. Assim, ela contribui para a formação de valores humanos e atitudes positivas como parte da formação integral dos alunos.

Palavras-chave: didática; ensino baseado em tarefas; inglês real; língua estrangeira; escritores americanos.

INTRODUCTION

The teaching of English in Cuba as a foreign language has a long history that dates back to the beginning of the 20th century, when Cuba became a neo-colony of the United States. At the end of the 1980s, the teaching of foreign languages in Cuba began to move from traditional and structural teaching to communication methods, influenced by international trends. Following the interactive social trend in language teaching (Ellis, 1995), Acosta and other authors have been developing interactive didactics in language teaching in Pinar del Río since 1995; which appears in the books *Communicative Language Teaching*, published in Brazil and Australia in 1998 and *Interactive Didactics of Languages*, published by the

publishers Félix Varela (2009) and the People and Education (2011). The article "Interactive Didactics of Foreign Languages" of (Acosta & Alfonso, 2015) also appears in the Mendive magazine. These publications are used in the training of foreign language teachers at universities, as well as in diploma, masters and doctoral courses.

This methodological perspective assumes the communicative, interactive and intercultural competence as the final objective in itself, since it constitutes the necessary skill to be a competent user or communicator of the language. Interactive teaching assumes that people learn the language better when they use it to interact with others and analyze how it works in communication, rather than studying the linguistic rules about the language system.

A research project called "Creation of a new language learning culture" is carried out in the Foreign Languages program at the Pinar del Río University "Hermanos Saíz Montes de Oca", aimed at promoting a change in the conception of teaching and the learning of foreign languages in teachers and students. In this sense, publications appear in the Mendive magazine that study various dimensions of the new culture of language learning, among them, Acosta & García (2015) focus on the role of the multiplicity of scenarios; Acosta & García (2017) emphasize psychological factors; Acosta, García & Carcedo (2018) delve into the need for learning English from the Latin American context; while de Gómez & Acosta (2017) reveal experience in the use of the interactive-reflective pedagogical workshop for the training and professional development of language teachers.

According to Acosta and Gómez (2017), one of the dimensions of the new language learning culture is the actual use of English. As part of this project, work with interactive teaching based on tasks is proposed to contribute to the learning process of the real use of English in students from the discipline of Comprehensive Practice of the English Language (PILI).

For its part, the actual use of the English language is defined by Hoge (2019) as the English that native speakers actually use with their friends, family and working colleagues. According to Hoge, it is the common English of every day that is used constantly, daily. It includes daily communication phrases such as slang, idioms, cultural references, filler words, natural English rhythm, jokes, double meaning, contractions, among other forms. It refers to that English that is little found in textbooks, which have been designed from the grammatical approach to learning the language.

However, the actual use of the English language has been the subject of research by several authors. Among them, the work group that Hoge (2019) has in the United States stands out; with a whole conception of the real use of English that directly impacts all the didactic components. In this sense, in Cuba only the investigations of Acosta and Gómez (2017), Acosta, Vigil and Gómez (2019) and Acosta and Vigil (2019) are registered, who have put their ideas into practice through their book: *Interactive English Use Learning*, used in the Comprehensive Practice discipline of the English Language and in experimental courses in Pinar del Río. Likewise, an article by Acosta & Careaga (2020) related to learning the real use of English from literature appears in the Mendive magazine.

Foundations for interactive task-based language teaching

The key ideas for interactive task-based language teaching are as follows:

1. Interactive, intercultural and communicative competence becomes the objectives of language teaching.
2. Communication is socially constructed in the interactive process (Vygotsky & Luria, 1975; Ellis, 1995; Richards, 2006).
3. Language learning occurs in social interaction (Vygotsky & Luria, 1975).
4. Verbal interaction is of crucial importance for learning the language as it helps to reveal the system and the use of the notable language and for the learner (Ellis, 1995).
5. Social interaction is the primary mechanism of mental recognition (The social and active character of human psyche, (Vygotsky & Luria, 1975).
6. Language is meaning, it is a negotiation of meaning (Ellis, 1995, Richards, 2006).
7. Learners need to be emotionally motivated to interact when they learn.
8. People learn the language by interacting with it.
9. Tasks should be meaningful and include real or pseudo- real communication.
10. Precision and the fluidity are targets of interactive language teaching.

On the other hand, the task itself provides all the conditions for learning: the problem, the solution, the objectives to be achieved, the content to be learned, the methods and instruments to

use, what and how to evaluate, the learning strategies and the procedures. Interactive teaching based on homework provides students with opportunities to interact with information, practice the language, and use it naturally and spontaneously. Furthermore, it creates in the students a state of integrity, meaning and meaning in a real context. The task makes possible the connection between reflection and action, the theory and the practice, the accuracy and the fluency, grammatical knowledge of the language and use. There are gaps in information, sustained discourse, focused on the code and the message, as well as the information gap.

An interactive task is more than just a mechanical grammar exercise. From our point of view, it implies:

- The development of communicative, interactive and intercultural competence
- The formation of human values in students.
- Humanism: learning to love and be loved.
- Reflection on structure, meaning and use.
- Creating interactions with meaning and purpose.
- Learning about culture and language.
- The unity of the cognitive and the affective.
- The contextualization of language in culture.
- Responsibility in learning.
- The diversity of techniques, tasks and procedures.
- Cooperative work, in pairs and individually.
- Constant updating of content.

Thus, the objective of this article is to demonstrate how interactive teaching focuses on the development of communicative, interactive and intercultural competence and how interactive tasks can be constructed,

such as "Writers of America", aimed at achieving this objective, taking into account It tells the real use of English from the sociocultural context in which students learn.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The base idea used in this research is the interactive didactics of language teaching as it is described by Acosta and Alfonso (2011) in their book, *Interactive Language Training*. For this reason, the concepts of interaction, reflection, communication and culture are a key when implementing this didactic through the line of the writers of America, with the addition of the actual use of English.

Research methodology

The quantitative paradigm has been used in combination while experimentation and quantification are used, and the qualitative paradigm since reality is interpreted from the meanings that the subjects give to the facts. To this is added the participatory action research of the socio-critical paradigm as the research professors become involved and share with the students. This has allowed the queuing technique to be gradually improved and turned into a learning task with various cross-cutting themes. This time, it is the queue of the writers of America, but the authors have developed queues related to the environment, history and fiction queues. The theme of the writers of America is not accidental but responds to the need of students to expand their knowledge about the culture of the region where they live, as previously diagnosed.

Likewise, classroom observation has been used as the main method to obtain data about the indicators, which have been derived from the qualities of the object, that is, the teaching-learning

process, as an object to transform from the interactive task. Among the indicators are interaction, reflection, participation, cultural contextualization, and dynamic learning, among other indicators. For example, participation is measured by a graph illustrating the order in which the students are sitting; the observer draws a line between the people who participate, including the teacher. Subsequently, the graph is analyzed and it is determined how much participation the students had, they are evaluated from 1 to 5, according to a scale established for this purpose. Likewise, reflection is measured by the number of opportunities the student has to reason and make decisions about the use of the language; and contextualization is measured by analyzing the cultural elements that appear on cards that contextualize the use of language.

Likewise, in order to evaluate the behavior of the learning process of the real use of English in the career, the operational definition proposed by Acosta & Vigil (2019) was assumed, which allows determining the teaching of the real use of English. Thus, the information provided by the instruments was processed and the strengths and weaknesses that exist in the Comprehensive Practice of the English Language were determined to contribute to the development of the real use of English. This allowed us to identify the problems marked by the scarce use of work with the real use of English and to identify *the queue* as a source for this purpose.

For their part, the methods of interview and group discussion corroborated the data of the observation to class, thus arriving at a methodological triangulation for the analysis of the data that reveals the correspondence between the results of the three methods. In these three methods the search object is the

teaching-learning process of English, for which the task is used as a methodological resource for the intensification of the teaching process. The group discussion also contributed to perfecting the task and procedures. Two group discussion sessions were held during the three courses, in which the queue of American writers was already used in the second semester of the first year.

In the same sense, each indicator was evaluated on a scale of 1 to 5 points, with 5 being the maximum. In a regressive direction, the sub-dimensions and dimensions were evaluated from the evaluations of the indicators. No control group is used or results are not compared with other methods, in such a way that qualitative analysis predominates, with some quantitative elements.

The tail of the writers has been permanently used for three courses in the first year of the Foreign Language Career at the University of Pinar del Río. In each year the queue has been instrumented in four groups of students all with an enrollment between 20 and 25 students. It has been used as a learning and demonstration activity in the discipline of Introduction to the specialty and in the discipline of Comprehensive Practice of the English Language (PILI).

From the observation of classes, the oral interview and the documentary analysis, the teaching-learning process of English from the learning culture was characterized, with an emphasis on interactive language teaching based on tasks and the actual use of English. From this diagnosis, a proposal based on the technique called *the queue was developed*, as a resource for learning the real use of English, in the training of English teachers.

The research carried out was of a mixed type, using the quantitative and

qualitative approaches, with participatory action research. The sample selected was three professors who make up the PILI discipline and approximately 90 students per year. The dialectical-materialistic method was assumed as the general method, and on the basis of this, the theoretical methods were used: the historical, the logical, the systemic, the modeling, the analysis and the synthesis; the empirical methods used were: documentary analysis, class observation, oral interview and group discussion.

The expert criterion was used as a method to assess the feasibility and validity of the queue for writers in America and the pre - experiment to evaluate their behavior and results in pedagogical practice. Likewise, the group interview with students and teachers was used to collect information about interactive task-based teaching as a learning resource for the real use of English from the PILI discipline.

This article proposes the use of *the queue* as a methodological resource for teaching and learning the real use of English as a component of communicative, interactive and intercultural competence. The proposal of topics and tasks organized around them is a sample to be used with the groups of students of the career, as well as a way to generalize procedures and techniques that can be used or adapted to other contexts of learning English at several levels of education.

RESULTS

Diagnosis of the real use of English

A new culture of learning and teaching requires teachers and students to focus on teaching the real use of the language, and not only on grammatical correction

as has traditionally happened. English is being taught from books, dictionaries and grammars, and not the real English spoken by real people in real situations. Based on the foregoing, the need to achieve greater interaction of students with the real use of English is manifested, and not only with the English of textbooks and other materials specially developed to learn the language.

For its part, the **documentary analysis** method reveals that:

The textbook used in the first year, Integrated English Practice I, is rich in texts specially prepared for learning English, which are used for listening and reading comprehension. However, it does not respond to the need for college students to conceive language as a system of meanings, functions and use in communicative real situations. The texts do not reflect the real use of English as they follow a linear grammatical organization, so they are far from showing the real use of English in the understanding and production that real people do of the language to satisfy their communicative and affective needs. Likewise, the structural approach predominates in the book with texts and tasks outside the true universal, regional or local culture. Furthermore, the themes are far removed from the needs and interests of the students as they do not reflect the wealth of events in the world today. They are frequent trivial topics of little interest to university students. The following are identified as weaknesses related to actual use:

- Teaching the actual use of the English language, because of the insistence on linguistic knowledge (grammatical) separated from the pragmatic knowledge (Use) is not focused.
- Resources and materials for the study and teaching of the actual use of the English language are

scarce for both teachers and students.

- The actual use of English is not part of the methodological lines of work of the Foreign Language Career.

The use of the queue of American writers

Learning English as a foreign language is not the same as learning it as a second language. The latter needs more attention in the structure of the linguistic system, as well as in communicative practice. *The queue of American writers* is a task based on the original model of (Hadfield, 1990). In Pinar de Rio, under the direction of Acosta, they have been modeled several queues with different themes that have been used in various postgraduate and undergraduate: animals queue, sexually transmitted diseases, historical events and American writers, among others, all used to teach foreign languages: English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

The queue task has the following **objectives**:

- Delve into the culture of America through the knowledge of famous writers.
- Understand texts written about great writers in America.
- Share information orally about writers in America.
- Feel the need to know the writers of America as a way to learn more about life, the history and the culture of the peoples.
- Strengthen values of patriotism and personal identity, respect and love for our America.
- Contextualize the structure of the English language system from culture.

Instructions for the teacher

a) Start the class telling students that a group of writers of America was in a queue to buy tickets to a musical. They wanted to see the presentation of the Cuban band, Buena Vista Social Club. Suddenly, a storm came and the writers took refuge. When the storm stopped, the writers tried to form the queue, but they did not remember exactly their place in the queue, they needed ask others who they were and what they did in the queue in order to identify who went before and who is behind it or her in the queue.

b) The teacher writes a list of Latin writers on the board, using the brainstorming technique. Each student selects a name to assume their role and share what they know about the selected writer with their colleague.

c) The teacher gives the students a card with information about the writer whose role they will assume. This will help the student become familiar with the character and the play.

d) The teacher gives the students a card with information about the writer whose role they will assume. This time the card contains information about who is the writer, who is in front of him or her and who is behind, and what he is doing in the queue.

e) The teacher offers a small model of dialogue that students can follow in the search for such information.

f) About five minutes later, the teacher asks the students to line up.

The *goal of the task* is to rebuild the queue as it was before. To do this, students will have to move around the classroom; looking for the information they need about who went in front and behind to form the queue. The queue will then become a circle, or horseshoe

shape, to facilitate the upcoming intensive oral communication stage.

Procedure for students

a. Suggest writers from America that you know. (Brainstorm)

b. Let's write all the writers on the board.

Alice Walker Octavio Paz Jorge Amado

Nicolás Guillén Rubén Darío Julio Cortázar

Pablo Neruda Alejo Carpentier Carlos Fuentes

Mark Twain Langston Hughes José Martí

Mario Benedetti Gabriel García Márquez César Vallejo

Rómulo Gallegos Edgar Allan Poe Miguel A. Asturias

Eduardo Galeano Ernest Hemingway Isabel Allende

c. Choose a writer whose role you will assume.

d. Share with your colleague what you know and what you don't know about your writer.

e. *Read the text about your writer so you know more about him or her (first card). The teacher gives each student the information on a card, accompanied by a photo, about the life and work of their writer. Example :*

Alice Walker, born in 1944, American author and poet, most of whose writing portrays the lives of poor, oppressed African American women in the early

1900's. Walker's experience during her senior year at Sarah Lawrence, including undergoing an abortion and making a trip to Africa, provided many of the book's themes, such as love, suicide, civil rights, and Africa. She won the American Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize for her best-known work, the novel *The Color Purple* (1982). The novel was made into a motion picture in 1985, and Walker's book *The Same River Twice: Honoring the Difficult* (1996) contains her notes and reflections on making the film.

Gabriel García Márquez was born in Colombia. He is the most famous contemporary American writer of the Spanish language. He has received the Nobel Prize of Literature and has written a lot of novels, most of which have been translated to many languages. One of his most famous novels is *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. He lives in Colombia and Mexico and was a professor at the Latin American Cuban Movies School.

f. Share the information with your colleagues, asking and answering about the authors of both (Yes or No questions and Wh questions).

g. Read the information about your writer (Second card), which tells you what he is doing in the queue, who is in front of him or her and who is behind. Examples of these cards:

You are **Langston Hughes** from United States. You are thinking about how to use the rhythms of jazz and of everyday black speech in your poetry. Alejo Carpentier is ahead of you. He is writing a novel about Haiti. Behind you there is Gabriel García Márquez. He is designing a lesson for the Latin American Movie School in Cuba.

h. Walk around the classroom asking for the writer in front and behind you in line. You can follow this model:

A: Excuse me Sir. Are you Mark Twain?

B: No, Madame.

A: Thank you, Sir.

A: Excuse me, are you Mark Twain?

B: Yes, I am.

A: Were you listening to Poe's poem: Annabel Lee?

B: Yes, I was.

A: So, I am behind you in the queue.

i. Let's order the tail. (The tail forms). Then the queue becomes a circle to facilitate intensive oral communication practice between the students and the students and the teacher.

j. Let us ask others about them and the other writers, using the questioning patterns: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How much, How many, and How long.

Example:

A: Could you please, Mark, tell me a well-known story you wrote?

B: Well, I wrote Tom Sawyer.

A: Tell us what you were doing in the line, and what other writers were doing. In case you don't remember, you may ask them.

k. Work with your partner and select the following information from your card :

- Subjects and their actions
- The subjects' assistants and their actions
- The oppositions
- Time markers

l. Search your writing card and share the following information with your colleagues :

- The communicative functions
- The grammar used to express those functions
- Possible pronunciation problems
- Extralinguistic contextual elements

m. Draw a semantic map that illustrates the content of your card. Start with the writer's name, then the front and rear writers, and the actions mentioned on the card.

n. Explain the content of the map to your colleagues.

o. Collectively answer the following questions :

- When one says America, what does it mean?
- What makes the difference between Latin America and America?
- What is really the Caribbean?
- When was Nicolás Guillén born and when did he die?
- Did Neruda meet Allende? What did he do during Allende's Government?
- What makes the difference between *queue* and *line*?
- How old would Benedetti be if he were still alive?
- Where can I find one of Galeano's plays to read?

p. To draw a semantic map that illustrate the content of the entire queue (starts with the word **queue**, then **writers** and finally the main concepts on them) (Activity for the whole class)

q. Does it express to the class which is of the following communication strategies you used in this task and some linguistic form corresponding to this?

- Asking why
- Asking for clarification
- Accepting and Asking questions joined by or in past tense
- Negating and adding information
- Inferring facts

r. Tell the class what you have learned today and what else you would like to learn tomorrow in cultural, interactive and communicative terms.

Example of cards of the Writers of America

*You're **José Martí**, the Cuban National Hero. You're the first one on the line. You're thinking about America. Nicolás Guillén is behind you. He's writing a poem about the Caribbean.*

*You're **Nicolás Guillén**, the Cuban National Poet. You are writing a poem about the Caribbean. José Martí's ahead of you. He's thinking about the independence of America. Pablo Neruda is behind you. He's writing a love poem to his wife Matilde.*

*You're **Pablo Neruda**, from Chile. You're the most romantic poet in America. You're writing a love poem to your wife Matilde. Nicolás Guillén is ahead of you. He's writing a poem about the Caribbean. Mario Benedetti's behind you. He's talking about his exile in Cuba.*

*You're **Mario Benedetti** from Uruguay. You're talking about your exile in Cuba, Argentina, and Spain. Pablo Neruda is ahead of you. He's writing a novel to his wife. Rómulo Gallegos, the Venezuelan writer, is behind you. He's thinking about Doña Bárbara, his masterpiece.*

*You're **Rómulo Gallegos** from Venezuela. You're thinking about one of your novels. Mario Benedetti is ahead of you. He's talking about his exile during the military dictatorship. Behind you*

there's Eduardo Galeano. He's about to finish writing a book about Latin America.

You're **Eduardo Galeano** from Argentina. You're about to complete writing a book about Latin America. Romulo Gallegos is ahead of you. He's thinking about one of his novels. Behind you, there's Langston Hughes. He's looking at the sky.

You're **Langston Hughes** from United States. You're thinking about how to use the rhythms of jazz and of everyday black speech in your poetry. Eduardo Galeano is ahead of you. He's writing a book about Latin America. Behind you there's Edgar Allan Poe. He's reading a poem.

You're **Edgar Allan Poe** from the USA. You're reading your poem Annabel Lee. Ahead of you there's Langston Hughes. He's thinking about how to use the rhythms of jazz and of everyday black speech in your poetry. Alice Walker is behind you. She's talking to you about the oppressed African American women.

You're **Alice Walker** from United States. You're talking about the oppressed African American women in the early 1900 's. Edgar Allan Poe is ahead of you. He's reading the poem Annabel Lee. You're the last person of the line.

Keep in mind that the first card the student receives is to achieve a general level of understanding, an approach to the author and his work; it is not about achieving a detailed or critical understanding of the text, which contains academic English. The second card that the student receives is written oral language, with conversational language, whose objective is to serve as the basis for intensive oral communicative practice, the main task of the technique as it is the niche where skills are developed. Therefore, the queue of the writers of America is a

technique turned into a task, particularly oral.

The observation method shows an evaluation between 4 and 5 points for all the indicators and measured dimensions, participation, contextualization, dynamical, cultural, etc. In this sense, students recognize the value of the intensity of oral practice, which gives a new rhythm to the English language class, the interaction and reflection achieved in learning, as well as the value of the cultural element as a basis for the contextualization of English, which, in his opinion, offers a touch of use to the language they learn, which fortunately distances them from repetitive, formal and boring exercises about trivialities that have nothing to do with their interests and cognitive social and affective needs..

From the **interview to the students:** These recognize the value of the communicative functions that are introduced, practiced and used in the queue task. They refer to learning to ask and say who is in front, who is behind and what people are doing. They point out that essential structures are repeated, that writers are interesting and motivating for future reading and seeking information about them. Above all, they are left with the impression that language serves more than to be repeated, and that when it is used contextualized in culture, it stimulates its learning and natural and real use. They add that knowing the writers of America is to know part of the world and systematizing their experiences of having seen their works as children without knowing who they were from. It is about relating the writer and the work with the current moments and the previous knowledge that they possess.

The group discussion: It arises valuable ideas for improving the procedures of the task queue and confirm its value in learning the English language naturally and closely as real

life. It is emphasized in the fact that for many students and teachers, to learn English does not require much thought, rather it is to repeat and say things, a gross mistake that is worth fighting with the revolution in language teaching, in which social interaction is conceived as reflective, there is no other. On the other hand, the old discussion of grammar teaching, what grammar and how, is focused. Teachers and students point out that grammar is easier and makes sense, as well as being inserted in the text and in the context. I like that of learning grammar inductively; this is how students refer to learning a functional, communicative and pedagogical grammar, fully contextualized from culture and literature.

These ideas are key to training students and teachers in a new culture of learning the English language in students studying foreign language courses at Cuban universities. This is the basic idea of the project of the Department of Foreign Languages, to which this research belongs, entitled the creation of a new culture of learning English in Cuban universities.

DISCUSSION

Learning the real use of English in an interactive, reflective, communicative and intercultural way in the context of training English teachers is an imperative in the current circumstances, to enhance the development of their own communication skills and to improve their professional work as teachers of English. This reveals the aspiration that students in Cuba, at any educational level, can come to interact intercultural, using the English that prevails as a *lingua franca*. Based on the foregoing, the need to achieve greater interaction of students with the real use of English and not only with English from textbooks and

other materials intended to pass through a course in the classroom is manifested.

The Queue of American Writers is an interactive, student-centered, learning task. More than 90 % of the time of the activity is used by the students in the search, exchange and use of information to form the queue that is the object of the activity, so that almost all the time is dedicated to achieving the objective of the activity. Almost all the time is dedicated to the development of communicative, interactive and intercultural competence. Interactive teaching is evident as students learn to interact with others through comprehension, interaction, and the production of language in a communication process that simulates a situation in which real writers of the culture of America participate.

On the other hand, as prescribed by interactive didactics, the learning of grammar, in its broad sense of the word, occurs through the induction method from listening to and reading the texts on the writers of America. In this way, the brief grammar explanation appears little by little as it becomes a necessity for students to understand and produce the messages. Thus, the center of the class is not the vocabulary, pronunciation or structural patterns of the language, but the communicative processes of information exchange, selection, feedback, reflection and interaction from the communication needs planned in the challenge of forming the queue. This technique favors the theory that grammar is more easily learned when contextualized in a cultural situation, it is in the coming and going of the text into the context and vice versa, that grammar is learned in a functional and communicative way.

In another order of things, authentic texts taken from scientific sources are used in the case of the information offered about the life and work of the writers, and texts with conversational

language are also used in the case of the cards that offer information to the student about the writer whose role he assumes. It is worth noting that in this case the language used on the cards can vary from one register to another depending on the learning context. As you can see the cards that are used as samples here in this article contain an informal language, full of contractions, fillers, slang, colloquial English phrases, etc. Above all, it is in oral practice that offers this task where informal language can be used the most, which happily has ceased to be a taboo in the teaching of English, at least in some institutions, including the University of Pinar del Río. This has been the effect of the study and use of theory about the real use of English and the need to create a new culture of learning in students of the Foreign Language Degree.

On the other hand, the queue task presents a theme that deviates from the trivial themes offered in most texts for learning English around the world. These texts present topics far from the needs and interests of the students, as they do not reflect the wealth of events in the world today. They are frequent trivial topics of little interest to university students such as: the first day at school, Parkview Street, a visit to Margaret's apartment, etc. Students are eager to learn more real, communicative, interactive, affective and cultural English. That is why Acosta & Careaga (2020) point out that both teachers and students fully accept the need and the real possibility of approaching literature, and from it, positively "inject" the learning of the language, particularly its actual use. The subject of the writers of America is interconnected with other subjects of interest to many students, such as their works, their places of origin and their positions before life. This is how networks are established between Alice Walker and Langston Hughes, between

them and Martín Luther King, between their works and the history of African-American culture in the United States, and many other connections from the informational niches of the events that are presented in the cards.

The queue of writers in America is conceived as a task that focuses on fluency following the standards of Richards (2006), without neglecting precision, which is an imperative when learning a foreign language in a teacher training career. *The queue of the writers of America* meets the following requirements:

- It focuses on communicative, interactive and intercultural competence.
- Pursues the development of learning strategies.
- Requires the use of communication strategies.
- Integrates different language and communication skills.
- Students demand understanding, analysis and production of texts.
- It reveals the culture of the region of America to which the student belongs.
- It provides a learning situation where the student can use the language naturally to satisfy communication needs.
- It achieves unity of knowledge about the language system and its actual use.
- It offers opportunities for interaction, reflection and exchange with other cultures.
- Contributes to the formation of values in students.
- Enrich the general comprehensive culture of the students.
- Contributes to the formation of Latin American identity.
- Offers opportunities for questions and answers among students.
- Contributes to the development of intertextuality in the context of literature.

- It stimulates the search for literature and the history of America.
- Focuses the attention on the content and the form, shaping the natural and spontaneous use of the language, making decisions about what and how to say and who to say, according to a given context.

These elements make actual development of interactive competition as a goal in itself and as a means to achieve intercultural and communicative competence in the learners of English in the School of Foreign Languages at Universities.

The queue of American writers conceived the literature and the culture to practice English so interactive, reflective, intercultural and communicative, as a means to develop communication skills, enrich knowledge and reinforce values and attitudes. Students engage in solving a task that reflects reality, expands their culture, and fits their cognitive, communicative, and emotional needs, from meeting relevant writers and their lives to the socio-cultural context of America and elsewhere. On the other hand, the queue allows contextualizing the learning of grammar in the text and its relationship with the cultural context.

The Queue responds to the need of university students to conceive language as a system of meanings, functions and use in situations, to learn it as people actually use it in the discourse of understanding and production in communicative reality, focusing its real use rather than the knowledge of the structure of the language as it has traditionally happened. Of course, the task is carried out entirely in English so that students use the language as a real way of communication in their cognitive, communicative and affective functions. Thus they can acquire the

particular vocabulary of the subject of the writers of America, phrases and words, slang, contractions, common phrases, registration and formality of the language, functions and interactions typical of real conversations.

The task facilitates learning with a strong cognitive, communicative, humanistic and cultural base, offering opportunities for the student to use the language in solving problems that require focusing attention on both meaning and linguistic forms. The oral tasks that make up the queues are varied. All aimed at developing oral skills. It makes use of the student's prior knowledge of the text and of this in context. In this way, the possibilities of conversation between students and between them and the teacher about a variety of topics related to the writer, the place and his work, among other connecting niches, are endless. For this reason, the queuing technique requires a high level of preparation by English teachers who use it in every sense of English proficiency and pedagogical skills.

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