

SPEAKING IN AN INTERCULTURAL CONTEXT: REFLECTIONS ON ASSESSMENT

BRODERSEN, Lucas Matías

Universidad Nacional del Sur - lubroder@hotmail.com

ESPINOSA, Gonzalo Eduardo

Universidad Nacional del Comahue / CONICET - gonzaedward@hotmail.com

Abstract

When assessing EFL students in comparison to a framework based on native-like proficiency, speaking is a controversial issue to be tested in a world where most speakers of English are non-natives. In these contexts, the native-like ability has been recently questioned towards an intercultural ultimate goal, given that many aspects of the speaking skill, which reflects characteristics of one's culture, do not interfere in communicative situations (Byram 1997, 2009, Corbett 2003, Liddicoat & Scarino 2013). This suggests that alternative methods and theoretical frameworks for assessing (Cf. Luoma 2004), where continuous assessment is seen as a contributor to learning, can shed some light on how to test students' speaking skills when English is spoken as a lingua franca. Without neglecting many of the aspects of more traditional methods, we will develop and suggest practical tools for assessing speaking through an intercultural approach in university EFL courses in Argentina. We will reflect on the different ways to assess speaking, bearing in mind an intercultural speaker and the social functions of the language.

Keywords

Interculturality - ELT - assessing - speaking - intelligibility

1. Introduction

Since the beginnings of English Language Teaching (ELT), most English as a Foreign Language (EFL) materials and methods have been mainly concerned with the development and improvement of the four well-known macro-skills (reading - listening - speaking - writing), seeking for "native-like proficiency". That is, the overall goal was that non-native speakers of English had to sound as native-like as possible. In addition, many of these approaches considered EFL learners "imperfect" speakers, even though many students were capable of reaching a high mastery of the Foreign Language (FL). More recently, there has been a change of paradigms as regards the ultimate goal of EFL, and those traditional approaches are being questioned, since experience has shown that seeking for a native speaker as a model and as an ultimate goal is almost an impossible target for the EFL learner. Moreover, the ELT field has also started to regard culture as an essential aspect that needs to be developed along with the four afore-mentioned skills (Byram 1997, 2009, Corbett 2003, Coperias Aguilar 2007, Liddicoat & Scarino 2013).

The adoption of an intercultural perspective, then, implies that culture needs to be integrated with any EFL syllabus and learners will be expected not only to master the target language, but also to become intercultural speakers, that is, speakers who are able to reflect on their own culture and the target culture, to express and share their views of the world, and to have intercultural attitudes. Thus, in an Intercultural (IC) approach, learners will need to develop specific *knowledge*, *skills* and *attitudes*. The ideal speaker is someone competent in the second language (L2) and second culture (C2) as well, i.e. one who has been learning another culture and has developed intercultural competence (LC2: L2+C2) (Fantini 2009).

In an intercultural approach, teachers must consider the abilities of an intercultural speaker, one who can reflect on the ways in which his own language and community function, and one who mediates between social groups that use different EFL varieties. These varieties encompass: EFL, English as an International Language (EIL), English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), English as a Second Language (ESL), etc. Even though all these "Englishes" refer to different characteristics of a particular variety, what they all have in common is the fact that they are mediated by an L1 and a C1.

As regards speaking, phonology is a crucial aspect when it comes to how successful communication can be in EFL contexts. Some aspects of a speaker's phonology reflect their cultural background and identity, and these aspects (sometimes) do

not interfere with intelligibility, i.e. the ability to be understood. From an intercultural perspective, EFL speakers should reflect and accept their mother tongue and their first culture. The key point is that if there is a strong influence from the L1 in the phonology of the L2 and this influence does not prevent listeners from understanding a message, there is no harm in communication when letting some phonological aspects of the L1 interfere with the L2; in other words, this "inaccurate" pronunciation can be healthily accepted. This will be crucial when EFL teachers set goals in their language courses¹, and need to test their students.

Assessing speaking in a context where intelligibility matters becomes a difficult task for EFL teachers as phonology can be seen as the most salient aspect of interculturality, reflecting the inner aspects of someone's identity. It is important to find ways to test an intelligible and intercultural speaker, so it is necessary to draw a distinction between the phonological features that have to be taught and learnt first from the ones that can be treated after the basic or core content is seen in class. It is also important to identify the features that students need to be aware of, because they should know that they have to make themselves understood in the international community. These features can serve as a guiding tool in order to design evaluating devices.

Having in mind students who will be mediators among different varieties of (non-native) languages, different aspects of the speaking skill (from segments to intonation) will be discussed that can be ranked according to how they enhance or diminish intelligibility/comprehensibility with an intercultural perspective. In relation to production, EFL learners should be aware of the phonological features that could reduce intelligibility in most Englishes of the world. How do we do it in the EFL classroom? Teachers can make good use of other Englishes in the form of foreign students with any nationality, teaching assistants, or any language input in coursebooks, movies, online newscasts, etc. All these Englishes (native and non-native) can help foster Intercultural Competence and the intelligibility in international contexts. If learners will be immersed in a context where EIL is spoken, assessment devices should adapt to that specific reality. In addition, as Fantini (2010) argues, assessment is not separate from but integral to every other aspect of the education process, this is why assessing Intercultural Competence and speaking, in terms of intelligibility, should be part of the language course syllabus.

¹ By language courses we mean English as a Foreign Language, leaving aside Teacher Training and Translation Courses at university level, where native-like proficiency is expected.

2. EFL in an Intercultural Context

As it has been mentioned above, one of the main purposes of this paper is to give insights into testing speaking through an intercultural approach in EFL university courses in Argentina. Now, the idea here is to work with Argentinian students as well as with the great number of international students that arrive at Argentinian universities, whatever the reason and the period of time they spend in our country: exchange programs or post-graduate students; long-term or short-term residencies. As these students come from different countries (mainly from South America, but also from the USA, Mexico, Europe and Africa), the aim would be to make the most of their rich and diverse cultural backgrounds. In this way, all students - both Argentinian and the international ones - would be not only in an ideal, real-life situation to learn a different culture but also to show their own culture. This is of course different from the typical situations in which EFL learners learn another culture from a textbook or specific EFL tasks. Here, they have direct encounters with real people and face-to-face interactions, added to the opportunities to discuss cultural topics with people from whom they will be able to learn both "culture" and "Culture".

The notion of culture with small 'c' corresponds to those aspects of a culture that cannot be easily identified with a nation given that they are ephemeral, i.e. cultural characteristics that exist for a short time or that will not last permanently; for instance, music bands, trends in fashion, popular places in a town, etc. In contrast, Culture with 'C' encompasses aspects related to literature, films, music, famous people, and historical figures, among others. These are aspects that are known worldwide and that are easily associated with a certain people or nation and that will be remembered by an indefinite number of generations.

In the last few years, we can see that "culture" is becoming a common issue in many EFL curricula, and a high degree of attention is being paid to the social functions of language. This implies that through an intercultural approach, apart from developing the four well-known macro-skills, learners will be expected to develop *cultural* skills, which implies an ability to reflect on both their own language and culture, and an ability to mediate between the different groups that use different languages and language varieties. We believe that these are the core tenets of this approach, since learners will find cultural topics quite interesting and motivating, as they will have the opportunity to reflect on their own culture, something which was not so common in previous approaches where learners

mainly focused on the target culture. As we will see, the focus is on Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) and not on native-speaker proficiency.

2.1 The Role of (Intercultural) Communicative Competence in an Intercultural Approach

In the last decades, most EFL approaches used to have native-like proficiency as an ultimate goal, and the role of "communicative competence" has been largely used and discussed when trying to account for and explain communicative EFL teaching. Celce-Murcia (2007) offers a summary of the evolution of the term "communicative competence" from the very beginnings with Hymes (1967, 1972) through the different proposals by Canale & Swain (1980), Canale (1983). A historical development and evolution of this term, and the different competencies which have been included in the different models is summarized in Figure 1 (adapted from Celce-Murcia 2007)

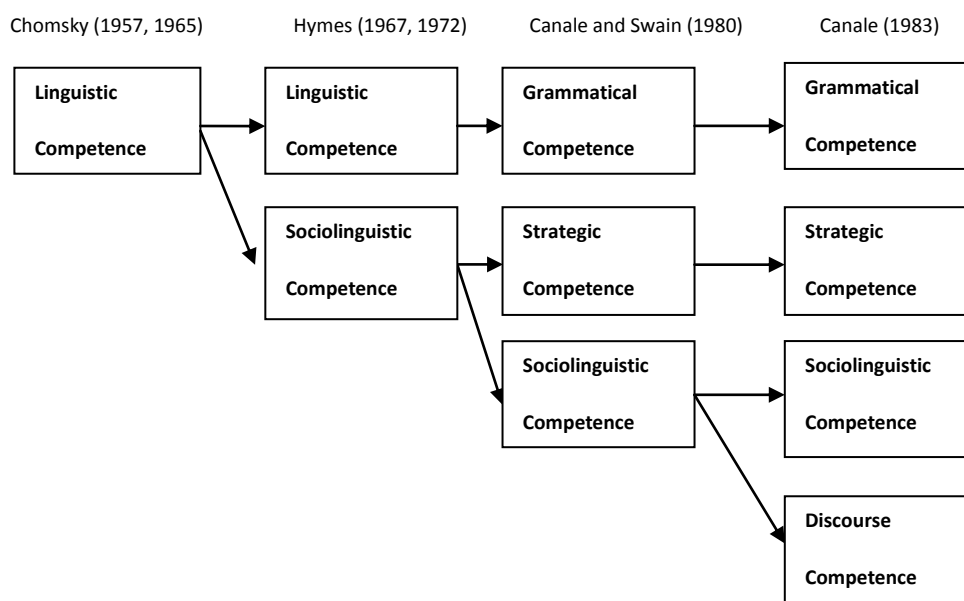


Figure 1. Chronological evolution of Communicative Competence

One of the most interesting aspects of Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) is that this interrelated model was one of the first proposals to include a cultural issue, since it modified Canale & Swain's (1983) sociolinguistic competence (the rules for using language appropriately in context) to *sociocultural* competence (the cultural background knowledge needed to interpret and use language effectively). Then, Celce-Murcia (2007) offers a modified model of communicative competence, based on her previous one, but

here we can find a more detailed description of the sociocultural competence. The model can be seen in Figure 2 (Celce-Murcia 2007: 45):

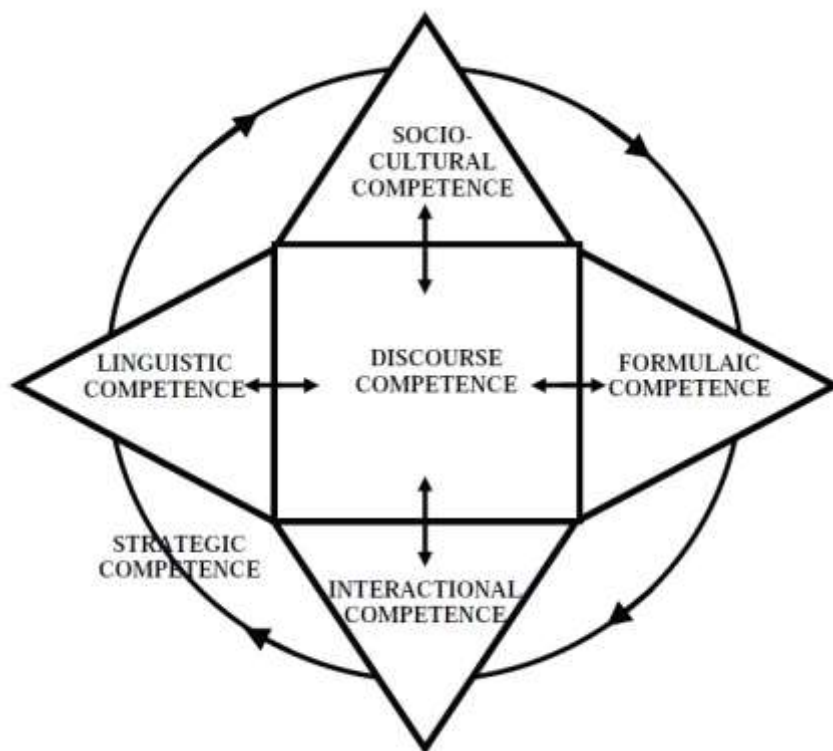


Figure 3. Revised schematic representation of 'communicative competence' (Celce-Murcia 2007: 45)

As regards sociocultural competence, it refers to "the speaker's pragmatic knowledge, i.e. how to express messages appropriately within the overall social and cultural context of communication"(Celce-Murcia 2007: 46), and also his knowledge to vary language when considering the sociocultural norms of the L2. This makes sense since, as Celce-Murcia says, there are cases in oral interaction in which a linguistic error is not as serious as an impropriety or lack of social or cultural knowledge. The variants in (1) are significant for this approach and can be acquired through knowledge of both culture and Culture. If learners are prepared to observe and have developed both adequate linguistic and sociocultural competence, a multicultural context, such as a lesson with learners from different backgrounds, will surely provide a wonderful experience to foster Foreign Language Acquisition.

(1)

- *social contextual factors*: age, gender, status, social distance, power and affect
- *stylistic appropriateness*: politeness strategies, a sense of genres and registers
- *cultural factors*: background knowledge of the target group, cross cultural awareness and the ability to recognize major dialects/regional differences

Thus, the main goal in an IC approach is Intercultural Communicative Competence (Byram 1997, Corbett 2003), which is referred to as an extension of communicative competence, and it implies the ability to cope with one's own cultural background in interaction with others. In addition, it requires certain *attitudes* (curiosity, openness, ability to observe other cultures without prejudices), *knowledge* (of social groups and practices of one's own and the interlocutor's) and *skills* (for example, interpreting and relating, discovering and interacting, critical cultural awareness and political education) (Corbett 2003). Fantini (2009) also gives some characteristics of ICC, such as flexibility, humor, patience, openness, interest, curiosity, empathy, tolerance for ambiguity, and suspending judgments, among others.

Now, the adoption of an IC approach encourages a critical reflection on the implications for teaching, since it seems that both the roles of teachers and students must be reconsidered. On the one hand, Celce-Murcia (2007) suggests that teachers must be careful not to focus only on linguistic competence but also to develop and foster learners' sociocultural behaviours and expectations that go along with the use of the foreign language. Corbett (2009) argues that language is taught through culture, and the teacher must guide learners to develop observation, mediation, interpreting and relating, the ability to discover, respect, empathy, tolerance for ambiguity and interest, curiosity and openness not only in the target culture but also in their own culture. Tasks should give learners the chance to reflect on how the cultural information is exchanged, and to search for cultural information that has an impact on their language behaviour. Needless to say, teachers must consider their learners' interests, such as music, art, cinema, television, and different subcultures. Learners will have the chance to know and reflect on different cultural topics without being forced to accept them, so as to promote further tolerance and enjoyment of the target culture. On the other hand, EFL learners in an IC approach are supposed to communicate appropriately and accurately in different communities, such as school, work, home, clubs, etc., as they have the abilities to observe, reflect on, adapt and put into practice the language which is suitable for each particular situation. In addition, learners

must acquire not only the skills to master an FL but also new cultural frames and maybe a new world view. This means that they must be ready to communicate with native speakers of the L2 as well as with speakers from different cultural backgrounds, because they may use the target language in different communicative situations, with people with different mother tongues, nationalities and cultural backgrounds. This implies a change compared to more traditional approaches, where the focus was mainly on linguistic development. House (2007: 19) defines an intercultural speaker as one "who knows and can perform in both his and her native culture and in another one acquired at some later date".

As we can see, the adoption of an intercultural approach necessarily implies a change in the aim of an EFL curriculum, in our roles as teachers, and in what we will expect from our students. This will have an impact in the way teachers prepare lessons to foster students' abilities, but we cannot leave aside how teachers will assess the different skills. In the following section, we will reflect on the nature of speaking in an intercultural context, and then, we will give some insights on how to evaluate this skill through an IC approach.

3. Speaking at an International Level

There are two competing ideologies in the conception of teaching pronunciation, and consequently in assessment. As clearly described in Levis (2005), one is the *nativeness principle*, which is related to the objective of achieving a native-like pronunciation. It was the dominant belief before the 1960s but reality has shown that only few learners were to achieve a native-like pronunciation in their FL. The other is the *intelligibility principle*, which states that learners simply need to be understood; even though they may have a strong accent, successful communication can still be possible.

Given the rapid and massive spread of international communication among different nations in the last couple of decades, a new way of interaction has become more popular. Nowadays, non-native speakers (NNS) talk mainly with NNS, and native speakers (NS) in a specific geographical area are no longer the main participants in international communication. The processes of non-native talk are qualitatively different from those coming from NS-NS or NS-NNS communication. Accordingly, the use of English has become decontextualized in the sense that English is no longer associated with a certain dialect or region, and it has become *recontextualized* in the sense that there are many

voices coming from different L1 and C1 backgrounds that blend together into a linguistic and cultural hybrid. This is why a new notion of intelligibility needs to be highlighted in EFL studies.

Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GA) are no longer the ultimate goals in most of EFL courses. Students who use the language to communicate for any purpose other than teaching EFL are not necessarily expected to follow RP or GA but to develop speaking skills that will allow them to communicate successfully with speakers who are generally NNS of English. This does not mean that students can stop improving and monitoring the way they speak, but they must be taught that there are some problematic aspects of their pronunciation that should be paid attention to so that they can succeed in being understood by speakers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Professionals used to refer to the notion of intelligibility as the ability to be understood in terms of how different the varieties of English were in relation to native models like those coming from RP or GA. However, EFL interlocutors differ from the way native speakers understand meaning, and sometimes even native speakers of English lack strategies to be successful in international interactions. Recent literature suggests that intelligibility should be considered the key aspect for felicitous conversation in NNS-NNS interaction, mainly in terms of pronunciation, given that most of the time, radical syntactic differences among different L1s do not interfere with meaning (Cf. Jenkins 2000, Derwing & Munro 2009, Walker 2010).

Jenkins (2000) was the first one to propose a list of areas that all NNSs of English should have in mind when speaking. She introduced the idea of the Lingua Franca Core (LFC), which basically covered seven main points that should be considered when correcting learners' pronunciation:

- **vowel quantity:** vowel quality differs a lot in most native speakers accents, but the length (quantity) is particularly distinct; this is why it's very important to differentiate long vowels from short ones;
- **consonant confluents:** this is related to the substitution of a consonant in English that does not exist in the L1 for one that is similar in the L1; this can create a lot of confusion; for example: the use of /p/ instead of /f/ by Korean speakers, as in *copy* or *coffee*;

- **phonetic realizations:** this is the use of an approximate sound in the L1; for instance, the fricative sound in Spanish in a context like *cabin*;
- **consonant cluster simplification:** the elimination of one consonant affects intelligibility more than epenthesis, i.e. the addition of sounds like "e" before *speak* in Spanish and Turkish speakers;
- **prominence and weak forms:** for an intelligible NNS-NNS interaction the focus should be on the adequate prominence on the stressed syllables; accurate weak forms should be aimed at developing perception of NS production;
- **tone groups:** intelligibility is affected if speech is not divided into meaningful chunks or in unexpected places;
- **nuclear / contrastive stress (excluding tone):** placing the main stress of an utterance on the wrong word may lead NSs and NNSs to get confused; for instance: *MARY finished it yesterday* vs. *Mary finished it YESTERDAY*.

Walker (2001) also speaks of the Lingua Franca Core with the purpose of seeking international intelligibility and emphasizes the positive impact of LFC in EFL learners in the sense that the workload is no longer related to stress, rhythm and intonation. "Good vowel length, good pronunciation of most of the consonants, good handling of clusters, the avoidance of incorrect deletions, prominence and good tonic stress (...) [and] the appropriate use of tone groups" are the main goals when teaching the English pronunciation to the international community. He also argues that monolingual classrooms can be an advantage because the teacher knows the L1 phonological features which could be exploited to teach L2 features. However, it is important to teach students skills that can be useful outside the classroom, i.e. skills that allow learners to use the language with speakers with other L1s. The areas from the LFC should not be left unattended.

The L1 should be seen as the starting basis and not the obstacle that should be eradicated. Considering the L1 can help teachers establish achievable goals because there are aspects that students *can* develop for sure in the foreign language. For example, students find it easier to make a vowel short or long than to produce different vowel qualities, so instead of having them distinguish the vowel in 'ship' or 'bud' from the one in 'sheep' or 'bad', they could be first encouraged to notice and produce the difference in length between these pairs of words. The new vowel quality is a feature students do not have in their L1 but they know how to lengthen or shorten a vowel. It is thought that length is much more important than quality in terms of intelligibility in EFL contexts. (For instance, nobody gets confused with 'I have a "ship" as a pet' in everyday conversation.) Being able

to control length will most probably facilitate the task of grasping vowel quality eventually. So, if the underlying idea is that they can be understood in the international community, exploiting some L1 phonological features can help students get started with the phonological contrast in the target language.

However, in Derwing & Munro (2005), studies suggest the importance of vowel quality mainly in NNS-NS interaction. There is evidence that points out that native speakers rely on vowel quality and non-natives with different L1s rely on quantity. We believe that if we also want our learners to be able to interact with native speakers, they should also be aware of the quality differences in vowels. This is supported by evidence from Wang & Munro (2004), in Derwing & Munro (2005), in which learners are able to distinguish different vowel qualities, rather than length, after having some perceptual training on quality.

There are other adjustments to the original LFC. For instance, Dauer (2005) is against leaving out the consonants in *they* and *thanks* and replacing them by /f, v/, as the Jenkins' first proposal states. Dauer suggests that /t, d/ should be used instead. She also suggests taking out, from the LFC inventory, the middle consonant in *measure* and the contrast between the vowels in *book* and *shoot*. She highlights the need to include word stress in the LFC given that it is essential for teaching and learning aspiration, vowel length and nuclear stress. Many other authors as well have criticized Jenkins' proposal; however, as Walker (2010) states, she just set the bases for the LFC; there is a lot of more research to be carried out so as to shape and sharpen the essentials to be intelligible in international communication.

Inspired by Jenkins (2000), Walker (2010), Dauer (2005) and Derwing & Munro (2005), among others, the following is our suggestion of what could be considered the LFC in the context of ESP and EAP in Argentina. Each item corresponds to the areas that should be particularly worked on because they generally make learners less intelligible:

consonants

- /b/ vs. /v/; avoid /β/
- /d/ vs. /ð /
- /s/ vs. /z/ vs. /ʒ /
- aspiration of /p/, /t/ and /k/
- clusters: word-initial and word-medial (*speak, product, texting, postman*)

vowels

- short vs. long: /ɪ//i://ɒ//ɔ:/ (*bit, beat, cot, court*);
fortis clipping (shortened before voiceless consonants: *beat* vs. *live*)
- quality as a stable set; mainly laxness: /æ//ɑ://ʌ//ɜ:/ (*bat, Bart, but, Bert*)

prosody

- nuclear stress and contrastive stress
- meaningful word/thought groups
- word stress in polysyllables (*comfortable, category, difficult*)

In relation to the last item (word stress), we have included this in the suggested LFC given that, in Spanish, polysyllabic words are rarely stressed on the antepenultimate syllable. We believe learners' attention should be placed on the correct word stress so as to avoid the penultimate position of stress. This last aspect of the LFC is supported by studies like Hahn (2004), where the position of stress in an utterance affects intelligibility. Field (2005) states that stress is not a top priority for intelligibility but the misplacement of it implies an increase in the effort that listeners make. "If lexical stress is wrongly distributed, it might have serious consequences for the ability of the listener, whether native or nonnative, to locate words within a piece of connected speech" (Field 2005: 419). Luchini & Kennedy (2013) have empirically investigated the LFC proposed by Jenkins. They provide some evidence for lexical stress as a source of unintelligibility in spontaneous speech between NNSs.

One important aspect, which goes beyond individual sounds and that should be considered a priority, is related to focusing on tone units rather than words. In the EFL classroom, effort should be put in the ability to speak by means of tone units or thought groups rather than concatenating words by words. Students should be encouraged to group ideas and to avoid pauses where not necessary. Pausing very frequently implies that listeners should pay attention to a lot of information and this makes NNS less intelligible. Speaking by means of meaningful chunks implies the placement of the correct nuclear or contrastive stress of an utterance.

Speaking also implies other aspects of communication apart from linguistic elements like individual sounds or stress. Many other extra-linguistic elements such as eye contact, space, gestures and movements, physical contact and timing in discourse, are

also relevant for successful international communication, and we need to take into account that they may vary from culture to culture. These non-linguistic elements are most probably part of speakers' speaking skills in their L1. However, because of other factors like anxiety, fear, lack of confidence, etc., speakers forget about very relevant aspects that contribute to communication. For instance, eye-contact, an adequate delivery rate, and appropriate use of body language are some of the areas of communication that can help speakers become more intelligible in intercultural contexts. As Field (2005) states, listeners may make use of a higher level of contextual understanding to compensate for a message that is hard to process. When someone listens to an NNS, there are other processes involved so as to get meaning, and these processes are sometimes linked to non-linguistic aspects.

To sum up, most learners in Argentina are confronted with a clear EFL context, since most of their classmates and teachers speak the same mother tongue. However, it is also possible to encounter a number of international students that can play a significant role in the English lesson, given that all learners can become aware of the different Englishes and cultural backgrounds in the lesson and, eventually, outside the classroom. This will allow students to realize that successful communication is possible without having reached a native-like TL as long as they sound intelligible. In other words, having a strong accent does not necessarily imply a breakdown in communication and, sometimes, a lack of accent does not correlate with being a better speaker. The major viewpoint change should be conceiving this reality -without native speakers- as the last goal, i.e. not a reality to be changed but a situation that is legitimate and worth exploring with its own characteristics, variants, difficulties and aims. With this in mind, teachers and learners can set achievable goals when it comes to the pronunciation of English. The aim is no longer to imitate native speakers but to be understood by both NNSs and NSs. As Walker (2001) says, "we establish a new perspective on pronunciation goals, with priorities that are both fewer in number and more realistic".

4. Assessing through an Intercultural Approach

In this section we will discuss some factors related to the assessment of speaking as well as the assessment of ICC. As we have said, adopting an IC approach implies a change of perspective and paradigm, where teachers will not focus only on the mastery of the target language but also on Culture and culture. The aim is that learners can "interact

effectively across cultures", so teachers will have to prepare them to turn language encounters into intercultural encounters. This suggests the necessity of new conceptual frameworks of reference "to evolve, first, from linguistic competence to language communicative competence and second, to integrate the development of ICC in the conception of the second and foreign language curriculum (Lazar et. al 2007: 25). Thus, certain *attitudes, knowledge* and *skills* - which were not contemplated in previous approaches - will have to be developed and considered.

As we have said, the notion of ICC becomes essential. Byram (1997) characterizes the three dimensions in assessing ICC, as summarized in Espinosa & Scilipoti (2012):

- Knowledge (*savoirs*): Knowing about the practices of social groups, their identities and one's own in order to interact socially and individually. It also includes the knowledge of how people from the other culture may perceive us. This element will help learners interact in different situations by being aware of social processes.
- Know-how (*savoir apprendre / faire*): Skills of discovering and interaction. It is the capacity of collecting information and interacting with people with different backgrounds, knowing how to communicate and engage in real life activities with people from different cultures and practices.
- Being (*savoir être*): Intercultural attitudes. The ability to appreciate others' culture and to value one's own. In other words, it is the ability to see through somebody else's glasses by having a sense of curiosity and openness that might make an individual ready to change their beliefs about the target culture and their own.

Taking into account this new perspective will give rise to a tension between the more traditional and the newer/alternate models, as IC teachers will have to contemplate many other aspects that previous models did not focus on or examine.

4.1 Assessing ICC

If the purpose, when students speak, is to assess how they create meaning in their discourse, assessing devices can be aimed at testing how efficient students are when they interact orally as part of a shared social activity. If this interaction mainly comes from NNS-

NNS, then it is also necessary to see how aware students are of the cultural background of their interlocutors.

Language assessment implies the understanding and judging of learners' performance, understanding and progress. The relationship between learning and assessment has different objectives, which can be represented in the three widely-adopted phrases: assessment *of* learning (with a summative purpose), assessment *for* learning and assessment *as* learning (both with a formative objective). Teachers who adopt an IC approach face the dilemma about where they need to focus on: Should they focus on language proficiency or on cultural aspects? Should they balance the skills? On what basis? As we can see, there is an obvious tension between traditional and alternate assessment paradigms. The former tend to be related to cognitive views of learning and psychometric testing, and teachers use predetermined standards to *measure* learners' performances (assessment *of* learning); and the testing procedures usually consist of single events. The latter "tend to be aligned with sociocultural views of learning and a range of assessment practices that include, for example, performance assessment, classroom-based assessment, formative assessment, and dynamic assessment" (Liddicoat & Scarino 2013: 124). This view considers assessment as a dynamic process that allows teachers to value learners' performance and progress over time, while at the same time, it regards assessment as an essential factor that forms or shapes learning. The aim here is to seek for the ways which show what students actually know, and that evidence comes from different students in different situations, allowing both formative assessment (assessment *for* learning) and summative assessment (assessment *of* learning). Fantini (2009) states that there are four dimensions (*knowledge, positive attitudes, skills and awareness*) whose assessment may present particular difficulties to EFL teachers, since they have generally been trained to assess knowledge and skills rather than attitudes and awareness, the latter being not so easily subjected to quantification and documentation.

Our view is that even though we cannot neglect the assessment of ICC as an important aspect of evaluation, we must not forget that EFL teachers are, as the acronym states, teachers of a foreign language, so the TL proficiency cannot be left aside or given minor importance. This does not mean that FL proficiency is the *only* aspect that should be considered, but it is a crucial one so as to develop and foster ICC, both qualitatively and quantitatively. If learners are not able to master the target language efficiently, they will be

somewhat limited in what to think and how to express their views of the world. TL proficiency will allow them to expand and transform their habitual conceptions of the world, while at the same time they will be able to confront and contrast the ways they behave, interact with others, express themselves and contextualize their views of the world. In addition, at the moment of assessing, teachers will need to capture the fact that learners are also subjects with a life-world, a home culture, a language, and subjects who have different and diverse experiences, interests, motivations and views of the world, Thus, we believe that EFL assessment should focus both on formative and summative assessment, and teachers face the challenge to design meaningful test types that account for learners' knowledge of the language and knowledge of the world, and these tests should provide feedback to teachers and learners in order to reflect on the teaching and learning tasks they are working on. This feedback, apart from providing information of learners' performances, should also help teachers decide whether they may adapt the framework they have set to fit their context². We need to consider assessment as an integral aspect of the whole educational process, and not as an isolated aspect. For this, Fantini (2010) proposes the Gemstone Model, which includes different interrelated components, showing "how assessment is related directly to explicitly articulated goals and objectives and that assessment measures their attainment by the learner" (Fantini 2009: 461). This means that there must not be any differences between what is to be learned and what is to be measured.

² The contextualization of assessment is related to the institutional context where the different assessment processes take place. Many national or state curriculum frameworks (for example, the Common European Framework of Reference) are used to define language teaching and learning, and they have different standards and generalized level of what students are supposed to achieve. Due to this, teachers will need to adapt those general frameworks to the local practices of teaching, learning and assessment in their particular contexts.

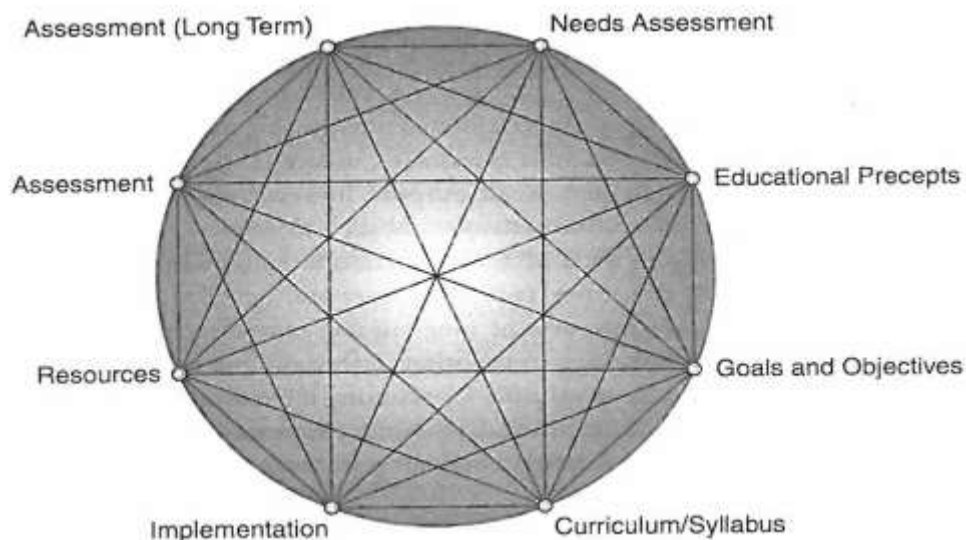


Figure 3: The Gemstone Model

Fantini (2009) recommends considering many factors so as to make sure that the assessment process is carried out proficiently, measuring learners' actual knowledge. For example, teachers must pay attention to the purpose of assessment, the target audience, the assessment tools and strategies, the assessment procedure (administration, evaluation and scoring of the test), factors that may affect students' performances, and other aspects such as the scope, the efficiency, the validity and the reliability of the test. In addition, teachers need to take into account that IC is not a fixed process but one that evolves over time, with periods in which it may remain inactive or even regress, so it must be regarded as longitudinal and ongoing. Due to this, in order to gather the information about students' performance and whether they reach the established objectives, apart from the traditional test formats, there are many others which are highly valuable and more accurate for testing, monitoring and measuring IC, such as portfolios, logs, observations, interviews, journals, anecdotal records, collections of written products and performative tasks. The use of these different formats will allow the assessment of the different dimensions of ICC, which has been mainly limited to the assessment (and teaching) of "knowledge" (*savoir*), where the goal is to measure how learners acquire cultural elements. Typical tests include, for example, multiple-choice items or answering questions, i.e., activities in which learners need to find similarities or differences between different cultures and expressions (affective, moral, mental, physical, etc.). The assessment of know-how (*savoir-faire*), which has focused mainly on the linguistic aspects of communicative competence that enable learners to interact in the target language and culture, will now have to integrate experiences so that learners can show how they can

"interact, adjust, integrate, interpret and negotiate in different cultural contexts" (Lazar et. al 2007: 27). Finally, ICC assessment has to include the evaluation of being (*savoir-être*), that is, how learners understand the similarities and differences between different cultures. Now, we must also focus on how students reflect on their own culture and values and integrate new views and perspectives, becoming cultural speakers and mediators. As we have said, it is important to consider all the dimensions of ICC, since the knowledge of other cultures is as important as the skills to act appropriately in new contexts and to accept new conceptions of the world.

ICC assessment needs to focus both on formative and summative evaluation, i.e., there should be an effort not to neglect any of them and to try to keep a balance. The assessment must be integrated with the teaching/learning process and it should give information on the progress made by the learners, but having information about what they have learnt and acquired after a period of time is also important. Accordingly, we propose continuous assessment, either teacher-assessment or self-assessment, throughout the course, carried out with the use of rubrics and grids, which will be explored in 4.2.

4.2 Using a Rubric for Assessment

Rubrics are a type of marking scheme that can be used for students' assessment. They can be adopted to clarify what teachers expect from learners' performances and also to provide and obtain valuable and constructive feedback. Not only can they be used for summative assessment but also for different alternate ways of assessment, such as projects, interviews, portfolios, essays, oral presentations and so on. They are also an effective tool for assessing individual, pair and group work, and they can be adapted depending on the objectives of the test and the learning task. Luoma (2004) describes different types of rubrics, depending on their structure or degree of formality (analytic or holistic), their topic (generic or transversal) subject or task domain- specific or general. In addition, they can be used for self-assessment, peer-assessment and peer-observation

According to Alderson (1991), in order to get more accurate results and maximize the use of a rubric, every context should have a specifically-designed rubric, instead of having a general one which can be used for different purposes. For this, we can decide on a number of possibilities, depending on both the learners' and/or teachers' needs. Rated-oriented rubrics will help the examiner to make the right decisions; examinee-oriented

rubrics give information about their general level, strengths and weaknesses; administrator-oriented rubrics provide concise and global information. Thus, we can see that apart from describing the expected performance, they directly relate teachers' interpretations with learners' competences.

Brodersen & Martino (2012) propose two different rubrics to evaluate university students in EFL courses. The first one (figure 4), a behaviourist-analytic rubric, is used for assessing the different language skills that learners will have to show and use in different contexts. This rubric is fairly useful to provide learners with feedback on their strengths and weaknesses, either on their individual performances or on their group performances. It is given to students for self- or peer-assessment along the course, so that they can reflect upon their own learning and achievements of what they have worked along the course.

- 1= I can do this with a lot of help from my mate or teacher.
- 2= I can do this with a little help.
- 3= I can do this fairly well.
- 4= I can do this really well.
- 5= I can do this almost perfectly. Great!

Competences	Lesson	Your score				
		1	2	3	4	5
I can understand phrases, words and expressions related to areas of most immediate priority (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment)						
I can make simple transactions in shops, banks, etc.						
I can describe my family and other people.						
I can make and accept apologies						

Figure 4. Suggested rubric for self-assessment taken from Brodersen & Martino (2012)

The other rubric (figure 5) is a holistic-analytic one and it will be used in the final oral exam. It is holistic because it can admit mistakes in a part of the final product without having a significant impact in the global quality, and it is also suitable for summative rather than for formative assessment. At the same time, it is regarded as analytic since it has descriptors in different areas and a grading scale (1-5) which provides accurate information about learners' performance. In addition, the examiners' tasks will be eased as this rubric has a practical and detailed guide.

Marks	Grammar	Vocabulary	Fluency	Communication-Interaction	Task completion
5	Effective use of basic grammatical structures. A good command of grammatical functions.	Competent use of vocabulary.	Good control. Fluent and consistent with production.	The student's answers are fluent and contribute to interaction.	The student succeeds in completing the task.
4	Acceptable command of grammatical structures.	Adequate vocabulary but the student hesitates.	Satisfactory production.	The student communicates effectively.	The student understands the task and completes it satisfactorily.
3	Confusion caused by inaccurate grammatical choices clarified by the student.	The student clarifies inadequate utterances when required.	Good production. Fluent at the level of language expected.	The student communicates in a satisfactory way.	Answers are adequate and relevant with very little prompting.
2	Poor command of basic grammatical structures.	Limited range of vocabulary.	Poor control.	There are some hesitations but has an acceptable level of communication.	Some elements of the task are overlooked. Interviewer support was necessary.
1	1. Inability to express correct utterances.	Inappropriate words and phrases.	Inability to finish sentences.	The student fails to understand and does not respond satisfactorily.	The student fails to do the task. Interviewer continuous support was needed.

Figure 5. Suggested rubric for teachers in an oral test taken from Brodersen and Martino (2012)

These rubrics help to assess students' performance objectively and consistently, and at the same time, to provide them with valuable and significant feedback, without devoting a considerable amount of time. Brodersen and Martino (2012) highlight the efficiency of these rubrics, as they substantially contribute to the improvement of the learning process; they clarify the aims and assist in the design of tasks and activities. Moreover, they can be easily adapted to the needs of every particular group of students, they adjust to the requirements of the assessment of the different skills and students will also know what goals they are expected to achieve.

Figure 6 is our suggestion in relation to a customized rubric for self-assessment including intercultural topics, based on some lessons from *Mirrors and windows. An intercultural communication textbook*³ (see Appendix). The first lesson is concerned with the notion of punctuality as seen by different cultures, and students are encouraged to reflect on these cultural differences by means of a number of speaking activities. For the design of the suggested rubrics, we considered the four-stage process described in Stevens & Levi (2005).

³ Martina Huber-Kriegler, Ildikó Lázár & John Strange (2003) *Mirrors and windows. An intercultural communication textbook*. Council of Europe Publishing

- Stage 1: Reflecting on the task and context
- Stage 2: Listing our learning objectives and expectations
- Stage 3: Grouping and Labeling the objective and criteria
- Stage 4: Application to a rubric grid format

Stevens & Levi (2005: 53)

How intercultural am I?					
1. I can do this with a lot of help from my mate and teacher. 2. I can do this with a little help. 3. I can do this fairly well. 4. I can do this really well. 5. I can do this almost perfectly. Great!					
Unit ...	My score...				
I can express the notions of punctuality in different contexts in my own culture.	1	2	3	4	5
I can understand how others consider punctuality.	1	2	3	4	5
I can tolerate cultural differences in relation to time.	1	2	3	4	5
I can clear up misunderstandings in relation to time.	1	2	3	4	5
I am aware of the time I take when I do different activities in my own culture	1	2	3	4	5

Figure 6. Suggested rubric for self-assessment of ICC (based on activities included in the appendix)

These self-assessment scales should be administered after a number of tasks, so that learners can perceive how they are progressing during the course. One advantage is that the teacher will be able to modify the different aspects to be tested according to the particular topics worked on in the course and the specific needs of the group of learners. In the following section, we will see how to integrate ICC with speaking in an intercultural context together with traditional aspects of assessment.

4.3 Assessing Speaking

The assessing tools that teachers make use of are expected to be designed in terms of specific situations. For instance, in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or English for Academic purposes (EAP), assessment at university and tertiary education should be based on the social and situational needs to be able to convey meaning in technical and academic contexts related (or not) to a specific field of expertise; for example our students may need to use the target language as attendees in courses and seminars, as attendees or speakers at conferences, as colleagues at work, etc.

After the 90s, some aspects of the phonology in L2s started playing an important role in formal instruction; it is believed that pronunciation can be and must be approached pedagogically in the L2 classroom (in Blázquez et al. 2014). It has been suggested, in the EFL literature, that the core features of the English phonology should be included in the teaching of every language course, i.e. that it should be included in the syllabus from the very beginning. The underlying idea is to raise students' awareness of their speaking performance. We believe that if some aspects of speaking are included in the syllabus, they should also have an assessing correlate, which does not necessarily mean a traditional examination (based on the norm) but an assessing device based on the needs that international users of English have.

Having stated the key points that international speakers should cover (mainly those from LFC), assessing speaking should be based on the core achievable goals that are established for the EFL learners. As Luoma (2004) argues, the native standards guide the new rating criteria, but these criteria should be established by effective communication based on realistic learners achievement. As the workload for English learners has been reduced, teachers and learners can concentrate, first, only on the areas that need some extra effort or conscious training, which can be included in customized rubrics aimed at testing speaking. These rubrics can be based on criteria set according to a particular setting. As stated in Björkman (2013), in international contexts, English does not belong exclusively to natives; it is vital to engage in criteria-referenced assessment and to make students aware of what they need for effective communication, introducing them to realistic goals in EFL settings.

Assessing the speaking skill, together with most aspects of a foreign language, is mainly conceived of as a process rather than a product (Cf. Tuan 2012). During the language course, there should be tasks aimed at having students speak in more or less controlled conversations based on pedagogical or "real life" situations. The same tasks can be used on assessing occasions. Accordingly, this helps students to be familiarized with the activities. One form of assessing the speaking skill is by means of holistic scales. These scales are designed with values, say 1, 2, 3, etc., and a description of the abilities of the examinees. There are words like *a lot*, *many*, *few*, *a few*, which describe how much students can do, and words like *very well*, *adequately*, *poorly*, which describe how well they can do.

Saying "poor" or "excellent" does not provide learners and teachers with enough information about examinees' performances. This is why it is recommended to adopt different levels or values for a rubric with their corresponding descriptors and criteria set for a specific context. The number of levels is suggested to be from 1 to 5 (Cf. Luoma 2004). If there are more values, the rating task demands a lot of effort on the part of the rater or examiner; and if there are fewer values, then there is not enough precise and relevant information. The description that FL learners get from assessment based on rubrics is rich enough to enable them to get helpful feedback on their speaking performance, recognizing their strong and weak points and learning from being assessed.

In EFL settings, the norm does not necessarily work when assessing speaking. So instead of adopting norm-referenced tests, where a standard way of speaking is followed, EFL teachers should get familiar with criterion-referenced evaluative devices. Referring more to criteria allows learners to know how well they can perform, say, an oral task, and to get descriptions of the different aspects of their performance. These criteria could be set together with the students as a way of helping them to see the purposes of the language course. In addition to this, assessment can be conducted among peers so that, as Björkman (2013) says, students can understand the teachers' criteria.

Based on the notion of intelligibility for international communication and considering the benefits of customized rubrics for assessing, the following are some suggestions as to how assess speaking in an intercultural context using a 1-5 scale. Figure 7 is a rubric designed for self-assessment that does not contain technical vocabulary and it can be also used for peer-assessment. It is aimed at assessing aspects of pronunciation and

intelligibility. One positive aspect of this type of rubric is that it can be designed with the students so that they know what the objectives of the course are. Thus learners will most probably feel motivated to take a more active role in the learning process, given that they know the direction and aims of the language lesson.

How do I speak English?					
1. I can do this with a lot of help from my mate and teacher. 2. I can do this with a little help. 3. I can do this fairly well. 4. I can do this really well. 5. I can do this almost perfectly. Great!					
I can speak with meaningful units	1	2	3	4	5
I can pronounce consonants (mainly p, t, k; b,v; s, z, <i>they, thanks</i>)	1	2	3	4	5
I can pronounce vowels (mainly <i>live, leave, word, happy, cart, pot, bought</i>)	1	2	3	4	5
I can produce the correct stress position of long words	1	2	3	4	5
I can contrast information	1	2	3	4	5
I can hesitate, use acceptable body language and/or filler words	1	2	3	4	5
I can convey my message	1	2	3	4	5
I can help listeners understand without them making much effort	1	2	3	4	5

Figure 7. Suggested rubric for self-assessment of speaking

Figure 8 is a scale for an oral examination to be handled by the teacher. It contains some aspects to assess ICC (first column). It also encompasses the values and descriptions to assess speaking, which in order to facilitate the assessment process have been divided into pronunciation and intelligibility (in the second and third columns). In addition, the teacher is given the possibility to integrate more traditional aspects like vocabulary and grammar (fourth and fifth columns).

ICC	Pronunciation	Intelligibility	Vocabulary	Grammar
5. Deep understanding and acceptance of notions (time, silence, customs, etc) from another culture.	5. Pronounces consonants and vowels (C&Vs) correctly. Very accurate stress position at word and sentence levels.	5. Very easy to be understood. Very good use of thought groups, hesitations and body language.	5. Competent use of vocabulary.	5. Effective use of basic grammatical structures. A good command of grammatical features.
4. Good understanding and acceptance of notions (time, silence, customs, etc) from another culture.	4. Pronounces C&Vs very well. Fairly good stress position at word and sentence levels.	4. Easy to be understood. Good use of thought groups, hesitations and body language.	4. Adequate vocabulary but the student hesitates.	4. Acceptable command of basic grammatical features.
3. Moderate understanding and acceptance of notions (time, silence, customs, etc) from another culture.	3. Pronounces C&Vs fairly well. Good stress position at word and sentence level.	3. Reasonably easy to process meaning. Fairly good use of thought groups, hesitations and body language.	3. The student clarifies inadequate utterances when required.	3. Confusion caused by inaccurate grammatical choices clarified by the student.
2. Limited understanding and acceptance of notions (time, silence, customs, etc) from another culture.	2. Pronounces C&Vs acceptably. Some problems with stress position at word level. Little contrastive nuclear stress.	2. A bit difficult to process meaning. Some use of thought groups; reasonable use of hesitations and body language.	2. Limited range of vocabulary.	2. Poor command of basic grammatical structures.
1. Insufficient understanding and acceptance of notions (time, silence, customs, etc) from another culture.	1. Pronounces C&Vs with a lot of difficulty. Some problems with stress position in polysyllables. Almost no contrastive nuclear stress.	1. Hard to process meaning. Almost no use of thought groups. Inappropriate use of hesitations and body language.	1. Inappropriate words and phrases.	1. Inability to express correct utterances.

Figure 8. Suggested rubric for teachers to test speaking in an intercultural context

All the different aspects (ICC, pronunciation, grammar, etc.) in this rubric were included taking into account the specific groups of students at university, i.e. in ESP and EAP courses in which there are both Argentine and international students.

5. Conclusion

Students in EFL courses at university, other than teacher-training and translation courses, have a lot of chances of using English to communicate orally. They sometimes have to participate at international conferences, take seminars or webinars with teachers using ELF, and defend their theses, among others. On these real-life occasions, there is no pressing need for them to stick to the strict norms of GA or RP English but to the criteria that lead to intelligible communication. This is why it is necessary to assess the speaking skill in the classroom having in mind the notion of intelligibility for international communication, and, if possible, making good use of the benefits of having international students in the classroom.

The internationalism of English has led many language instructors and theorists to re-think the priorities when teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language. New Language coursebooks are including an amalgam of NNS voices in their listening activities. However, teachers and students have yet to be more aware of the richness of the different Englishes that come from a wide variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Placing the NNS voices of our students in assessing devices is a way of deviating from hard-to-learn goals and of helping students to be intelligible in today's NNS-NNS interaction; and analyzing these voices culturally may help students develop their ICC.

After so many years of research in the ELT field, nowadays it is almost impossible to maintain a monocular vision that does not integrate and make use of culture as a necessary and powerful tool for the development of a foreign language. Learning to speak internationally and being aware of the cultural diversity we are daily confronted with should be part of ESP and EAP language courses and, having in mind the recent paradigms coming from ELF, speaking in an intercultural context should also be included in the assessment process by means of customized rating scales.

6. References

- Alderson, C. (1991) Bands and Scores. In Alderson, J. and North, B. (eds) (1991) *Language testing in the 1990s*. London: Modern English Publications/British.
- Blázquez, B.; Dabrowski, A. & G. Espinosa (2014) Pronunciación y cultura en la clase de ELE para angloparlantes. In Fernández, S. & M. Pozzo (eds) *Diálogos Latinoamericanos. Globalización, interculturalidad y enseñanza de español: Nuevas propuestas didácticas y evaluadoras*. University of Aarhus, Denmark, 22: 77-90
- Björkman, B. (2013). Peer Assessment of Spoken Lingua Franca English in Tertiary Education in Sweden: Criterion-referenced versus norm-referenced assessment. In Johannesson, N.L., Melchers, G., and Björkman, B. (Eds.). *Of Butterflies and Birds, of Dialects and Genres: Essays in Honour of Philip Shaw*. 109-123. Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis.
- Brodersen, L. & A. Martino (2012) Evaluación en Cursos de Inglés Como Lengua Extranjera: Métodos, Recursos y Alternativas para el Nivel Universitario. In *Actas del II Congreso Nacional "El conocimiento como espacio de encuentro"*. Facultad de Lenguas de la Universidad Nacional del Comahue, Gral. Roca, Argentina.
- Byram, M. (1997) *Teaching and assessing intercultural competence*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.
- Byram, M. (2009) Intercultural Competence in Foreign Languages. The Intercultural Speaker and the Pedagogy of Foreign Language Education. In Deardorff, D. K. *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. SAGE Publications.
- Canale, M. (1983) From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In: Richards J, Schmidt R (eds) *Language and Communication*. Longman, London, pp 2–27.
- Canale M. & M. Swain (1980) Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to Second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics* 1(1): 1–48.
- Celce-Murcia M., Dörnyei Z. & S. Thurrell (1995) A pedagogical framework for communicative competence: A Pedagogically motivated model with content specifications. *Issues in Applied Linguistics* 6(2): 5–35.
- Celce-Murcia, M (2007) Rethinking the Role of Communicative Competence. In Alcón Soler, E. & M. Safont Jorda (2007) *Intercultural Language Use and Learning*. Springer.
- Chomsky, N. (1957) *Syntactic Structures*. Mouton, The Hague.
- Chomsky, N. (1965) *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.

- Coperias Aguilar, M. (2007) Dealing with Intercultural Communicative Competence in the Foreign Language Classroom. In Alcón Soler, E. & M. Safont Jorda (2007) *Intercultural Language Use and Learning*. Springer.
- Corbett, J. (2003) *An Intercultural Approach to English Language Teaching*. Multi-lingual Matters Ltd.
- Dauer, R. M. (2005). The Lingua Franca Core: A new model for pronunciation instruction? In: *TESOL Quarterly*, Volume 39, Number 3, September 2005, pp. 543-550.
- Derwing, T. & M. Munro (2005) Second Language Accent and Pronunciation Teaching: A Research-Based Approach. In: *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 39, number 3, 379-397.
- Derwing, T. & M. Munro (2009). Putting Accent in its Place: Rethinking Obstacles to Communication. In: *Language Teaching*, 42(4), 476-490.
- Espinosa, G. & P. Scilipoti (2012) The Importance of Being Plurilingual: Blooming with the Other. In *Actas del II Congreso Nacional "El conocimiento como espacio de encuentro"*. Facultad de Lenguas de la Universidad Nacional del Comahue, Gral. Roca, Argentina.
- Fantini, A. (2009) Assessing Intercultural Competence. In Deardorff, D. K. *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. SAGE Publications.
- Fantini, A. (2010) *The EFL Teacher's Aid. A Guide for Volunteers in English Teaching Projects*. Prepared in collaboration with Federation EIL. Brattleboro, Vermont, USA.
- Field, J. (2005) Intelligibility and the Listener: The Role of Lexical Stress. In: *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 39, number 3, 399-423.
- Hahn, L. D. (2004). Primary Stress and Intelligibility: Research to Motivate the Teaching of Suprasegmentals. In: *TESOL Quarterly*, 38, 201–223.
- House, J. (2007) What is an Intercultural Speaker? In Alcón Soler, E. & M. Safont Jorda *Intercultural Language Use and Learning*. Springer.
- Hymes, D. (1967) Models of the interaction of language and social setting. In: *Journal of Social Issues* 23(2): 8–38.
- Hymes, D. (1972) On communicative competence. In: Pride J.B. & J. Holmes (eds) *Sociolinguistics: Selected Readings*. Penguin, Harmondsworth, pp 269–293.
- Jenkins, J. (2000) *The Phonology of English as an International Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lazar et al. (2007) *Developing and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence: A Guide for Language Teachers and Teacher Educators*. Council of Europe.
- Levis, J. (2005) Changing Contexts and Shifting Paradigms in Pronunciation Teaching. In: *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 39, number 3.

- Liddicoat, J. & A. Scarino (2013) *Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Luchini, P. & S. Kennedy (2013) Exploring sources of phonological unintelligibility in spontaneous speech. *International Journal of English and Literature*, Vol. 4(3), pp. 79-88.
- Luoma, S. (2004) *Assessing Speaking*. Cambridge Language Assessment Series.
- Stevens, D. & A. Levi (2005) *Introduction to Rubrics. An Assessment Tool to Save Grading Time, Convey Effective Feedback and Promote Student Learning*. Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Tuan, L. (2012) Teaching and Assessing Speaking Performance through Analytic Scoring Approach. In *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 4, pp. 673-679, Academy Publisher, Finland.
- Walker, R. (2001). Pronunciation priorities, the Lingua Franca Core, and monolingual groups. *IATEFL Speak Out! Pronunciation SIG*.
- Walker, R. (2010) *Teaching the Pronunciation of English as a Lingua Franca*. Oxford University Press.
- Wang, J., & M. Munro (2004). Computer-based training for learning English vowel contrasts. *System*, 32, 539–552.

7. Appendix

1) REFLECTING ON YOUR OWN CULTURE

English-language invitations to social events are sometimes formulated as “7.30 for 8 p.m.”, for example for a formal dinner party. This means you are expected to arrive between 7.30 and 8 p.m., when the party or dinner will start. Arriving outside these times would be impolite.

- **At what time would your culture find it acceptable to arrive at a dinner party where the starting time was given as 8 p.m.? At a business appointment arranged for 10 a.m.? At a private language lesson arranged for 3 p.m.?**



2) LATE ARRIVALS

An Italian student on a postgraduate course at a British university never once, in a whole year, turned up for lectures and seminars on time. She was always, without exception, about 10 minutes late. It became a standing joke, and some lecturers simply started 10 minutes late to allow for her late arrival. Of course, other Italian students were quite punctual, but the point is that the student seemed not to notice. Apparently 11 a.m. seemed to mean 11.10 a.m. to her.

- **What do you think of the Italian student’s lack of punctuality?**

3) VOLUME. CAN YOU HEAR ME?

Some cultures seem not to mind at all if people sitting very close to each other in public spaces talk in very loud voices. An Englishman was once on a plane and the Dutch person in the seat behind was telling another passenger (who he had never met before) about his work as a secondary school teacher. The other passenger was interested and listened to the long monologue (with occasional sounds of agreement) until the plane landed. The Englishman was astonished to find that the Dutchman had been sitting five rows back!

Conversely, after spending some time in a Mediterranean country, you can get the impression on returning to northern Europe that people are in mourning and only allowed to speak in low voices. There are exceptions. The difference in volume (and body language) between Spanish and Portuguese people is very striking indeed. Which do you think tend to speak loudly, and which quietly?

- **How loud do you think people in your culture are compared to other cultures? Are people who speak very loudly tolerated, ignored or considered irritating in the cultures you are familiar with?**



Adapted from: Martina Huber-Kriegler, Ildikó Lázár & John Strange
(2003) *Mirrors and windows. An intercultural communication textbook*. Council of Europe Publishing