

Axolotls, environmentally conscious mayors and watermills: Didactic proposals for raising awareness on water conservation through pedagogical translation

Krisztina Zimányi^{a*} , Denisse Alejandra Vargas Montiel^a, Lydia Carneiro^b, Robin Pitte^b, Renata Ayala Ciprés^a, Valeria Tinuviel Escamilla García^a

^a Department of Language, Universidad de Guanajuato, Guanajuato, Mexico

^b Université de Caen, Caen, France

Received: August 22, 2024 / Accepted: January 8, 2025 / Published Online: January 18, 2025

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Abstract

The present article explores the possibilities of integrating Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #6 (Clean water and sanitation) in the content of materials designed for Spanish as a second or foreign language (S2/FL) learners in a Mexican context. The idea arose from the recent severe droughts in the country that affected water consumption in certain cities. For immersion students studying S2/FL in Mexico, this became a reality rarely discussed in the classroom. In addition, the use of pedagogical translation is proposed to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the learners' already existing linguistics skills. Considering the particularities of the context where the project was developed, the material design stage was preceded by two smaller enquiries into the perception of Mexico and Mexican culture abroad as well as the country's representation in existing S2/FL materials. One specific point of interest was if everyday realities where the lack of water received mention in the foreign press and / or if S2/FL textbooks. The resulting activities propose to cover these rather complex topics through a ludic perspective that can be replicated and adapted to a variety of contexts and any one of the SDG.

Keywords material design, pedagogical translation, Sustainable Development Goals, water conservation

1. Introduction

This article reports on expanding the possibilities in didactic material design for Spanish as a second or foreign language (S2/FL) teachers and learners. Based on the findings of contextually defined sub-projects within this inquiry, it proposes to integrate culturally informed activities in everyday teaching practice. It advocates for combining various techniques and strategies in second and foreign language (L2/FL) teaching. In this case, we have decided to include three aspects: 1) local issues, 2) a specific Sustainable Development Goal (also connected to local realities), and 3) the use of pedagogical translation in the L2/FL classroom for the following reasons:

First, learners of Spanish are often interested in more than just acquiring a L2/FL, they are also attracted by the cultural aspects associated with a language spoken in such diverse contexts. So, questions arise regarding how these cultures are depicted in the didactic material available in printed or digital formats? In our particular case, how is Mexico portrayed for S2/FL learners? What can foreigners learn about Mexico by studying Spanish? Finally, from a teaching perspective, how can we incorporate local information in our classes?

Second, it is now vital to promote a sustainable future in all areas of education, and L2/FL teaching is no exception in this regard. Connecting L2/FL learning with topics pertaining to sustainable development can not only lead to generating didactic material that focuses on related issues but could also help teachers and students alike to become agents of change in their respective communities. This way, and thanks to the activities, tasks or projects designed with these ideas in mind, L2/FL learners could become aware of the urgency to take action and implement measures that could contribute to achieving some of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) defined by the United Nations and adopted by its member states in 2015. Once again, one could ask how this could be accomplished?

Third, consciously integrating translation, which is a naturally occurring brain activity when learning a new language anyway (Thierry & Wu, 2007), could enrich the L2/FL learning experience. Once considered the “be-all-and-end-all” of teaching a L2/FL, translation fell out of favour in the language teaching field with the rise of communicative approaches and has not recovered its importance since despite a recognition by certain authors as the “fifth skill” (Campbell, 2002; Carreres et al., 2017) apart from listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As a

final query, this article examines how to consider pedagogical translation in the design of didactic materials for S2/FL learners.

In the following sections, first a short literature review of these three themes is provided on: 1) the cultural aspects in language teaching, 2) the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with special reference to Goal #6 on “Clean water and sanitation,” and 3) the opportunities offered by pedagogical translation. This brief conceptual discussion will be followed by a description of the research and design process, the participant profile and the methodological design. Then, the data and the associated products will be presented with a corresponding discussion of the findings. After revealing the activities as part of the didactic proposal, the article will conclude with a short summary of the findings, accompanied by a consideration of the limitations and some ideas for future research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Perceptions of Mexico in the Foreign Press

Mexico’s global image is a complex tapestry woven from diverse threads of culture, politics, and societal issues. As Santillán and Zuart explain:

cinco de cada diez noticias aparecen publicadas en El País, los corresponsales firman el mayor número de informaciones y la Ciudad de México es el epicentro informativo. También predominan las temáticas de política interna por encima de las de política exterior, así como de los asuntos económicos y culturales, y la imagen que los diarios proyectan es la de un país peligroso, económicamente atractivo, culturalmente sólido y como un lugar de asilo. (Santillán & Zuart, 2021, p. 84)¹

Scholarly literature on the subject has grown over the last decades, especially, in regard to traditional media outlets, such as newspapers and television broadcasts. More recently emerging social media platforms have received far less attention (Rendón, 2016; Rendón & Johnson, 2015), despite the fact that these have a far greater role in creating an image.

The Internet is the medium through which most have met Mexico, followed by television. The media that have had the least impact are the newspapers and the radio. The telenovelas stand out as a television format referring to the knowledge of the spanish [sic] people of Mexico and their idiosyncrasies. (Gabino-Campos, 2018, p. 212)

A relatively equal thematic distribution of news items related to Mexico seems to be confirmed in a more specific analysis of the German press:

Unlike other foreign reporting analyses, its coverage does not concentrate solely on political issues (33%). A considerable amount of economic (15.5%) and cultural (23%) topics leads to a balanced image (60%), even though the reporting was tailored to a German domestic audience. (Cazzamatta & Garcia, 2021, p. 147) (see also, Cazzamatta, 2018, 2020)

Generally, and understandably, formative events, for example, election campaigns, have been of particular interest (Johnson et al., 2009; Rendón Gómez, 2016). However, common perceptions sometimes fixate on the country’s challenges with violence, drug cartels, and trafficking (Cazzamatta, 2018; Neder, 2016; Martínez & Aristizábal, 2019), on the one hand, and an idealized and often colourful yet reductionist representation of its official multiculturalism on the other (Gabino-Campos, 2018).

Thus, for example, in her analysis of three newspapers from El Paso, Texas, Neder confirms that:

A primera vista, los indicadores parecen ser una descripción inofensiva de los acontecimientos descritos, sin embargo, al analizarlos por medio de la semántica, pudimos observar que existe un trasfondo interpretativo recurrente. Es decir, el uso de significados inherentemente negativos conforma gradual e insistentemente una imagen negativa o desfavorable al relatar sucesos pertinentes al contexto expuesto por el medio. (Neder, 2016, p. 286)²

In contrast, certain elements of Mexico’s cultural heritage are perceived as positive, even if lacking a deeper understanding or a more critical stance. Gabino-Campos (2018) found some of these aspects in her research on Spaniard’s conceptualization of Mexicans:

The representative Mexican characters are the historical ones and those of fiction that are projected through television, such as Chavo del Ocho. Biodiversity, culture and above all customs stand out as attractive elements of the country. Gastronomy is an ambassador of the country. The tacos, the spicy, and the tequila, are indisputable identifiers of Mexico. Culture is better known for its festivities than for its customs. In their majority, the spanish [sic] people have little knowledge with respect to the main mexican [sic] cultural references. The singers have a positive impact on the image of Mexico. Mexican music from mariachi to Mexican pop is known in the country. Alejandro and Vicente Fernández are known, but also Juan Gabriel. (Gabino-Campos, 2018, p. 213)

It is interesting to note that in a series of features that characterize Mexican culture according to the Spanish, bitter-sweet or double-edged perceptions could be

¹ “Five out of ten news items published by *El País*, mostly written by correspondents and with Mexico City being at the epicentre of information. Furthermore, domestic politics take precedent over external affairs, just as economic affairs have priority over culture, and the image that daily newspapers project is a dangerous, but economically attractive and culturally solid country and a place of refuge.” (translation by the authors)

² “At first sight, the indicators seem to suggest an inoffensive

description of the events. However, following a semantic analysis, a recurring interpretative backdrop can be observed. Thus, through recounting incidents pertinent to the context, and exposed by the media, the use of inherently negative meanings gradually and persistently develops into a negative or unfavourable image.” (translated by the authors)

discerned.

While the mexican [sic] citizen recognize an important value for their selfesteem [sic] sports performance, for the spanish [sic] people, no, which is associated with the fact that mexican [sic] sports stands [sic] out in few disciplines and where they do, they are unimportant sports.

[...]

Mexico is considered an attractive tourist destination, but the negative perception of security affects that Spanish people do not see Mexico in a positive way, although it is important to note that Spanish are clear that security levels also depend on the region of Mexico. Not in all regions, insecurity is the same.

The mexican [sic] man is appreciated as a worker, honest, responsible and attentive. Its negative characteristics are associated with machismo, and excessive consumption of alcohol.

The mexican [sic] woman is considered for her physical features, and for having a positive attitude, being familiar and religious, although they also speak of negative attitudes, which were not listed by the Spanish people who pointed out this response. (Gabino-Campos, 2018, pp. 213-214)

This duality of “Mexico is wonderful but...” approach is perhaps most distinctive in foreign press representations. The question remains if this translates into the country’s cultural depiction in L2/FL materials available to those interested in learning Spanish in Mexico, or not. This will be discussed in the following section.

2.2. Representations of Mexico in Foreign Language Learning Materials

The importance of including contextualized cultural material in L2/FL teaching had been recognized by various authors (Ariza et al., 2019; Gómez et al., 2017; Quintana & Jackson, 2017). It has also been suggested that appropriately designed didactic material fosters the development of intercultural competence both among teachers and learners (Risager, 2018). Despite these assertions, the representation of Latin-American countries is rather scarce in official didactic materials, including textbooks, for the teaching and learning of S2/FL. This over-representation of Spanish culture, at the expense of excluding other regions, is all the more surprising given that in 2022 only 8.75% of Spanish native speakers resided in Spain – in contrast with over 25% living in Mexico (Statista, n.d.).

It is worth noting, however, that inequality in terms of representation also exists among Spanish-speaking Latin-American countries, as Andrade affirms:

[...] los países latinoamericanos, en cambio, son abordados en menor medida, y con una especie de jerarquía en su mención, resaltando, por lo general, a los mismos países (México, Argentina, Chile, Nicaragua, Perú, Venezuela) y excluyendo a otros (Paraguay, Uruguay,

República Dominicana, El Salvador, Panamá). Esto puede generar el posible problema de que los estudiantes terminen sin una visión total del mundo hispano. (Andrade, 2011, p. 35)³

In the absence of printed material, S2/FL teachers in Mexico and Mexican teachers abroad (Basurto & Sánchez, 2019; Cruz & Saracho, 2016; Garzelli et al., 2018) often resort to designing their own material or generating intercultural exchange conversations if they wish to include cultural elements in their classes. These resources include ludic activities based on traditional customs (Marzin et al., 2023), conversations among a group of friends in practical situations arriving in and getting around Mexico City (Cruz & Saracho, 2016), the use of narratives (Olivar, 2019) and literature in teaching S2/FL (Coto & Stewart, 2017; Delgadillo, 2023; Lee, 2016; Rubio, 2019). What seems to be missing from these proposals is any reference to current realities, social and environmental issues, or any reference to sustainable development, the topic of the following sub-section.

2.3. Teaching and Learning for Sustainable Development

Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was endorsed by the United Nations in 2015. This ambitious plan defined seventeen Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved by 2030, which include:

No poverty (SDG 1), Zero hunger (SDG 2), Good health and well-being (SDG 3), Quality education (SDG 4), Gender equality (SDG 5), Clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), Affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), Industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9), Reduced inequalities (SDG 10), Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), Climate action (SDG 13), Life below water (SDG 14), Life on land (SDG 15), Peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16), and Partnerships for the goals (SDG 17).

Achieving these goals would be difficult to conceive without their integration into the educational framework at various levels, and they have received some attention globally (Shulla et al., 2020) and in Latin-America as well (Pedraja-Rejas et al., 2023), with a special focus on tertiary education (Amoros Molina et al., 2023; Leal Filho et al., 2023; Serafini et al., 2022).

As far as L2/FL teaching is concerned, in their review of the available literature on SDG in English as a foreign language (EFL) students’ learning, Astawa along with her colleagues (2024) identified three findings worth mentioning. First, the number of publications on the subject was on a slow but steady increase during the period 2018-2022. Second, they observe ways in which SDG can be integrated into the learning process: through the content of the material designed for these purposes (e.g.,

Salvador and Panama). This could lead to a possible problem whereby the students end up lacking a complete vision of the Spanish-speaking world.” (translation by the authors)

³ “[...] Latin-American countries are less represented. An apparent hierarchy exists, and the same countries are generally mentioned (Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Nicaragua, Peru and Venezuela), excluding others (Paraguay, Uruguay, the Dominican Republic, El

as a discussion topic) or the focus of a project. Finally, all the publications they reviewed suggested that there was a “a positive effect of involving SDGs in the EFL context towards students’ learning achievement, environmental awareness, global citizen values, as well as students’ levels of self-norms, beliefs, and self-value” (Astawa et al., 2024, p. 9).

The interest of this article lies in their second finding, namely, the ways in which these issues can be incorporated into material design. Given that the didactic proposal presented here is based on pedagogical translation, the concept merits a brief introduction, provided in the upcoming section.

2.4. Pedagogical Translation

The idea that translation is an artificial activity that cannot be aligned with communicative language teaching approaches and that it interferes with L2/FL learning (Carreres et al., 2006). This could be explained by the tendency to reduce translation to reading and writing skills within the L2/FL field, even if translation itself can be carried out in a much broader range of modalities, including mixed modes (García-Medall, 2001). According to another prevailing belief, translation impedes the acquisition of L2/FL, because it causes interference from the mother tongue. Despite all these negative views, interest in applying translation in the L2/FL classroom has increased over the last decades, as far back as the publication of Alan Duff’s seminal resource book for EFL teachers *Translation* in 1989. Twenty years later, the “translational turn” (Cook, 2010) generated new research in areas where translation and L2/FL teaching and learning coincide.

Pedagogical translation, simply defined as using translation for the purposes of L2/FL teaching and learning, emerged as a result, to demonstrate how translation can aid the L2/FL acquisition process by offering learning strategies for teachers and learners alike (González-Davies, 2004, 2018; González & Scott-Tennent, 2009; Hurtado, 1988; Martínez Ruiz & Zimányi, 2021). Or, as Pintado-Gutiérrez (2018) states, it refers to “translation activities and tasks that are included in FL teaching and learning” and which “enhance the development of specific language and translating skills” (p. 16). The most recent contributions on the subjects owe it to their predecessors to propose that translation can be coupled with various teaching approaches, including task-based instruction (TBI) or project-based learning (PBL), communicative approaches or content and language integrated learning (CLIL). These proposals are based on conceptualizing translation as communication (House, 2015), which, in turn, implies that carrying out translation cannot hinder the teaching and learning of a L2/FL (Leonardi, 2011; Pintado-Gutiérrez, 2018).

Once the key concepts have been defined, now the methodological design will be explained.

3. Methodology

The circumstances of how this project was carried out greatly determined its methodological design. The

proposal was submitted for the research summer school for undergraduate students at the University of Guanajuato, Mexico (2024), reflecting the project coordinator’s research interests in pedagogical translation and the possible use of a L2/FL teaching context to raise awareness about sustainable development. Once the project had been accepted, those interested in participating could sign up to become part of the team. As it happens, apart from students of the BA in Teaching Spanish as a Second Language of the same university, applications were also received from the Université de Caen, in Normandy, France. This opened the prospect to enrich the study with collaboration from intercultural perspectives without compromising the original aim: design didactic material applying pedagogical translation with the objective of raising awareness about the Sustainable Development Goal #6 on “Clean water and sanitation” in the Spanish as a foreign language classroom – all based on preliminary research on related subjects.

This way, the students were guided through a brief action research project, from the identification of the problem, through a design and implementation of a plan for improvement, analysis of the intervention, reflection and redefining the problem. This method is often used in teacher training (Carr & Kemmis, 1988; Elliott, 2000; Latorre, 2003; Suárez, 2002) and education as well as in translator training (Hatim, 2001; Kiraly, 2000; Williams & Chesterman, 2014). In the current project, and due to the temporal limitations of the research summer school, the focus was on identifying the problem through various sub-studies that culminated in a didactic proposal in the form of material design (McGrath, 2016; Tomlinson, 2014; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2018), while the implementation and analysis would need to form part of a future publication.

Considering the conceptual and methodological framework as well as the young researchers’ profile, during the initial phase, the students conducted an enquiry on the perception of Mexico in the foreign press as well as the representation of Mexican culture in S2/FL didactic material. In order to have a deeper understanding of translation (although most of them had had some previous experience), the group also rendered an informative manual on water consumption from Spanish into English (Gobierno del Estado de Guanajuato, 2024), focusing on the translation problems and solutions. This exercise also provided an opportunity to familiarize themselves with topics related to SDG #6 “Clear water and sanitation.” In addition, the team visited various water reservoirs close to Guanajuato town to gain a deeper insight into the water shortages that had negatively affected the town and were jeopardizing the availability of water resources. Finally, a didactic proposal was prepared containing a series of activities using pedagogical translation and raising awareness about issues related to water.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Perceptions of Mexico in the French Press

It is often believed that the only way in which Mexico is portrayed before the world is through the culture of

violence, drug cartels and trafficking, which ends by giving a negative impression to foreigners. But are these the only topics being discussed? To understand how foreigners see Mexico, four traditional newspapers from France, all with different political orientations, were studied during the period of January-June 2024. This section reports on the finding about Mexico's perception in *La Libération*, *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, and *La Croix*.

Following a bottom-up manual coding of the topics by two young researchers, the following seven categories across the four outlets were identified (listed in an alphabetical order):

- Economy and politics: reporting events regarding economic and political issues aside of the national

elections

- Elections: news related to the national elections in Mexico
- Environmental issues and ecology: mainly about serious draughts affecting the country
- Immigration; primarily reporting on immigrants from Central America traversing through Mexico and arriving in the USA
- Incidents: such as traffic accidents and incidents.
- Society: reporting various themes such as arts, social events, sports, society, etc.
- Violence: entries about violent events including drug trafficking and “narco-culture”



Figure 1. Color-coded categories based on articles on issues related to Mexico found in the French Press between January and June 2024.

From January to the end of June 2024, the newspaper *La Libération* shared six entries regarding national elections, reported five times environmental and ecology issues, published four times about violence and twice about violence during the national election campaigns.

Three entries about US-Mexican immigration were written during this period, and two entries about sports, one about social health and one more about social events were published falling into the society category.

As for *Le Monde*, this newspaper reported 21 times

about elections and seven times about violence during the elections, as well as other social and environmental issues. Regarding politics, there were six entries about international politics and the same number about national politics. The least published topics were violence, with four entries, culture with just two articles, and national economy with two entries.

The most reported topic in *Le Figaro* was violence, with 26 entries, followed by violence during the national election process (13 entries). Elections and sports were reported ten times, while environmental issues and US immigration headlined in six instances. The least reported topic was incidents, with only four entries since January.

Finally, *La Croix* reported mainly on the national elections (23 entries), followed by environmental issues (seven) and violence (5). Regarding society, this newspaper published four times each on religion, social events, and international politics in connection with Mexico. The outlet only reported three times on violence during the elections; a number surprisingly low compared to the other newspapers. National politics and US immigration had the lowest numbers in this newspaper with just one entry per topic.

Having analysed the themes and the number of entries in each media source, it was interesting to observe that, even though that there was a perceivable bias towards violence with a high number of publications, it was not the only topic as expected. Thus, there appears to be a wider thematic variety than certain authors would suggest. However, given the fact that it was a “special” year due to the elections, violence still features predominantly among the entries in all four newspapers, which to some extent coincides with the findings of previous studies.

4.2. Representations of Mexico in Spanish as a Foreign Language Learning Materials

Having explored how Mexico is portrayed in the news abroad, the attention turned to how Mexico and Mexican culture are conveyed in language teaching materials. In the field of L2/FL teaching, the concept of “social representations” defined as “une forme de connaissance, socialement élaborée et partagée, ayant une visée pratique et concourant à la construction d’une réalité commune à un ensemble social” (Jodelet, 1989, p. 54). The author continues on to say that “On reconnaît généralement que les représentations sociales, en tant que systèmes d’interprétation régissant notre relation au monde et aux autres, orientent et organisent les conduites et les communications sociales”⁴ (idem.). Thus, representations as socially construed meanings influence our way of understanding the world around us and influence our behaviour and social communication.

The construction of representations illustrates the crucial role played by learners’ images of the second or foreign languages they study, as of the speakers and the countries where they are spoken. One of the essential characteristics of these representations is their flexibility

4 “a form of knowledge, socially elaborated and shared, with a practical aim that contributes to the construction of a reality shared by a common group” and “It is generally recognized that social representations, as systems of interpretation regulating our

and fluid nature, and how they are adapted according to the learners’ perspective, previous knowledge, their proximity to the L2/FL culture, among other factors (Castelloti & Moore, 2002). It is easy to perpetuate stereotypes in the language classroom, especially when there is little representation of a country and its speakers. Based on analysing three different manuals and a series of compendia of S2/FL material for teachers, this appears to be the case of Mexico.

The activities in the manuals with a focus on Mexican culture mostly comprised the following four topics: food, music, monuments and biographies of historical characters. Regarding food, the activities focused on specific ingredients of the Mexican diet, such as beans, tortillas and chili peppers. The majority of the exercises that involved music were of the fill-in-the-gaps type, where learners have to complete the lyrics of a traditional Mexican song. Similarly, there was a lack of variety in terms of historical buildings, limited to mentioning the most representative monuments, above all, pyramids, only in some of the material revised. The biographies consist mostly of poets and renowned artists. Out of three compendiums (with 150 pages each), only about seven activities had any Mexican-related content; the rest were focused on Spain and its dialects, although they acknowledge the difference between certain linguistic variations of Spanish from Europe and America, such as the words “carro” and “coche.”

These observations seem to confirm the findings of the available literature discussed above, whereby, among the 21 countries where Spanish is recognized as a native, official or first language, there is only one “Hispanic” culture represented in most of the language teaching materials. This has a homogenizing effect on the language and invalidates the existence of linguistic varieties belonging to the other countries (Hortiguera, 2011). The lack of representation of Mexico in Spanish as a foreign language teaching presents both a challenge and an opportunity for teachers to explore new areas and create content that reflect culture beyond folklore (Mignolo, 1996) with a wider range of content, objectives and materials.

Considering the above, in the following section, a series of activities will be presented, as a didactic proposal to integrate sustainable development and pedagogical translation in S2/FL teaching and learning.

5. A didactic proposal: Integrating local issues, sustainable development goals and pedagogical translation in Spanish as a foreign language material design

As mentioned before, the lack of material contextualized in Mexico represents an opportunity for teachers to create alternatives, not only to portray culture, but also to integrate new competences for language

relationships with the world and others, guide and organize social behaviour and communication.” (translated by the authors)

learners. In addition to the four skills promoted in L2/FL (learning, speaking, listening, reading and writing), translation has been identified as a potential fifth skill that students can develop to acquire the L2/FL (Campbell, 2002). Pedagogical translation, therefore, is “not only an aim but a way of learning” (Petrocchi, 2014, p. 96). Along with culture and contextualization, there are global issues that need to be addressed in general education and language teaching, which include environmental concerns. One of the most important, given the latest droughts and lack of access to running water around the world, is the preservation and sanitization of water.

In 2024, Mexico suffered one of its biggest environmental challenges in the recent decades: a severe drought that affected 89.58% of the country according to Mexican National Water Commission, CONAGUA. In central Mexico, specifically in the State of Guanajuato, this drought resulted in water shortages in all 46 municipalities, left over 1560 local schools without running water, and resulted in the loss of three dams and reservoirs (Jiménez & Pérez, 2024). Considering this scenario, raising awareness on the importance of water preservation became a topic of interest for all sectors, including (language) teaching.

With the aim of showing the relevance of water preservation and its presence on the Mexican culture and folklore, a short compendium of activities was created to implement as material for S2/FL teaching. The design of these activities focused on the addition of the fifth skill, translation, and vocabulary related to water. These encompassed flora and fauna directly associated and depending on water resources in Mexico, actions to preserve water at home and phrases and proverbs on Mexican jargon associated with water.

5.1. Proposal 1: Arriving in Xochimilco

This activity aims to:

- Share knowledge about axolotls and their natural habitat: rivers in Mexico.
- Challenge students' abilities to translate, with their available vocabulary repertoire, and produce different sentences. It also raises awareness about the concept of equivalence in translation.

The activity consists of a board game (Appendix 1), which includes five game pieces in the shape of axolotls and a set of 24 cards with information about these animals and their natural habitat. The game has 10 squares marked; a student will randomly select one of the cards included that all the players will translate into Spanish. The student with the most accurate translation will get to move its game pieces an extra square. The player who gets to Square #10 first wins the game.

After each round there is a moment for the students to share their translation, which appropriate feedback from the teacher.

5.2. Proposal 2: Broken telephone / Chinese whispers + Argue as the mayor

The objective of this activity (Appendix 2) is for foreign students to learn about some common cultural practices for water preservation in Mexico. They will

receive a piece of paper with a sentence that explains one of these techniques in English, which the students will translate into Spanish and share their translation with a classmate, who will translate the sentence back into English and pass it on to the next classmate.

The activity is meant to be played in teams of at least 3 people, and, by the end of the translation process, the final sentence will be compared to the original.

The differences in the translations, whether caused by misunderstandings or confusion regarding grammar/vocabulary in the target language will be spotted at this stage, allowing for feedback.

5.3. Proposal 3:

This activity (Appendix 3) aims to share cultural content through proverbs in Spanish popularly used in Mexico through finding the equivalent (focused on meaning) in the students' target language. The activity focuses on semantics, more than grammar structures, to keep students from doing literal translation and make them pay close attention to meaning instead.

6. Conclusion

The design of materials for language teaching is a complex activity that must be carefully considered. This study suggested three stages prior to contextualized activity creation: researching how the set country/region/ is perceived by the learners, including what they know and how much access to information they have regarding the country (or countries) where the L2/FL is spoken; examining existing material, what can be used and what needs to be improved/added, and last but not least, what skills and extra features/topics the teacher wants students to learn or the learners themselves are interested in. Based on this preparation, and with the explicit aim of including issues related to SDG #6 on “Clean water and sanitation” in the content and pedagogical translation as a method, we set out to design various activities and tasks, three of which we briefly presented. An apparent limitation of the present article is the lack of empirical evidence on the application of these activities, an aspect to be pondered in the future.

As a final reflection, we consider that the teaching of a language should contemplate the culture(s) and current situations lived in the L2/FL country (or countries) to give a more accurate social representation of the language and its speakers. In addition, the implementation of translation as a fifth skill in the classroom improves the understanding of the L2/FL language through a comparison with the L1 and, as with the main four skills, can be – and should be – adapted to cultural content. Language learning activities and materials can be seen as spaces to create and implement environmental solutions that generate more sustainable lifestyles and strengthen resilience to climate change.

Krisztina Zimányi (Corresponding Author) is a full-time associate professor at the Department of Languages, University of Guanajuato, Mexico where she is involved in second language teacher training and the promotion of translation studies. She has an MA in English Language

and Literature from Eötvös Loránd University of Sciences, Budapest and an MPhil in Anglo-Irish Literature from the University of Dublin, Trinity College. She graduated with an MA in Translation Studies from Dublin City University, where she also completed her PhD on Mental Health Interpreting. Her research interests include translator training, translator and interpreter ethics, intersemiotic translation, pedagogical translation as well as discourse and multimodal analysis.

Email: krisztina@ugto.mx

Denisse Alejandra Vargas Montiel is a graduate of the BA in Teaching English and currently studies the BA in Teaching Spanish as a Second Language at the University of Guanajuato. Her interests include translation, pedagogical translation, activity design and applied linguistics, mainly psycholinguistics and second language acquisition.

Email: da.vargasmontiel@ugto.mx

Lydia Pereira Carneiro is currently studying Sciences of Language at the University of Caen Normandy. Her interests include linguistics, sign language, speech therapy and learning languages such as Spanish, Portuguese and English.

Email: lydia.crn@gmail.com

Robin Dominique Jean Pitte is currently studying Foreign Languages at the University of Caen Normandy. He is in his third year of post-baccalaureate studies. He has a keen interest in languages, including English, Spanish and Italian.

Email: robin.pitte@etu.unicaen.fr

Renata Ayala Ciprés is currently studying the BA in Teaching Spanish as a Second Language at the University of Guanajuato. Her interests include learning languages such as Japanese and English.

Email: r.avalacipres@ugto.mx

Valeria Tinúviel Escamilla García is currently studying the BA in Teaching Spanish as a Second Language at the University of Guanajuato. Her interests include learning languages such as English, Italian and a little bit of Japanese (and sometimes French).

Email: vt.escamillagarcia@ugto.mx

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Conflict of Interest

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Appendix 1: Arriving in Xochimilco

Arriving in Xochimilco!

Nivel de competencia: B2 Intermedio Avanzado

Objetivo de la actividad: Desarrollar y reforzar las habilidades de traducción y el reconocimiento de vocabulario en dos idiomas a través de una dinámica de juego competitivo e interactivo, mientras aprenden datos curiosos del ajolote mexicano.

Concepto introducido:

- **Mejorar la Precisión en la Traducción:** Fomentar la capacidad de los estudiantes para traducir palabras y frases de manera precisa y correcta.
- **Ampliar el Vocabulario:** Aumentar el conocimiento de palabras y frases en dos idiomas, facilitando su uso en contextos adecuados.
- **Estimular la Competitividad Saludable:** Motivar a los estudiantes a participar activamente y esforzarse por lograr la traducción más acertada.
- **Fomentar la Atención y la Concentración:** Desarrollar la habilidad de los estudiantes para prestar atención a los detalles y concentrarse en las tareas de traducción.
- **Promover el Aprendizaje Colaborativo:** Crear un ambiente en el que los estudiantes puedan aprender unos de otros, compartiendo y discutiendo sus traducciones.
- **Diversidad cultural:** Mientras los estudiantes refuerzan sus habilidades de traducción, aprenderán sobre una parte importante de la cultura mexicana: *El ajolote mexicano*.

Contexto de la clase: Clase de 10 alumnos en adelante, de habla inglesa como primera lengua.

Equipo necesario: Material didáctico “*Arriving in Xochimilco!*”, papel y lápiz/pluma, diccionario bilingüe o celular.

Instrucciones del material didáctico: Ya sea en parejas o en equipos, los estudiantes harán uso del material didáctico: *Arriving in Xochimilco!* De manera general se tomará una tarjeta del montón. Por grupo los estudiantes en conjunto escribirán su traducción de la tarjeta en un papel o en su celular. Tienen un tiempo limitado (por ejemplo, 1 minuto) para escribir la traducción. Los estudiantes compartirán sus traducciones en voz alta. En forma de votación, los estudiantes decidirán cual es la traducción más acertada (pueden usar un diccionario o consultar al profesor si hay dudas). El grupo con la mejor traducción gana un punto. El juego continúa hasta que un estudiante hasta que un grupo reúna los 10 puntos necesarios para llegar a Xochimilco. Ese grupo será considerado el ganador.

Etapa 1

Instrucciones: Los estudiantes en grupos, tomarán su turno para sacar una tarjeta del montón y leerán la tarjeta del montón. Por grupo escribirán su traducción de la frase en la tarjeta teniendo un tiempo limitado. Al finalizar todos los equipos compartirán su traducción y por medio de votación decidirán cual es la mejor para ganar el punto. El juego terminara cuando el primer equipo reúna 10 puntos.

Papel del profesor: El profesor se encargará de que se mantenga el orden en el grupo y resolverá dudas en caso de que haya. Mientras el juego está en pie, el profesor supervisará las partidas.

Papel del estudiante: Los estudiantes en grupos, tomarán su turno para sacar una tarjeta del montón y leerán la tarjeta del montón. Por grupo escribirán su traducción de la frase en la tarjeta teniendo un tiempo limitado. Al finalizar todos los equipos compartirán su traducción y por medio de votación decidirán cual es la mejor para ganar el punto. El juego terminara cuando el primer equipo reúna 10 puntos. En caso de haber dudas pedirán ayuda al profesor o la resolverán entre ellos.

Conclusión

Instrucciones: El profesor supervisará que todas las partidas hayan concluido y recapitulará los puntos claves aprendidos durante la actividad y hará retroalimentación de todas las traducciones mientras responde las dudas de los estudiantes.

Instrucciones del profesor: El profesor supervisará que todas las partidas hayan concluido y recapitulará los puntos claves aprendidos durante la actividad y hará retroalimentación de todas las traducciones mientras responde las dudas de los estudiantes y comparte las traducciones correctas del juego.

Instrucciones del estudiante: Los estudiantes escucharán la retroalimentación del profesor y harán preguntas en caso de que tengan dudas.

**Arrive to
Xochimilco!**

game pieces

<p>Axolotls have many eye colors</p>	<p>Axolotls have an amazing ability to regenerate their body parts</p>	<p>Axolotls can change their regular cells into stem cells</p>	<p>They are resistant to cancer</p>
<p>Axolotls can regrow parts of their brain</p>	<p>Axolotls have almost no bones</p>	<p>The axolotl is sometimes called the "Mexican walking fish"</p>	<p>Axolotls do not go through a full metamorphosis</p>

<p>Axolotls look like they're always shyly smiling</p> 	<p>Axolotls will "beg" for food when they see you</p> 	<p>Axolotl genomes are ten times larger than ours</p> 	<p>Axolotls can squeak</p> 
<p>Axolotls may eat their aquarium buddies</p> 	<p>Axolotls are like little kids: They put everything in their mouth</p> 	<p>Axolotls can eat with no teeth</p> 	<p>Axolotls can't blink</p> 

<p>Wild axolotls are critically endangered</p> 	<p>The axolotl was once a god</p> 	<p>Axolotls guided the ancient Aztecs to the land of the dead</p> 	<p>The Aztecs used to eat axolotls</p> 
<p>Axolotls come in lots of colors</p> 	<p>You can't take them out of water</p> 	<p>Axolotls can still use their lungs to breathe air</p> 	<p>They live a long time</p> 

Appendix 2: Broken telephone / Chinese whispers

¿Cómo cuidamos el agua?

Nivel de competencia: A2 – B1

Objetivo de la actividad: Que los estudiantes sean capaces de identificar cómo cuidan el agua en sus países y cómo ellos la cuidarían, al igual que practicar sus métodos de traducción incluyendo su lengua materna.

Concepto introducido: Práctica del gerundio y condicional en español.

Contexto de la clase: 10 alumnos adultos de diversas culturas y orígenes de entre los 18 a 26 años. Todos tienen en común el inglés.

Equipo necesario: Televisión/ proyector, computadora, pizarrón, plumones, material (papeles traídos por el profesor)

Sources:

<https://www.gob.mx/profeco/es/articulos/cierra-la-llave-cuida-el-agua?idiom=es#:~:text=>

https://youtu.be/70I1ItWnRQw?si=xAy5r5oZo_JUVwGI

Etapa 1: Importancia del cuidado del agua

Instrucciones

Los estudiantes responderán las preguntas con el fin de adentrarse en el tema del cuidado del agua.

Después, verán un video en donde se habla del uso del agua en el planeta. Una vez terminado el video, se les preguntará a los alumnos si sabían de esto y las pequeñas formas en las que podemos ayudar. (Esta fase se desarrollará de acuerdo a la apertura de los alumnos)

Papel del profesor: El maestro presentará a los alumnos una serie de preguntas, las cuales las dirá de manera oral.

Preguntas:

- ¿crees que el agua es importante? ¿Por qué?
- En tu país, ¿hacen algo para cuidar el agua? ¿Qué cosas?
- ¿Qué cosas haces tú para cuidar el agua?
- ¿Qué cosas te gustaría hacer para cuidar el agua?

Poner el video y hacer preguntas reactivas a los alumnos

	<p>Papel del estudiante: El estudiante responderá a las preguntas de manera oral si el profesor se lo indica, mientras otros compañeros estén hablando, será un receptor pasivo y escuchará con atención.</p> <p>Verán el video y responderán las preguntas que el profesor les vaya preguntando. En caso de que no sean preguntados, escucharán con atención.</p>
<p>Etapa 2: ¿Cómo cuidan el agua en México? Teléfono descompuesto</p>	
<p>Instrucciones</p> <p>El profesor separará al grupo en 2 equipos de 5 personas. A un miembro de los dos equipos se le dará una forma en la que los mexicanos cuidan el agua (en inglés), y ellos tendrán que decirla en español a sus compañeros en forma de teléfono descompuesto. La última persona a la que se le diga pasará al pizarrón a escribir. Los 5 pasarán a escribir, así como los 5 serán los que dirán y traducirán las formas de cuidar el agua.</p>	<p>Papel del profesor: El profesor controlará la actividad y monitoreará a los alumnos.</p>
<p>Etapa 3: Post lectura</p>	
<p>Instrucciones</p> <p>Una vez concluida la actividad, se compararán las respuestas de los alumnos en el pizarrón para ver cómo el otro equipo la tradujo y cuál es la más “correcta”. Después, los alumnos dirán cuál de estas acciones ellos realizan en sus casas y cuáles les gustaría realizar.</p>	<p>Papel del profesor: El profesor les pedirá a los alumnos que comparen sus respuestas en grupo con las del otro equipo y corregirá de ser necesario. Al equipo “ganador” les dará una paleta/ dulce. Y después les pedirá a los alumnos que les digan cuáles acciones hacen ellos.</p> <p>Papel del alumno: comparar las respuestas del otro equipo y corregir si es necesario. Con los plumones identificar cuáles realizan en sus casas/ ciudades y cuáles les gustaría realizar.</p>

Conclusión: ¿Qué harías si fueras alcalde de tu ciudad?	
<p>Instrucciones</p> <p>De forma escrita, los alumnos escribirán un pequeño texto en donde narren la forma en la que cuidarían el agua si fueran alcaldes de la ciudad. Después la leerán al grupo y compararán respuestas.</p>	<p>Papel del profesor: El profesor estará a cargo de apoyar la reflexión de los estudiantes y los escuchará y corregirá en caso de que tenga que hacerlo.</p>
	<p>Papel del alumno: Escribirán y reflexionarán sobre el cuidado del agua y lo que harían siendo alcaldes. Compartirán su reflexión al grupo y escucharán las demás opciones de sus compañeros.</p>

2DA ACTIVIDAD (TELÉFONO DESCOMPUESTO)

INSTRUCCIONES: El profesor separará al grupo en 2 equipos de 5 personas. A un miembro de los dos equipos se le dará una forma en la que los mexicanos cuidan el agua (en inglés), y ellos tendrán que decirlo en español a sus compañeros en forma de teléfono descompuesto. La última persona a la que se le diga pasará al pizarrón a escribir. Los 5 pasarán a escribir, así como los 5 serán los que dirán y traducirán las formas de cuidar el agua.

Una vez concluida la actividad, se compararán las respuestas de los alumnos en el pizarrón para ver cómo el otro equipo la tradujo y cuál es la más "correcta". Después, los alumnos dirán cuál de estas acciones ellos realizan en sus casas y cuáles les gustaría realizar.

Appendix 3

Dichos y refranes en español.

Nivel: B1-B2 Habilidades: comprensión lectora y producción escrita

1. Lee los siguientes dichos y refranes y sus significados.

Selecciona 3 y busca frases con significados similares en tu idioma nativo.



- El muerto al pozo y el vivo al gozo = Recuperarse de las pérdidas es importante
- A río revuelto ganancia de pescadores = aprende a ver las ventajas aún en las malas situaciones.
- Agua que no has de beber déjala correr = no te meta en asuntos que no te importan.
- Camarón que se duerme se lo lleva la corriente = No te distraigas, cuida lo importante.
- Cuando el río suena es porque agua lleva = Si se dicen cosas de alguien, es por algo.
- Cuando un barco se hunde las primeras en huir son las ratas = Las personas que no valen la pena te abandonan en situaciones difíciles.
- Debajo del agua mansa está la peor corriente = Las personas que más amables parecen, son las más peligrosas.
- Viejo el mar y todavía hace olas = la edad no es importante para hacer cosas.
- Nunca digas 'De esta agua no beberé' - No digas que algo nunca te pasará.
- Llevar/traer agua para tu molino - aprovecharse de una situación para tu beneficio.



- Agua de mayo, pan para todo el año - un periodo de abundancia da resultados todo el año
- Agua pasada no mueve molino - no lamentarse por una oportunidad pasada
- Ni firmes carta que no leas ni bebas agua que no veas - debes tener cuidado en todo momento
- Después de los años mil, vuelven las aguas a su carril - con el tiempo todo toma su lugar.

Dicho o refrán en tu L1

- _____
- _____
- _____

Significado (en español):

- _____
- _____
- _____

2. Lee el siguiente texto. Identifica los dichos/refranes y explica su significado en el texto.

Ayer me encontré a Pedro, al fin regresó al pueblo después de años trabajando fuera. Estaba muy triste, me contó que se separó de su mujer porque le fue infiel con su compadre, su mejor amigo Juan, ya sabes, debajo del agua mansa está la peor corriente. Mientras el pobre Pedro se mataba trabajando para mandarle dinero a su esposa, María jalaba agua para su molino y se construyó una casita para vivir con el compadre. Ya lo decían los chismosos del pueblo, que ella se veía con Juan, y cuando el río suena es porque agua lleva. Después, Pedro tuvo problemas en el trabajo, ya no tenía dinero para mandarle a María, y, como cuando el barco se hunde las primeras en huir son las ratas, la mujer aprovechó para decirle que lo dejaba. Yo le digo a Pedro que ya mejor ni piense en esa mala mujer y aquel mal amigo; al fin y al cabo, a río revuelto ganancia de pescadores. Que se consiga un nuevo trabajo, una nueva novia; lo invité por una cerveza, total, el muerto al pozo y el vivo al gozo, ¿o no? Ya después ni se va a acordar, después de los años mil, vuelven las aguas a su carril.

3. Imagina que tu eres el narrador de la historia anterior y vas a contarle a tu amigo/a lo sucedido. Reescribe el texto anterior narrando lo sucedido sin usar los dichos/refranes. En su lugar usa el significado que les diste. (L1/Esp)

Dichos y refranes en español

Nivel de competencia: B1 – B2

Objetivo de la actividad: Los estudiantes serán capaces de leer, interpretar y parafrasear los dichos y refranes presentados en español así como sus significados.

Concepto introducido: Lenguaje connotativo y denotativo; uso del presente perfecto simple vs imperfecto y sus diferencias semánticas.

Contexto de la clase: Estudiantes de español como segunda lengua edades 15 en adelante.

Equipo necesario: Worksheet, dispositivo con acceso a internet.

Etapa 1: Dichos y refranes de México y España

Instrucciones

Los estudiantes leerán los dichos y refranes, así como su significado.

Para esta actividad es necesario tener un dispositivo con acceso a internet para consultar vocabulario desconocido.

Posteriormente, buscará refranes o dichos en su L1 que denoten el mismo significado (aunque no tenga que ver con el agua). Será necesario que el estudiante escriba dichas frases en su idioma nativo y traducirla al español.

Papel del profesor: El profesor presentará el worksheet (impreso, en formato digital o proyectado), posteriormente, dirigirá la lectura. El profesor apoyará a los estudiantes con vocabulario desconocido.

Después, el profesor apoyará con la aclaración de significados.

Papel del estudiante: El estudiante leerá las frases en la actividad 1 así como su significado, e intuirá la relación detrás de ellas.

Deberá encontrar en su L1 frases o dichos que tengan el mismo significado (o similar) que las presentadas en su idioma nativo. Para esta parte de la actividad, deberá escribirlo en su lengua nativa y después traducirla al español; para esta parte, puede apoyarse de recursos en línea o del profesor para encontrar las palabras adecuadas.

Etapa 2: Los dichos en uso

Instrucciones

En parejas o individualmente, los estudiantes leerán el texto corto que se presenta. Será necesario identificar con un color los verbos en pretérito

Papel del profesor: El profesor controlará la actividad y monitoreará a los alumnos.

Deberá verificar o corregir los verbos identificados por los alumnos, así como aclarar dudas.

Posteriormente, deberá dirigir tanto la lectura del

<p>perfecto simple, y con otro el pretérito imperfecto.</p> <p>Después, deberá identificar los dichos o frases dentro del texto y deducir cuál es el significado que tiene en la historia.</p> <p>Para la revisión de la actividad, los estudiantes escribirán en el pizarrón los verbos que identificaron.</p> <p>La segunda parte de la revisión consistirá en lectura en voz alta del texto y una lluvia de ideas sobre los significados que encontraron de los dichos con respecto a la historia.</p>	<p>texto como la lluvia de ideas, promoviendo la interacción del grupo y resolviendo posibles dudas.</p>
<p>Etapa 3: Chisme aclarado</p>	
<p>Instrucciones</p> <p>Los estudiantes deberán hacer traducción intralingüística (parfraseo) explicitando los significados que le dieron a los dichos y refranes dentro de la actividad por medio de una narración de los eventos reportados en el texto de la actividad 2.</p>	<p>Papel del profesor: El profesor apoyará a los estudiantes con la redacción de su texto.</p> <hr/> <p>Papel del alumno: Deberán parafrasear el texto de la actividad 2 como si contaran la anécdota a uno de sus amigos/familiares/etc. sin usar los dichos; en su lugar, deberán escribir el significado que le han atribuido a los dichos y refranes. El estudiante es libre de usar los recursos lingüísticos a su disposición para transmitir el mensaje.</p>