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**ENGLISH UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS’  
REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT CULTURE IN FOREIGN  
LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS**

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Esta Dissertação foi julgada adequada para obtenção do Título de Mestre, e aprovada em sua forma final pelo Programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês e Literatura correspondente.

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## ABSTRACT

Many scholars in different areas (Byram, 1989; Hall, 1997; Kramsch, 1998) have already emphasized how language and culture are intimately related. The main issue in Applied Linguistics seems to be the understanding of how these concepts – language and culture – should be connected in the language classroom (Kramsch, 1998; Risager, 2006). Therefore, this study tries to understand the role of culture inside foreign language classrooms through English undergraduate students' representations about culture and culture learning in their English classes at Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC). The data collection consisted of an open-ended questionnaire, private semi-structured interviews and email correspondences. A thematic analysis of the data showed that students represented culture in mainly two ways – as formal and valued knowledge or as sociocultural practices. Similarly, they regarded culture learning as learning about contents from English-speaking countries or as learning how to perform pragmatic functions of language in appropriate ways, depending on the context of situation. The role of culture in EFL classrooms was perceived by students either as the topic of the lesson, at times dissociated from language or as the pragmatics of learning a language that reflects specific world views, in which language and culture were intrinsically connected. Thus, two main pedagogical implications seem to arise from these findings. The first one regards the construction, in the language classroom, of meanings of culture that allow students to see the fluid and changeable nature of culture. The second one regards the importance of making our students aware of the social construction of meanings so they can perceive the intrinsic relationship between language and culture.

**Key-words:** English students, representations, the role of culture, EFL classrooms.





## RESUMO

Diversos pesquisadores em diferentes áreas (Byram, 1989; Hall, 1997; Kramsch, 1998) já enfatizaram a relação intrínseca existente entre língua e cultura. Neste aspecto, a principal discussão no campo da linguística aplicada parece ser a identificação de como esses conceitos – língua e cultura – deveriam estar conectados na sala de aula de língua (Kramsch, 1998; Risager, 2006). Dessa forma, este estudo tenta entender o papel da cultura na sala de aula de língua estrangeira (LE) através das representações sobre cultura e aprendizado de cultura na sala de aula de LE de estudantes da graduação em língua inglesa da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC). A coleta de dados consistiu-se de um questionário aberto, entrevistas semi-estruturadas e troca de emails entre os participantes e a pesquisadora. Uma análise temática dos dados demonstrou que os participantes representavam cultura principalmente de duas formas – como conhecimento formal valorizado ou como práticas socioculturais. Da mesma forma, eles consideravam aprendizado de cultura como aprendizado sobre conteúdos dos países falantes de inglês ou como aprendizado em relação à como usar funções pragmáticas da língua de forma apropriada, dependendo do contexto. O papel da cultura da sala de aula de LE foi percebido pelos alunos tanto como conteúdo da aula, por vezes dissociado da língua ou como pragmática de se aprender uma língua que reflete visões de mundo específicas, onde língua e cultura foram conectadas intrinsecamente. Sendo assim, duas principais implicações pedagógicas parecem surgir desses resultados. A primeira diz respeito à construção, na sala de aula de língua, de sentidos de cultura que permitam aos alunos perceberem a natureza fluída e mutável da mesma. A segunda se refere à importância de conscientizar nossos alunos sobre a construção social dos sentidos para que eles possam perceber, dessa forma, a relação intrínseca entre língua e cultura.

**Palavras-chave:** estudantes de inglês, representações, papel da cultura, sala de aula de LE.



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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The main premise of this thesis is that, as Byram (1989) points out, if language teaching is part of general education, it should do something to raise students' understanding of the other, or as he puts it, of other cultures. He argues that in foreign language teaching "there is and has always been a contribution to the personal education of learners in terms both of individuals learning about themselves and social beings learning about others" (Byram, 1989, p. 22).

Gimenez (2002) argues, in the same vein, that foreign language teaching should contribute to the general education of learners. This education would entail sensitizing students to different world views and values, that is, to different cultures, while at the same time, making them aware of the values and world views of their own culture. In this view, the general education of foreign language learners involves learning and contrasting diverse cultures. According to Gimenez (2002), this is exactly one of the objectives for foreign language learning found in the Brazilian NCP (National Curriculum Parameters), in which culture is a way to construct citizenship. Gimenez (2002) also emphasizes that this perspective is reinforced in the document about traversal themes, "where cultural plurality is addressed with an emphasis on national diversity, which is frequently associated to discrimination."<sup>1</sup> (Gimenez, 2002, p. 1)

The call, then, is for foreign language learning to be more than foreign language acquisition and so essentially foreign language education, in this case, English language education. It is pertinent to consider here the current status of English as an international language (McKay, 2003) or a lingua franca (Canagarajah, 2006). According to McKay (2003), the status of English as a global lingua franca is due to "an increase in the number of individuals in the world today who believe it is to their benefit to acquire English as an additional language" (McKay, 2003, p. 1). As a result, English speakers from different contexts are using English to a variety of purposes, and as suggested by McKay (2003), "often to communicate information about their own cultures in order to participate in the global community" (McKay, 2003, p. 3). It is in this sense that English learning becomes English education – an education that would prepare globally aware citizens. Culture is at the core of the debate around English language education.

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<sup>1</sup> My translation.

## 1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the present time, no Applied Linguist would deny the fact that language and culture are related (Kramersch, 1998; Risager, 2006), after all, a language is discursively constructed by the community which uses it and, therefore, it is subject of change due to changes in its use made by that community. Yet, the main issue in applied linguistics has been how these concepts, language and culture, should be connected in the language classroom (Kramersch, 1998; Risager, 2006), especially if one considers the many uses and purposes for which languages are used and learned every day in different contexts of the globalized world. The discussions in applied linguistics have usually regarded either the cultural contents of a language classroom or the pedagogies for culture teaching (McKay, 2003), which can be summarized in two main anxieties in the area, the question of just what culture to teach and how explicitly it should be taught in the language classroom.

This subject seems to become even more complex when the language at stake is English. Since English nowadays has reached the status of a *Lingua Franca* of wide communication (Canagarajah, 2006), issues such as whether the English language is damaging periphery native languages' own culture (Phillipson, 1992) or empowering periphery subjects who have appropriated the language for their own purposes (Clemente & Higgins, 2008; Canagarajah, 2006), have been on the agenda of discussion in Applied Linguistics, not only in English postcolonial countries like South Africa and India, for example, but also in EFL contexts, such as Brazil. Similarly, the impact of the teaching and learning of the English language and of the culture(s) that come with it has been considered to be either negative, as a process of alienation (Moita Lopes, 1996) and loss of one's own culture (Phillipson, 1992) or positive, as an act of agency from the part of the learners pursuing their interests (Rajagopalan, 2003; Canagarajah, 2006; Norton, 2010; Clemente & Higgins, 2008).

Many scholars in Applied Linguistics fear that, in the English language classroom, culture is represented in an homogeneous way and culture learning simply means learning about specific English speaking countries, typically United States and England (Moita Lopes, 1996), without considering other English speaking countries' cultures or the students' own culture as topics of classroom discussion. At the same time, other researchers have emphasized the danger of viewing culture learning in the English classroom as learning how to speak and act like a

native speaker, mainly from the United States and England (Moita Lopes, 1996; Corbett, 2003).

Therefore, issues such as ‘what it means for English students to learn culture in the English language classroom’ or ‘how they are representing culture’ are pertinent to be investigated if we want to better understand both the relationship between language and culture and the pedagogical practices regarding culture as represented by the language students. Therefore, the objective of this study is to investigate English undergraduate students<sup>2</sup>’ representations about culture and its role in their English classes at Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC). These representations associated to the context investigated, the undergraduate program in English at UFSC, may also help us understand the development of some of these students as future English teachers who will have to face questions such as how to deal with culture in the language classroom.

## 1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Allwright and Bailey (1991) emphasized the importance to understand what actually happens in the language classroom, instead of, for example, trying to discover the best teaching method. I consider this study *a study of the classroom*, given that in general terms, its concern is to contribute with knowledge about what goes on inside classrooms, where learners are learning English. This research investigates, above all, some students’ representations about classroom practice, as regards the contents and the ways in which the English language is taught, in an attempt to attribute active voice to English learners in this process.

This study focuses, specifically, on culture inside the language classroom, that is, on the meanings students attribute to it and on the role it plays in language learning, where the language-culture relationship is at stake. Even though culture in the language classroom is an important aspect of the teaching and learning process and of the educational policies, few studies have researched the role of culture in EFL classrooms in practice. As Gimenez (2002) points out, The

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<sup>2</sup> The term *English undergraduate students* is being used in this research instead of *English student-teachers* given that this study encompasses a broader population which includes not only the English learners who have chosen to major in Teaching but also the ones who are studying for the Bachelor and the ones who still haven’t decided between a Bachelor degree or a Teaching Degree.

Brazilian NCP (National Curriculum Parameters) in its section about the teaching of foreign languages discusses the importance of studying languages as a way to know and contrast many cultures and therefore provide students with the opportunity to understand their own culture and if necessary, change their own context.

Culture is no doubt a very difficult issue to research, due to the many meanings it has acquired across time (Stern, 1992; Hall, 1997), and the many ways of viewing it provided by different areas of inquiry. Thus, the significance of this study is exactly that – bringing culture from the background to the fore of practical research – as culture has long resided in theoretical accounts, at least in Applied Linguistics. Furthermore, getting to know students' perceptions about culture in their language classroom may help teachers by shedding light on the discussions about language and culture through students' perspectives. At the same time, given that many of these students are also studying to become teachers, this research may contribute to the area of language teacher education.

### 1.3 ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis is organized in five chapters. In this first chapter, Chapter I, I have briefly introduced the research, presented the general problem to be investigated and the significance of an empirical research which focus on culture in the language classroom. In chapter 2, I will review literature that deal with the relationship between language and culture, especially in Applied Linguistics and I will also revise some empirical studies about culture teaching and learning inside language classrooms. In chapter 3, I will introduce the methods used to collect and analyse the data, the context where the research was conducted and the participants of the study. In chapter 4, I will present the analysis and discussion of the representations about culture and about culture learning encountered among the participants of the study. Finally in chapter 5, I will conclude the thesis, by discussing its main findings in light of literature on language and culture, I will present the limitations of the study and I will also make suggestions for further research.

## 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The aim of this chapter is to revise the relevant literature in Applied Linguistics that deals with the role of culture in foreign/ second language classrooms. For that purpose, first I will discuss the relationship between language and culture and the diverse meanings that culture has acquired through time. After that, I will discuss the teaching and learning of culture in foreign/ second language classrooms through time and I will present the construct I chose to analyse the discourse of my participants – representations. I will end this chapter revising some empirical qualitative studies on culture inside foreign/ second language classrooms in Brazil and abroad.

### 2.1. CONCEPTS OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

In choosing the definitions of language and culture that would be used in this study, I decided to select the ones that, in some way, were attempting to make a connection between the two concepts. It was particularly challenging to research and come to terms as regards the concepts of culture, given that, as the sociologist Stuart Hall (1997) admits, culture is one of the most difficult concepts in the human and social sciences. Thus, in the next paragraphs, I will try to define language, culture and to discuss the relationship between the two.

The view of language that is used in this research is in accordance to that of Norton and Toohey (2002) and Norton (2010) in which language is viewed not only as a linguistic system of signs and symbols or a medium of communication, but essentially as discourse, a **complex social practice** that carries value systems and power relations, widely used for the negotiation of meanings by speakers with diverse intentions. According to Norton (2010), language as discourse is integral to poststructuralist theories of language that “build on, but are distinct from, structuralist theories of language associated predominantly with the work of Ferdinand de Saussure (1966)” (Norton, 2010, p. 1). Norton (2010) goes on to explain that, for structuralists, language is a system that provides stable meanings to signs, and because of that, it cannot account for struggles over these meanings. Her view of language is based on the ideas of some poststructuralist theorists such as Michel Bakhtin (1981, 1984); Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1991); Christine Weedon (1997); Stuart Hall (1997).

Stuart Hall (1997), trying to understand the connection of culture and representation, discusses the relationship between language and culture. For Hall (1997), language is the privileged medium by which people make sense of the world around them, by which meaning is produced and exchanged and as such it is the key repository of cultural values. As regards culture, Hall (1997) states that it is “what distinguishes the ‘human’ element in social life from what is simply biologically driven” (Hall, 1997, p. 3). Based on Bauman (1973), Risager (2007) calls such definitions of culture as the generic way of approaching culture, which emphasizes what is common to all humans – the fact that they possess language and tools. Similarly, Kramsch (1998) points out that culture is what is nurtured from the technology of words, and not biologically.

According to Hall (1997), for many years, the debate about culture was framed considering the existence of a high culture, represented by literature, painting, music, and philosophy and the existence of a popular or mass culture, represented by widely distributed forms of popular music, art, and entertainment characterizing the “ordinary people”. However, in recent years, as Hall (1997) indicates, culture has received anthropological and sociological definitions, as everything that “is distinctive about the ‘way of life’ of a people, community, nation or social group” (Hall, 1997, p. 2), including the shared values of the referred group or society. This second definition is close to Risager’s argument that there is another way of approaching culture, which she calls the differential way, in which culture is something that “marks off groups of people from each other” (Risager, 2007, p. 33).

Having shown that, according to the mentioned authors, culture is what makes all of us humans and at the same time it is what differentiates humans from one another, we have to consider the importance of, what Hall (1997) calls, the ‘cultural turn’ in the social and human sciences. Hall (1997) argues that since the seventies, **culture has been viewed as a process, a set of practices**, more than a set of things or products. Thus, for Hall (1997):

To say that two people belong to the same culture is to say that they interpret the world in roughly the same ways and can express themselves, their thoughts and feelings about the world, in ways which will be understood by each other (Hall, 1997, p. 2)

Although this definition may appear too unitary, Hall (1997) claims that, diversity will always exist inside the same culture and as such more than one way of interpreting or representing the world. Hall's argument is that the connection between language and culture is done by the work of representation, that is, our culture(s) influence the ways we represent things through language, a topic that I will discuss in more detail in Section 2.3 of this Review of Literature.

In a similar fashion, Kramsch (1998) also emphasizes the notion of shared practice when defining culture, maintaining that culture is "membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting" (Kramsch, 1998, p. 127). In this view, it is interesting to notice how the groups or communities that construct a specific culture, are recognized by the close identity of their discourse and not by biological or other pre-established categories. Therefore, as we have seen in this section, both language and culture are defined as practices that are constructed in social interaction and because of that amenable to change. In the next subsection, I will discuss culture being defined as a form of capital that can be acquired by the individual especially through the socialization in the family and in the school system.

### **2.1.1. Education and students' cultural capital**

Weininger and Lareau (2007) argue that the concept of *cultural capital*, broadly discussed in the literature on education, was first developed by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in the sixties, in an attempt to explain how cultural habits inherited from the family, are crucial to understand the educational attainment of children from different social classes. It seemed productive, in my attempt to grasp the concept, to understand culture also as a form of capital (just like economic capital) that can be acquired by an individual in the path of his or her life. Bourdieu's concern is that, in the educational system, the cultural capital is a specific one in accordance to the values of the upper social class (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 48). The sociologist criticizes the educational system for contributing to "the reproduction of the social structure by sanctioning the hereditary transmission of cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 48)

If we consider the status of English as an international language (McKay, 2003), and therefore English as an important cultural capital in

this century, this becomes even more relevant. In the case of English, Canagarajah (1999) prefers to view the English students in his context as actively appropriating many kinds of cultural capital, including institutional discourse, so as to meet their own needs and purposes, instead of viewing them as subjects acquiring, unthinkingly, the cultural capital transmitted by the school system.

### **2.1.2. Main authors that deal with the relationship between language and culture**

Claire Kramersch has been studying the connection between language and culture for many years. In her book “Language and Culture” from 1998, she acknowledges the intrinsic relationship between the two discussing the non-arbitrariness<sup>3</sup> of language in expressing, embodying and symbolizing cultural reality. For Kramersch (1998), language expresses cultural reality as we use language to refer to common experience or a common stock of knowledge about the world shared by other people. At the same time, language embodies cultural reality because, in order to understand a community or social group, it is not only important to know what their members talk about, but also how they talk about it, that is, the medium they choose to communicate and the way they use this medium (speakers’ tone of voice, accent, style, gestures, facial expressions, etc.) Finally, Kramersch (1998) also recognizes how language symbolizes cultural reality, in that frequently speakers view their language as a symbol of their social identity.

Taking her insights from the weak version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis<sup>4</sup>, Kramersch (1998) argues that there are two main ways in

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<sup>3</sup> Kramersch (1998) argues that the linguistic sign has been called arbitrary, because there is nothing inherent in the nature of the signified object that makes the linguistic signifier the way it is. However, she also emphasizes how, for the language speakers, the linguistic sign is a motivated sign, especially because meaning is constantly created “guided by the human desire for recognition, influence, power, and the general motivation for social and cultural survival. It is in this way that linguistic signs are non-arbitrary” (Kramersch, 1998, p. 23)

<sup>4</sup> According to Kramersch (1998), Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf were researchers of American Indian languages. In the forties, they formulated a hypothesis that posited how language determined the way people thought. This is called the strong version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. The weak version gained respectability with the rise of the social sciences in the seventies and eighties. The weak version posits that language does not determine but only influences what people routinely do think.



which culture influences language – through the semantic (encoded) and the pragmatic (contextual) meanings conveyed by culture. As regards the semantic meanings, she explains that “language, as a code, reflects cultural preoccupations and constrains the way people think” (Kramersch, 1998, p. 14). As for the pragmatic meanings, Kramersch (1998) also recognizes that the context is essential in complementing the meanings already encoded in a language, which are expressed through the actual use of this language. Finally, it is important to highlight how power relations influence the discursive construction of culture. In that sense, Kramersch (1996) admits that even though culture is constantly being constructed by people in everyday life, it is also arbitrary, because as she argues:

But, of course, culture is arbitrary, which doesn't mean it is gratuitous, only that **different events could have been recorded if other people had had the power to record them**, different patterns could have been identified, these patterns in turn could have been differently enunciated (p. 3).

Just like Kramersch (1993), Byram (1989) also discusses the relationship between language and culture in the language classroom. He fosters foreign language education and not simply foreign language skill-training and thus, the inclusion of cultural studies and language awareness in EFL classrooms. For Byram (1989) the connection between language and culture is one in which language “embodies the values and meanings of culture, refers to cultural artifacts, that is, refers beyond itself and signals peoples’ cultural identity” (Byram, 1989, p. 41). In what regards English teaching and learning, Byram (1989) states that even in countries where English is taught as a foreign language, “the absolute separation of lexical items from their original reference is extremely difficult” (Byram, 1989, p. 42). Therefore, for Byram (1989) and Kramersch (1998) culture is in the nature of language and, in their ways, they wanted to demonstrate the connections between the culture of a community and its language.

In a different way, as Risager (2007) herself admits, she is most interested in identifying the borders and not the connections between language and culture. She is concerned with the danger in ascribing identity between language and culture, as if the concepts were completely inseparable. For her, the risk lays in understanding culture as totally language-dependent and leaving aside from the language

classroom everything cultural that is not related to the specific language under study, such as what Holliday (1999) terms subcultures – the many regional, ethnic, racial, gendered, professional, religious affiliations of people. Risager (2007) argues that, especially due to the processes of globalization and migration of people, it is very hard to sustain that for every language there is a culture.

Risager (2007) goes on to explain that the linking of language and culture to a national territory (a country or region) started with the German-speaking J. G. Herder in the 1760s, it was cultivated by German national-romanticism and it was later expanded to other European countries and the world during the nation-building period in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The researcher contents that, in language education, this idea gained greatest value in 1980s and 1990s, when the object of language teaching was being described as language-and-culture or language-and-cultural with the works of Byram, Morgan and colleagues (1994) and Roberts et al (2001). The belief was that in order to learn a language the student should also learn “about cultural phenomena in the countries where the target language is spoken” (Risager, 2007, p. 9). Risager (2007) names this idea the first-language bias or native-speaker bias within linguistics. She argues that this inseparability between language and culture does not consider language being learned as a second or foreign language, when many cultures come into contact.

## 2.2. CULTURE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN EFL<sup>5</sup>/ ESL<sup>6</sup> CLASSROOMS ACROSS TIME

The discussions above on the potential meanings that culture has acquired across time and the relationship between language and culture in language education, aligned with an understanding of the history of pedagogies to English language teaching through time are both relevant to help us understand how culture became such a contentious topic in English language learning. In the next lines, I offer some insights into culture learning in English language classrooms.

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<sup>5</sup> EFL or English as a Foreign Language refers to the teaching of English in countries where the language is not widely used in communication or in institutional documents.

<sup>6</sup> ESL or English as a Second Language refers to the teaching of English in countries where the language is broadly used in communication and/ or in institutional documents.

Applied Linguists like Stern (1992), Kramsch (1996), Lo Bianco, Liddicoat and Crozet (1999) and Corbett (2003) all have attempted to trace the history of culture learning in English language classrooms. Stern (1992) agrees with Hall's view already stated before (1997) that there were two main concepts of culture out there associated with two historical periods, before and after World War II. As Stern (1992) suggests, before World War II, culture teaching meant teaching the great accomplishments of the target community in arts, music, drama, and also its history, geography, and institutions. However, after World War II, the growth of social science led to an emphasis on the 'way of life' of a community, namely, its typical behavior in daily situations. According to Stern (1992), this new emphasis resulted from "the application to modern western societies of a concept of culture which derived from anthropological studies of tribal societies in the inter-war years" (Stern, 1992, p. 207).

Lo Bianco et al (1999) making the case for intercultural competence in language education, discuss how the teaching of culture has developed through time. They summarize four approaches of culture teaching in language teaching history: the traditional approach, the culture studies' approach, the 'culture as social practice' approach and the intercultural approach. For them, the traditional approach relates specially to the teaching of literature as solely high culture and emphasizing written language. Culture learning in this view comes in terms of "knowing a valued text, rather than viewing the text as a window onto broader aspects of culture" (Lo Bianco et al, 1999, p. 18). Similarly, for Kramsch (1996), literature, in the modern world, was the universal link between language and culture that speakers of various languages could share across social and national boundaries.

The second approach, the Culture Studies approach, as indicated by Lo Bianco et al (1999), was associated to learning a body of knowledge about the countries – their history, geography, and institutions – in a tourist-like way, in which the learner knows about the country, but remains external to it. Likewise, Kramsch (1996) recognizes that there was a split between language and culture in this view, given that language was the mere conduit for the transmission of a cultural knowledge that existed out there independent of language. Therefore, both the Traditional – literature teaching, and the Culture Studies approach – teaching about the Land, in their own ways, emphasize culture learning as learning about the target community.

The third approach to teaching culture, as argued by Lo Bianco et al (1999), became famous in the 1980s as a result of work by anthropologists such as Gumperz (1971, 1982) and Smolicz (1981). The central aim of the 'culture as social practice' approach was to describe the practices and values that characterized a certain society – what people from this society were likely to do and what cultural values were placed upon certain actions and beliefs. According to Kramersch (1996), the cultural component of language teaching came to be regarded as “the pragmatic functions and notions expressed through language in everyday ways of speaking and acting” (Kramersch, 1996, p. 5). Culture learning seemed to be regarded then as learning how to perform pragmatic functions of language in order to fulfill basic human needs.

The fourth approach, the intercultural approach, is the one favored by Lo Bianco et al (1999). They start describing the intercultural approach in opposition to the communicative approach of the 80s. For them, the aim of the intercultural approach is to support “the development of intercultural competence through the learning of foreign languages and by extension through the learning of how language and culture connect in one’s first and target language” (Lo Bianco et al, 1999, p. 11). They argue that behavioral changes aiming at cross-cultural understanding, peace and tolerance are more likely to occur through intercultural language teaching. According to the authors, the fundamental aspects of an Intercultural approach are a) the teaching of a linguaculture, b) the comparison between learners’ first language/culture and target language/culture and c) the work with intercultural exploration.

Gimenez (2002) having had contact with Lo Bianco and colleagues’ ideas about intercultural language teaching and the four approaches to culture teaching mentioned by Lo Bianco et al (1999), contends that the third approach discussed above, ‘cultural as social practice’, comprises what became known, in the 70’s and 80’s, as the communicative approach. Also, the intercultural approach was incorporated by many scholars in language education, who may have discussed it in different ways. Therefore, the next subsections of this chapter are intended at clarifying the latest discussions on language and culture in language education, in which the communicative approach, the intercultural approach and globalization/ transnational processes were at the core of the debate.

### **2.2.1. The communicative approach – *Using language to function in any ‘culture’***

In his book “An intercultural approach to English language teaching”, Corbett (2003) states that culture was relegated by communicative language teaching, especially because the transactional character of the communicative language teaching – “its focus on knowledge of how to do things with language – had overshadowed its cultural aspects” (Corbett, 2003, p. 21). The researcher also affirms that the marginalization of culture in communicative curricula has been surprising, given that “the key idea of communicative competence was adapted from the work of a sociolinguist, Dell Hymes” (Corbett, 2003, p. 20).

The sociolinguist Dell Hymes (1972) had coined the term communicative competence not only to refer to a person’s ability to construct grammatically acceptable sentences as in Chomsky’s linguistics (1957), but her ability to construct appropriate sentences, that would include, for example, when to speak, when not, with whom, in what manner, etc. Based on Loveday (1981), Corbett (2003) sustains that sociolinguistics promised to contribute to a cultural perspective to communicative language teaching, in that its interest lies in the structures of discourses and in the “ways in which linguistic markers and procedures identify speakers and writers as members of a particular group” (Corbett, 2003, p. 10). Corbett (2003) contends that sociolinguistics delivered these promises only to some extent, for example, in the study, description and teaching of politeness formulae, while some other aspects, such as “the social construction of self and others, have been comparatively neglected” (Corbett, 2003, p. 10).

According to Corbett (2003), the communicative approach<sup>7</sup> is based on a notional-functional syllabus, needs analysis and information gap activities. He argues that information gap activities entailing the exchange of information between students who would have it and students who wouldn’t, did not ask the important question such as whether the learners would want to exchange the specific information

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<sup>7</sup> Corbett (2003) argues that the communicative approach was extremely influenced by Morrow’s and Johnson’s book, *Communication in the Classroom*, from 1981, that discussed the three pillars of communicative language teaching – notional-functional syllabus, needs analysis and information gap activities, which basically provided ways of *doing things*, or using language to transfer information.

involved. For Corbett (2003) “personal information is exchanged for its own sake” (Corbett, 2003, p. 23). Although recognizing that these kinds of activities remain important to any language classroom interested in involving students in communication, Corbett (2003) summarizes his critique to the communicative approach stating that it underrated culture, when it assumed that

By bridging a series of information gaps, learners [would] ‘naturally’ develop their linguistic knowledge and skills, ultimately to the point where they [would] acquire native-speaker competence” (p. 1).

In a similar way and taking some insights from Phillipson’s *Linguistic Imperialism*, from 1992, Kramersch (1996) argues that although language teaching in the 70s and 80s at the peak of the communicative approach, was made to meet the needs of local speakers and hearers and thus to serve more democratic social goals, the reliance on universal speech functions to meet those needs was problematic in that it associated universal human needs to universal ways of thinking and talking about those needs. The criticism that Lo Bianco and colleagues (1999) target to the communicative approach is that it left the learner “primarily within his/her own cultural background, observing and interpreting the words and actions of an interlocutor from another cultural background” (Lo Bianco et al, 1999, p. 9).

Therefore, for the authors discussed in this subsection, the discomfort with the communicative approach is that even if the purpose of Hymes (1972) might have been to demonstrate how cultures have specific structures of discourse, later developments of the communicative approach, by emphasizing speech functions that could be universally transferred to any language, did not address the particularities of a language as the manifestation of a culture.

### **2.2.2. Intercultural approach – *The hope to establish the connection between language and culture***

Kramersch (1993) affirms that in foreign language education, the belief that, because we are all humans and have the same basic human needs we can agree on how to fulfill these needs in situations of everyday life, gave prominence to functional and pragmatic approaches to foreign language teaching and learning. For Kramersch (1993) the

problem resided in the teaching of culture from a functional or pragmatic perspective, given that culture is “difference, variability, and always a potential source of conflict when one culture enters into contact with another” (Kramersch, 1993, p. 1). The researcher admits that she is not interested in the universal but in the particular meanings that a language can express, in contextual differences and in seeing how learner variability affects her or his perception of the world. To that end, she concludes “language use is indissociable from the creation and transmission of culture” (Kramersch, 1993, p. 9).

Still discussing language teaching and learning, Kramersch (1993) states that, in FL/SL acquisition, a learner’s linguistic development has been viewed on an interlanguage continuum, with the construct “native speaker” as the endpoint. Given that she considers language study as the “initiation into a kind of social practice that is at the boundary of two or more cultures” (Kramersch, 1993, p.9), she argues that there is no point in trying to attach oneself exclusively to native speakers’ norms. She claims for the creation, inside the classroom, of a “social, linguistic reality that is born from the L1 speech environment of the learners and the social environment of the L2 native speakers, but is a third culture in its own right” (p. 9).

Kumaravadivelu (2008) argues that it was after Kramersch’s appropriation of Bhabha’s concept of third places to foreign language and culture learning that the intercultural approach became most celebrated and spread to other countries. In Brazil, Gimenez (2002) wrote a theoretical paper advocating the use of the intercultural approach in order for students to identify culture in the foreign language they are learning and thus be able to reflect on their own world views. Similarly, Serrani (2004) being herself an Argentinian living in Brazil, is interested in discussing socio-cultural aspects of language in the teachers’ practice, not only in theory. She calls for teachers to become cultural mediators between the culture(s) of students and the culture associated with the target language they are learning.

Based on Byram (1997) and Guilherme (2002), Corbett (2003) argues that “the ultimate goal of an intercultural approach to language education is not so much ‘native-speaker’ competence but rather an ‘intercultural communicative competence’. This competence would be that of understanding the language and behavior of the target community and explaining it to the ‘home’ community and vice versa. Corbett (2003) suggests that an intercultural approach to language teaching and learning is an attempt to value and bring to the fore

students' home culture, helping them acquire strategies for the systematic observation of behavioral patterns in their own and the target language, that is, training them to be ethnographers.

The intercultural approach came to be opposing itself to communicative language teaching that focused only on skills and functions for language use. The intercultural approach tries to restore the importance of content, which will always be cultural. The approach also gives prominence to learners' home culture valuing it as much as the target language's culture. The language classroom, in this paradigm, is a third place for comparison and discussion of cultures. We turn now to the discussion on the changes that global flows of meaning (Risager, 2007) have leveled on the relationship between language and culture in language education.

### **2.2.3. Globalization/ Transnational Processes – *Many identities, many cultures***

As it was stated before, Risager (2007) argues that the standard concept of culture in TESOL<sup>8</sup> has traditionally linked language to a national territory. Similarly, Atkinson (1999) argues that the most dominant view of culture in TESOL defined it as geographically and nationally distinct entities providing rules and norms that determined personal behavior. Atkinson (1999) goes on to explain that poststructuralist and postmodern critiques of this concept of culture have helped us understand the role of individual agency in creating their environments, even though in a frequently constrained social world. This author argues that, because of the traditional concept of culture in TESOL as something fixed and stable

“many TESOL practitioners and theorists have gradually come to eschew the concept of culture largely or altogether finding other concepts and categories – such as identity and difference – by which to treat some of the phenomena that were earlier dealt with under culture” (p. 625)

However, based on Shore (1996), Atkinson (1999) argues that only avoiding the concept of culture in TESOL is not the solution and that this poststructuralist critique of the traditional concepts of culture

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<sup>8</sup> Teaching English for speakers of other languages



should be used to refine the notion of culture rather than to reject it. He claims that

“if we can develop a notion of culture in TESOL that takes into account the cultural in the individual, and the individual in the cultural, then we will have a conceptualization that will stand us in good stead in the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (Atkinson, 1999, p. 648).

Kumaravadivelu (2008) also criticizes the notion of culture that, for a long time, has informed foreign language education – one in which there is a C1 (native culture) associated to a L1 (native language) and a C2 (target culture) associated to a L2 (target language). He argues that even after the contributions of theoreticians advocating for intercultural language teaching to language education (Kramsch, 1993, 1996; Lo Bianco et al, 1999), culture was not seen as being affected, as it is, by the processes of globalization. He defines globalization as referring to a:

Dominant and driving force that is shaping a new form of interconnections and flows among nations, economies and peoples. It results in the transformation of contemporary social life in all its economic, political, cultural, technological, ecological, and individual dimensions (p. 32).

As for cultural globalization, Kumaravadivelu (2008) argues that it relates to the many new contacts between people and their cultures – their ideas, values, and ways of life – that was made possible by the process of globalization. In this global context, people’s subjectivities and identities are at stake. Hall (1992) has stated, convincingly, that stable identities from the past are collapsing in late Modernity<sup>9</sup> and giving birth to new identities (sometimes contradictory and unresolved), fragmenting the modern individual. This is particularly true if we consider the construction of students’ identities in the path of learning a language. For Kumaravadivelu (2008) the construction of students’ identities on a strong foundation of global cultural consciousness is better achieved when we, as language teachers, do not confine the

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<sup>9</sup> Giddens (1991) uses the term “late modernity” to depict a post-traditional order characterized by a highly reflexive way of life, in which relations of time and space are restructured.

teaching of culture to the culture of the target language community alone but rather when we give students the opportunity to discuss the multiplicity of realities and cultures that are out there in the world.

Likewise, Risager (2007) contends that language teaching as a sociocultural and institutional activity is inserted in the contemporary global flow of meaning and she wants to emphasize how languages spread across cultures and cultures spread across languages. Reflecting on the language classroom, Risager (2007) argues that much present-day foreign language teaching has a bilateral scheme – between students’ national culture and the national culture of the target language countries. For Risager (2007), foreign language teaching does not have to be bilateral – it can be multilateral and still be characterized by the national paradigm. She contends that in the language classroom,

A multidimensional linguistic and cultural contact will, under all circumstances, be involved, one in which sex, social class, life experiences and mastery of language will be able to play a role (p. 24).

From this perspective, cultural globalization and transnational processes influence language students in language classrooms everyday, and put the focus on the many small cultures individuals belong to and the many identity possibilities they have available in the globalized world. In this sense, the language classroom is much more than a third place between the national culture of learners and the national culture of the native speakers; it is a mixture of national, regional, group, and professional cultures. Therefore, after having discussed the many theoretical accounts on the role of culture in language teaching, I will now discuss the construct I chose to use to understand the discourse of my participants, that is, I will reflect on *representations*.

### 2.3. THE STUDY OF REPRESENTATIONS

This study tries to understand some students’ representations about culture and culture learning in their English classes at the Federal University of Santa Catarina. Therefore, I have tried to review some theoretical accounts on representations. Stuart Hall in his book “Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices” tries to offer readers insights on how representation works in everyday social practice. For him, representation is the production of meaning through language and

therefore it is what makes the connection between language and culture. Hall (1997) argues that:

We give things meaning by how we represent them – the words we use about them, the stories we tell about them, the images of them we produce, the emotions we associate with them, the ways we classify and conceptualize them, the values we place on them (p. 3).

According to the author, there are three approaches to explaining how representation of meaning through language works – the reflective or mimetic, the intentional and the constructionist approach. The first approach says that language works by “simply reflecting or imitating the truth that is already there and fixed in the world” (Hall, 1997, p. 24). The second approach, the intentional, argues the opposite case, as it is us, the speakers or writers, who fix our own unique meanings on the world through language. Hall argues that these two approaches are flawed because the first one does not regard the human agency in creating unique meanings, and the second one does not consider how language depends on shared codes and conventions in order for meanings to be shared and understood.

The third approach, favored by Hall (1997), the constructionist approach, recognizes that:

Neither things in themselves nor the individual users of language can fix meaning in language. Things don't mean: we construct meaning, using representational systems – concepts and signs (p. 25).

Hall (1997) goes on to argue that “it is social actors who use the conceptual systems of their culture and the linguistic and other representational systems to construct meaning” (Hall, 1997, p. 25). This is why meanings always change from one culture or period to another.

Discussing the many complex constructs used in social sciences, such as beliefs, representations and social representations in order to define the theoretical perspective in their study about English teachers' discourse, Freire and Lessa (2003) select the notion of representation to guide their work. Based on Celani and Magalhães (2002), they define representations as “socio-constructed ways of

perceiving, shaping, negotiating, signifying, sharing and/or resizing phenomena, mediated by language and conveyed by expressive lexical and/or symbolic choices that give rise to the recognition of a repertoire that identifies the individual and his socio-historic relation to the environment, to the other and to himself”<sup>10</sup> (Freire & Lessa, 2003, p. 136).

In presenting these two definitions of representation, by Hall (1997) and Freire and Lessa (2003), I want to suggest that the discourses of my participants – the undergraduate students of English at UFSC – on language and culture can be viewed as representations that while deeply founded socio-culturally and historically, are not determined by socio-cultural and historical conditions but only influenced by them. Both perspectives on representation presented in this study, emphasizing the social construction of meanings, have the advantage of not taking out the agency of participants in constructing their own discourses and presenting, at the same time, the influence of students’ past experiences and culture(s) in their views about the role of culture in EFL classrooms.

#### 2.4. QUALITATIVE STUDIES ON LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Some researchers have devoted themselves to the challenging task of studying the role of culture in EFL or ESL classrooms. Those investigations were basically of three types: analysis of teachers’ discourse about the relationship between language and culture - through questionnaires and interviews (Stapleton, 2000; Sarmiento, 2004; Forlin, 2009); analysis of teachers’ pedagogic practice regarding culture learning - through observation (Sarmiento, 2004; Menard-Warwick, 2009); and analysis of the cultural content in classroom materials - through documental analysis of textbooks (Vidal, 2009). As it was possible to see, the English teachers were the most investigated population in these studies, whereas it was not possible to find research solely regarding English undergraduate students, who are the population of this study. However, because one of the major objectives of the undergraduate program in English at UFSC is to educate English teachers (some students already work as teachers) and because my own objective in this research is to understand culture learning and teaching in English classrooms, I have revised empirical studies which deal with EFL/ ESL teachers’ discourse on the relationship between language and

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<sup>10</sup> My translation

culture and their pedagogic practice with culture learning inside the English classroom.

The study by Stapleton (2000) researched native English speaking teachers' views on the role of culture in TEFL. Twenty-eight university-level teachers in Japan responded to a questionnaire providing comments about the extent and nature of the culture they teach. His results demonstrated that while respondents felt that culture should be part of TEFL, they included it in their classes more randomly than other aspects of their teaching. Teachers also had given serious thought and taken action to make changes in their teaching style based on the observation of their students' cultural style of learning. Moreover, responses to questions on ELT textbooks revealed that participants had some dissatisfaction with the way they treated culture.

Sarmento (2004) aiming at analyzing the kinds of cultural aspects that were approached in EFL classrooms in the south of Brazil, observed and interviewed seven English teachers from a private language school. When analyzing the interviews, the researcher detected four definitions of culture provided by her participants. For them, culture was defined as people's behavior and habits; information; language and history. Likewise, when analyzing the classrooms' videotapes, Sarmento (2004) perceived that only visible cultural aspects were being taught encouraging, many times, the creation of stereotypes. She, then, concluded that:

The classroom practice does not offer enough opportunity for students to develop their intercultural communicative competence, since it is focused on transmitting cultural information, many times out of context or without considering language use in social interaction (p. 241). [my translation]

The research which is methodologically closest to this one is Forlin's study with EFL in-service teachers and EFL teacher's educators from PAC (Pedagogic Advisory Center) of the Federal University of Paraná, in Brazil. Forlin (2009) made use of questionnaires, interviews and field notes to investigate these teachers' views about language, culture and cultural identity. Her results showed that both in-service teachers and teachers' educators, in their day-to-day practice, were working with language as a code and not as a discourse, and with traditional approaches to EFL teaching, in which structural elements of

the language were emphasized and isolated cultural aspects were taught. Moreover, the teachers in the study perceived language and culture as two inseparable entities, but not as two facets of the same coin. They perceived language as a tool for communication and culture as a framework of knowledge(s). In the same vein, the construction of cultural identity was not problematized by the participants.

More inspiring results were found by Menard-Warwick (2009), in a research conducted in three university EFL classrooms in Chile and three community college ESL classrooms in California. In the study the researcher was trying to examine through classroom observation, the approaches used in teaching culture, how particular cultures were represented, how these representations were co-constructed by teachers and students, and the ways in which the observed cultural pedagogies seemed to cultivate interculturality.<sup>11</sup> Menard-Warwick (2009) showed that:

Although teaching culture was not the primary goal in any of these classes, the teachers generally provided space for students to problematize cultural issues; however, this problematization did not necessarily lead to interculturality (p. 30).

In sum, each of these studies has contributed to enhance our understanding of the status of culture teaching and learning in English language classrooms. Stapleton (2000) and Menard-Warwick (2009) have emphasized that teaching culture was not the primary goal of the English teachers or of the observed classes, but that in both studies teachers have tried to either make changes in their own teaching style in order to accommodate their learners' cultural style of learning (Stapleton, 2000) or they have provided considerably safe spaces for their students to discuss hot cultural issues (Menard-Warwick, 2009). Nevertheless, both studies by Sarmiento (2004) and Forlin (2009), developed in the south of Brazil have demonstrated that culture in English language classrooms is still viewed as knowledge to be apprehended and that culture learning, for many teachers, still means

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<sup>11</sup> Based on Byram, (1997), Menard-Warwick (2009) defines interculturality in EFL/ ESL classrooms as involving attitudes of curiosity and openness, skills in interpretation and mediation, and a critical awareness of conflicting perspectives.

transmitting isolated cultural information, therefore enlarging the distance between language and culture.

## 2.5. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In this Review of Literature I have attempted to demonstrate the many concepts of culture that have informed foreign language teaching. For that purpose, I had to discuss why culture is such an important issue for language and language teaching and learning. After discussing the possible links between language and culture, I tried to show how culture learning has been understood in foreign/ second language learning, followed by a discussion on the concepts of representations, which are very important for my research. Finally, I reviewed four qualitative studies in foreign and second language classrooms which aimed at understanding the role of culture in classroom practice and in students' and teachers' discourse about the language classroom. In the next chapter I will discuss the methods used in the research process.





### 3 METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to explain how the research was conducted and which methods were used during the research process. Thus, first I will present the reasons behind my interest in conducting a research on culture in foreign language classrooms and I will introduce the general context of the *Letras Inglês* program at UFSC. After that, I will present the participants of the study, followed by information about the data collection, in which the research instruments, namely a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews will be described. Then I will demonstrate how the data was analyzed and I will also present the objectives of the study and the research questions addressed. A summary of the chapter is offered at the end.

#### 3.1. INTEREST IN CONDUCTING A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN EFL CLASSROOMS

Since I graduated in Portuguese and English languages by the State University of Londrina, I have been teaching English and Portuguese for foreigners in Florianópolis, a touristic city in the south of Brazil. These experiences have proven to be very enlightening to me, especially the contact I have with foreign students from Japan, China, South Africa, Israel, Iran, Norway, Spain, USA, and Colombia, just to mention a few. From the experiences teaching Portuguese for foreigners, I could notice that: a) almost all students speak English fluently and are using this language in their own way, with their own accents, to meet their purposes; b) they are usually very much interested in learning cultural facets of Brazil. Whenever a student asked me to teach her Brazilian culture I was puzzled and frequently asked myself what that even meant, considering specially the size of this country. I would eventually end up bringing to the classroom information from different regions of the country that I searched online or I would choose different kinds of music or films. This move was always careful and I would end the class stating that “we should consider that people will differ even apparently belonging to the same “culture”.

This wide contact with users of English that were not necessarily from mainstream English speaking countries allied with the reflection I had to go through all the time I had to teach “my own culture” were the starting points to a project that would focus on the role of culture in language classrooms. Researching culture in English learning contexts

seemed even more challenging for me due to the contemporary status of English as an international language and the debate about the role of culture in this new context. Therefore, the decision to research *the undergraduate program in English at UFSC* came from the desire to accommodate both my anxieties about how far language and culture were connected and my long-established interest in foreign language teacher education.

### 3.2. THE CONTEXT

This subsection was constructed from my analysis of two online documents, available in UFSC's website, about the undergraduate program in English at UFSC, namely *Estrutura do Curso de Letras Língua Inglesa e Literaturas*, and *Currículo do Curso Letras Língua Inglesa e Literaturas 2007/1*, and also from the information provided by the participants of my research as regards their program in English at UFSC.

According to '*Estrutura do Curso de Letras Língua Inglesa e Literaturas*', the undergraduate program in English was created at the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC) in 1959. Nowadays the program offers 40 vacancies per year for students interested in getting one of the two different types of degrees available: a Bachelor degree (BA) or a Teaching degree. The Bachelor degree usually interests students who are going to work with research or translation in English. The Teaching degree allows the future professional to teach in primary and secondary education, or in language schools. The undergraduate program in English consists of 8 phases/ terms that are equivalent to 8 semesters, being that in the first semester of each year, students can be studying at the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, or 7<sup>th</sup> terms of their program in English, while in the second semester, they can be studying at the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> phases.

According to the 2007's new curriculum of the English program at UFSC, students have to take the same mandatory modules until they finish the fourth semester of the program. Those modules are mostly introductions to literature, translation, and language studies or modules in which the focus is to provide students with competence in oral and written English. After finishing this basic cycle, students must choose between getting a BA degree or a Teaching degree to complete the four next phases of the program. In both options (BA or Teaching), students will have some mandatory modules but also the possibility to take more optional courses than they had had in the first four phases.

The English program at UFSC is supposed to be completed in a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 14 semesters, the BA degree having a duration time of 2880 hours, from which 288 hours are optional modules. Students doing the BA in English must also complete 180 hours of complementary academic activities. The Teaching Degree has a duration time of 3390 hours, from which 108 hours are optional modules. In order to get the Teaching Degree students must also fulfill 240 hours of complementary academic activities.

An important information about the undergraduate program at *Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina* is that students may be in different phases of the program and still be in the same class of the modules “*Compreensão e Produção Oral em Língua Inglesa*”, what I will be calling *Oral English*, and “*Compreensão e Produção Escrita em Língua Inglesa*” what I will name *Written English*. This is because in the beginning of the program they have the opportunity to take a placement test, through which their level of communicative competence in the language is evaluated, both orally and through a written test. The students who participated in the interviews talked about this test:

*Interviews:*

*Jane: ((...)) I didn't want to take the placement test because my English was terrible that I knew it wouldn't be worthy, and then I started doing English since the 1<sup>a</sup> phase, and in the 1<sup>a</sup>, 2<sup>a</sup>, 3<sup>a</sup> and 4<sup>a</sup> phases the book Interchange is used with the CD.*

*Gisele: I opted not to take the placement test, because I wanted to learn from the very beginning, because it had been a long time since I studied.*

*Theo: ((...)) I took the placement test and then I passed to the 5<sup>a</sup> phase, then I did the 5<sup>a</sup>, the 6<sup>a</sup> and now I am doing the 7<sup>a</sup> and then in the 5<sup>a</sup> already ((...)) it was more focused + you know + it wasn't exactly language + there was language + but we studied ++ language acquisition + and in the 6<sup>a</sup> phase + we studied foreign language teaching and learning ((...)) and now for example + it is Systemic Functional linguistics in the 7<sup>a</sup> phase + it is as if the module is not English for me ((...)) sometimes I forget that the module is called English VII.*

Therefore students have the option to take the placement test if they believe they don't need to be exposed to Basic English instruction, provided in the first four phases of the modules *Oral and Written*

*English*. As we observed in the examples above, some students decide not to take the test. The students who take it and start studying in the third or fifth phase of *Oral and Written English* meet, in these classes, students from many different phases in the program. This way, we may have students who have just started the undergraduate program in English, but at the same time, they did well in the placement test and so are enrolled in *Oral English V*. Also, until the fourth phase, as Jane pointed out, the book *Interchange* is adopted in the English classes as a guide for work with communicative skills. Theo argues that, from the fifth phase on, no specific book is adopted in the English classes and that their focus is not on the study of the English language but on language studies in general, with topics such as language acquisition, foreign language learning and Systemic Functional Linguistics.

### 3.3. THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants of this research are undergraduate students of English from UFSC who, at the time of data collection, were enrolled in the modules *Oral English I*, *Oral English V* and *Oral English VII*. The course *Oral English* was chosen due to its presence in all phases of the program, which could provide a broader picture of students in the beginning, in the middle and in the end of their program at UFSC. Moreover, as the objective of the research was to understand students' representations about the role of culture in the language classroom, investigating this topic on this specific course could make them reflect about culture in their own English classes at University. In the next lines, I will describe the three groups which participated in the first phase of the research, answering a questionnaire and the students from each of the three groups who contributed to the second phase of the study, participating in private interviews with the researcher.

#### 3.3.1. *Oral English I*

The group *Oral English I* consisted of 15 students, who were just starting their undergraduate program in English at UFSC. The group was formed by young adults, given that 60% of the students were aged between 16 and 23 years old, 33% of them were aged between 24 and 31 years old and only 7% of the students were aged 32 years old or more.

As already stated, students taking *Oral English I* are the ones who did not want to take the placement test in order to advance in the

modules *Oral English* and *Written English* or the ones who took the test but were unable to get a sufficient grade in order to advance in these modules. In sum, these students who did not skip *Oral English I* to go to *Oral English III* or *V*, for example, form a more homogeneous group, since they ideally are at the same level in all academic disciplines, not only the ones where the English language is the focus, while they are also not so dissimilar as regards their ages, usually below thirty years old.

### 3.3.1.1. The interviewed participants from *Oral English I*

Three students from the Oral English I group were invited to participate in interviews with the researcher; namely Juh<sup>12</sup>, Gisele and Regiane. A summary of their profiles<sup>13</sup> is offered below:

**Juh** is a white, seventeen year-old girl from São José, a city in the metropolitan area of Florianópolis. She is the only daughter of a couple who owns a snack bar in São José, where they live. She has always studied in private schools and has always liked English. Nowadays she is taking an English course in a famous private language school in Florianópolis. She was always good in Portuguese and English at school that is why she decided to study English at the University, although she has never liked the idea of becoming a teacher. Her first intention was to study Secretarial at the same University, but she thought that the level of English for this program would be too high. After getting in the program, she regretted a bit for not applying for Secretarial, but now she is considering the possibility of becoming a teacher. She believes English has a higher status in relation to the other foreign languages offered by the Department of languages at UFSC, and her intention is to speak English like a native speaker. Juh still does not know which career she wants to pursue in the future.

**Gisele** is a white, twenty eight year-old girl from Florianópolis, but her parents are from very small towns in the same state. Gisele's mother is a retired seamstress and her father is a retired fisherman, who also worked as a stone cutter to help in the household budget. Gisele has four brothers and she studied at the same public school all her school

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<sup>12</sup> All names used in this research are pseudonyms chosen by the students' themselves.

<sup>13</sup> The information about students' life stories and language learning trajectories were provided by them in the interviews, when they were asked to talk about their past and present experiences, and their future dreams and projects.

years. She has liked English since she was very little, because her family used to listen to American gospel songs. She studied for one year in a private language school in Florianópolis when she got a scholarship. After she finished her school Education she got married to a police officer and moved to a very small town in the south of the state. She worked as a salesperson and as a seamstress, but now, ten years after she finished high school, she decided to apply for the undergraduate program in English at UFSC, motivated by her husband. Gisele always knew she wanted to do an undergraduate program in English. She has just started her studies and she did not want to take the placement test to advance in the modules concerning English learning because, according to her, she wanted to study the language very deeply, from its basis.

**Regiane** is a white, twenty six year-old girl from Florianópolis. She graduated in Law from UFSC and she is now doing her second undergraduate program in the same university. At the moment she is studying in order to get a position to work for the government as a lawyer, but she has already worked in law offices and prosecution offices. Her parents are also from Florianópolis and her mother owns a “bed and breakfast” in a beach neighborhood in the city. During High Season (summer), Regiane sometimes have the opportunity to talk to English speakers that stay in her mother’s guesthouse. Regiane has one brother and one sister. They have always studied in private schools. Her sister is a nurse and her brother is a lawyer. Regiane likes the Human Rights’ area in Law, so she would like to work for the United Nations or other international organizations. She decided to do the undergraduate program in English at UFSC only to improve her language skills.

### 3.3.2. Oral English V

Twenty five students from *Oral English V* answered the questionnaire in their class time. From the total of participants, 72% were aged between 16 and 23 years old, 16% were aged between 24 and 31 years old and only 12% were aged 32 years old or more. Just like the group *Oral English I*, this group also consisted of quite young students, but they were in different phases in the program in modules other than English. Twenty eight (28%) percent of them were in the first phase of the program, thirty six (36%) percent were in the third phase and other thirty six percent (36%) were exactly in the fifth phase (in the program and in English). Therefore, we can say that, in general, this group was composed of young students who had had different times of exposure to disciplines such as Literature, Translation, and Linguistics.

### 3.3.2.1. The interviewed participants from *Oral English V*

Six students from *Oral English V* were invited to participate in interviews with the researcher, namely João Macedo, Will, Olegas, Purple, Gisa, and Clara. From the interviewed participants taking Oral English V, two were in the first phase of the program, João Macedo and Will; one was in the third phase of the program, Olegas; and three were in the fifth phase of the program, Purple, Gisa and Clara. A summary of their profiles is offered below:

#### 3.3.2.1.1. *Students from the 1<sup>st</sup> phase*

**João Macedo** is a white, twenty eight year-old boy from Criciúma, a city in the south of Santa Catarina state. His father is a retired engineer from Santa Catarina and his mother is a retired English teacher from Rio de Janeiro. João had an older brother who passed away four years ago in a car accident. Nowadays João has a scholarship in research on teaching from the undergraduate program in English at UFSC and also gives private English classes. He lives with his parents in Florianópolis and regards to have learnt English since very little with his mother and later doing seven years of English in a private English language school. When he was at the eighth grade, João spent one month in the US to do an English course. He has already started many different programs in different universities, such as veterinary, architecture, and pedagogy. He then came to Florianópolis and graduated in Physical Education at UFSC. After his brother's death, he decided not to continue in the area of Physical Education, given that this was also his brother's major. During this time, João started working by teaching private English classes. As he was already working with English, he decided to apply for a vacancy in the undergraduate program in English at UFSC and he is now very excited about the program. João wants to continue in the university environment – studying in a master and PHD in this area. He intends to speak English like a native speaker and he is very enthusiastic about what he calls “the American culture”.

**Will** is a white, twenty three year-old boy, from Porto Alegre, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, the most southern state in Brazil. He came to Florianópolis in order to be with his girlfriend, who lives in the city. A little after that, his mother also decided to come to Florianópolis with his other eighteen year-old brother and his ten year-old sister. They have been living in Florianópolis together for one year now. Will's

father is a cabinet maker and his mother is working as a waitress. Nowadays Will teaches English in a language school in the city, but when he lived in Porto Alegre he worked at the same school, but as a receptionist. His current life is very busy, because, besides living far away from the University and from his job, he also teaches many hours when he is not at college. As regards his education, Will studied elementary and junior high school in private schools, directed by priests and nuns in Porto Alegre, but he completed high school in a public institution in the same city. Even though he had English as a school subject, Will affirms to have learnt the language studying alone and not in a formal instructional environment. Moreover, he has never studied in private language schools or travelled abroad. Will has just started the undergraduate program in English at UFSC for the opportunity to be in an academic environment and so he does not know yet if he really wants to work with English teaching.

#### *3.3.2.1.2. Student from the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase*

**Olegas** is a white, twenty four years old boy, from Campo Grande, the capital of Mato Grosso do Sul, in the central west region of Brazil. His mother is a civil servant, his father is a retired military and his brother (older than him) works in the aviation field. Olegas came to Florianópolis to study Economics at UFSC, following the steps of his brother, who studied Business Administration at the same University. Olegas completed all his school Education in the Military School of Campo Grande and demonstrates to have enjoyed his time there. He believes his English classes at school were a good basis for him to start learning English in a very well-known private language school in Brazil. He studied in this school for almost seven years. When he finished High School he came to Florianópolis and studied Economics at UFSC for five years, but he did not finish this program because he did not like it. In 2009 he started to realize that what he really liked was English and teaching, thus in 2010 he started the undergraduate program in English at UFSC, almost at the same time when he started teaching English in the private language school where he studied as a teenager. Olegas belongs to the English V group, but he is at the third term in the other modules of the program because he took the placement test and advanced in the modules concerning English.



### 3.3.2.1.3. Students from the 5<sup>th</sup> phase

**Purple** is a white, twenty one year-old girl from Florianópolis. Her father is a doctor from Espírito Santo and her mother is a psychologist from Minas Gerais, both states located in the southeast region of Brazil. Both of her parents are also musicians, although working with music is not their main source of income. Purple has three older brothers: the oldest one, graduated in Physical Education at UFSC, is studying to become a firefighter. Her other one brother and one sister are musicians. Music has always been very important in the family, thus Purple even started an undergraduate program in Music at another public University in the city. However she did not like the program and decided then to do the entrance examination for English at UFSC. As regards her school years before University, she has always studied in private schools and started learning English with a private teacher when she was seven years old. She decided to do the undergraduate program in English at UFSC because she always liked reading and composing songs in English. Purple did not want to take the placement test in English in the beginning of the program, so she is now studying in *Oral English V* and also in the fifth term in the other modules of the program.

**Gisa** is a black, thirty two year-old girl from Florianópolis. Gisa's parents are divorced and she has not seen her father for almost twenty years. She lives with her mother and a ten year-old sister, in a neighborhood near the university. Before retiring, Gisa's mother worked as a lunch lady in "Colégio Aplicação", a school considered of good quality maintained by the federal government, where Gisa got a scholarship to study in primary and secondary education. Gisa's dream had always been to be accepted in the undergraduate program in English at UFSC, and while she could not reach this dream, she did other courses and worked. She worked in sales and also as a secretary, but she ended up realizing she wasn't doing what she really wanted. After studying English in a private University for one year and a half, Gisa was accepted in the undergraduate program in English at UFSC by the system of quotas for afro-descents. Nowadays Gisa teaches Portuguese for foreigners in the extracurricular course of Portuguese at UFSC. She is graduating to be an English teacher and according to her, she prefers to teach English for children. Not long ago, she went on a one-month trip to England in order to improve her oral abilities. She demonstrates to appreciate what she names British 'language-culture', unlike American 'language-culture'.

**Clara** is a white, twenty year-old girl from São José, but she has lived in Palhoça since she was fourteen. Both cities belong to the metropolitan area of Florianópolis. All her family is from Santa Catarina state, her father is a sergeant from Aeronautics and at the moment her mother is unemployed. Clara has a younger brother, who is studying in Aeronautics like his father. Clara works at the University library and she tries to practice English by listening to audio programs in the internet and reading. She studied in two public schools all her school years. She declares to have always been a dedicated student. According to her, at the school she did High school, teachers were graduated from UFSC and they used photocopies of the same book she has been using in the undergraduate program in English at UFSC. Clara still do not know what she intends to do with English in the future, what she knows is that she entered the University in order to learn the language very deeply, purpose that, according to her, is not being reached. Just like João Macedo and Juh, she would like to speak English like a native speaker.

### 3.3.3. Oral English VII

Thirteen students from *Oral English VII* answered the questionnaire during their class time in this module. From the total of 13 participants, 38% were aged between 16 and 23 years old, 31% of them were aged between 24 and 31 years old and other 31% were aged 32 years old or more. As we can see, this group was more heterogeneous as regards their ages, and relatively older than the previous two groups.

Concerning students' phases in the program (for modules other than Oral and Written English), 23% of them were taking the fifth phase of the English program at UFSC, 8% were taking the sixth phase, 61% were taking the seventh phase and only another 8% were taking the ninth phase. Therefore, this group was more homogeneous as regards students' phases in the program, given that 61% of them were taking *Oral English VII* and also studying in the seventh phase, but they were heterogeneous in ages and older than the previous two groups.

#### 3.3.3.1. The interviewed participants from *Oral English VII*

Two students from *Oral English VII* were invited to participate in the interviews, Theo and Jane. As it was shown above, the majority of students taking this module are either in the fifth or in the seventh phase of the program in English at UFSC. Jane and Theo were both in the

seventh phase of the program. A summary of their profiles is offered below:

**Jane**, 35 years old, is a mixed-race woman from Florianópolis. She is married and works as a teacher in kindergarten and elementary education because she got a two-year teaching diploma before starting the undergraduate program in English at UFSC. In the program, she is in the seventh term, also enrolled in English VII. Jane has always studied in public schools. In High School, she studied in a technical school, where, besides learning the contents for High School, she learned a profession. When she finished High School, she did one and a half year of English in a private language school in Florianópolis. After that, she remained twelve years without having any contact with the English language whatsoever. During this period, she was always trying to pass the entrance exams for the public universities in the city. She succeeded three years ago for the undergraduate program in English at UFSC, but because she has always liked Pedagogy she is still unsure about which area she wants to continue studying, English or Pedagogy.

**Theo** is a white, twenty one year-old boy from a very small town in the state of Santa Catarina. His father is a driver, his mother is a housewife and he has a fifteen year-old brother. He came to Florianópolis in order to do the entrance examination for UFSC. He always liked reading and the English language, so he thought about graduating in Journalism or English. At UFSC, he did the exam for English and got the vacancy. Nowadays, Theo has a scientific-initiation scholarship from UFSC and he is always involved with activities related to the University. Before going to the University, he had studied at a public school for all his school years. He really liked this school and specially one English teacher who motivated him to look for a private English language course to improve his language abilities. This way, he studied in this private course for five years. Theo did the placement test in English when he entered the program at UFSC and he was located in English V. He had two experiences travelling to English-speaking countries, one scholarship in High School from the American Embassy in Brazil to go to the US for three weeks and another at University when he participated in an exchange program in an American University for six months.

### 3.4. DATA COLLECTION

The data which will be presented in this research were collected by two means: firstly, on April, 2011, an open-ended questionnaire was applied to three groups taking the module Oral English – *Oral English I*, *Oral English V* and *Oral English VII*, in an attempt to capture students' representations in the beginning, in the middle and in the end of the undergraduate program in English at UFSC; secondly, after performing a preliminary analysis of the questionnaire, eleven students were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews with the researcher. Therefore, students' answers to the questionnaire and the transcriptions of the audio-recorded interviews contributed to form the data of the study. I explain below how the questionnaire was built and how the interviews were conducted.

#### 3.4.1. The questionnaire

The objective of the questionnaire was to elicit students' understanding of culture, its connection to language in the foreign language classroom and students' own relationship with the English language they were learning. Therefore, fourteen questions were created, six of which dealt specifically with language and culture, namely questions number 1, 2, 3, 4, 10 and 14. Although the fourteen questions of the questionnaire were topically related to culture, this research will only address questions number 1, 2, 4 and 10, given that they were the ones more directed to understanding the role of culture in the foreign language classroom. In Appendix I, it is possible to see the complete questionnaire.

Many discussions and readings on the impact of post-modernity in peoples' own sense of self and their culture (Hall, 1992), and on the new contexts that are emerging from the status of English as an international language (McKay, 2003), helped in the construction of the questionnaire. This was designed bearing in mind the hypothesis that these two new scenarios (post-modernity and the status of English as an international language) may also be affecting students' ways of interacting with the English language that they are learning at University.

As regards form, the four questions used in this study, were intentionally open questions. These open questions included three yes or no questions in which students, after answering positively or negatively to each question, were asked to elaborate on their answers discursively

(examples of such questions include questions number 2, 4 and 10) and also one open question in which students had to associate words to the word culture, building, this way, a semantic map. The analysis of the questionnaire was supposed to provide general ideas on the role of culture in the language classroom that could be further and deeper explored in the interviews.

Moita Lopes (1996) also used a questionnaire to elicit his participants' views on the English language and 'its culture'. However, in his study, he only made use of closed questions as techniques of data collection, while in this one I made use of open questions, in which students could discuss their ideas on culture as related to language. Just like Moita Lopes (1996), I also made use of question number 6 "*Is the perfection of the native English your objective in your English language learning? Why?*", in my study, only to provide background information in the profiles of the students who answered positively to this question, as it may explain some representations they hold about culture learning in language classrooms, associating it to native speakers.

Kramsch's (1998) ideas on language and culture and Sarmento's (2004) empirical study on teachers' work with culture in the classroom were inspirations for this research. Questions number 1, 2, and 4 dealt with students' opinions on the relationship between language and culture and the importance of culture in their English learning at University. This was also the objective of question 10, even though in a more indirect way. In short, the purpose of these questions was to have a more ethnographic view of students' representations about culture in their English classes. I will present now information about how the interviews were conducted.

### **3.4.2. The interviews**

After the fifty three questionnaires were collected, an initial analysis of them enabled the researcher to choose some students to interview. Eleven students were invited to participate in private semi-structured interviews with the researcher – three students from the *Oral English I* group, six students from the *Oral English V* group and two students from the *Oral English VII* group. The criterion as regards the number of participants invited from each group was relative to the size of the group and this meant that as the group who participated in the questionnaire was bigger, so was the amount of students invited from that group, as the table below demonstrates:

Groups	Total of participants to the questionnaire	Total of participants to the interviews
Oral English I	15	3
Oral English V	25	6
Oral English VII	13	2

**Table 1: Total of participants interviewed from each group**

The criteria as regards the choice of participants for the interviews were three-fold: to choose students that were in the beginning (1<sup>st</sup> phase), in the middle (3<sup>rd</sup> phase and 5<sup>th</sup> phase) and in the end (7<sup>th</sup> phase) of their program at UFSC; to select students who had learned or were learning English in an instructional foreign language context, such as in Brazil and not in English speaking countries<sup>14</sup>; and finally to choose students based on their answers to the questionnaire<sup>15</sup>. The table below shows the participants of the study and their respective phases/terms in the undergraduate program in English.

	Oral English I	Oral English V	Oral English VII
First Phase	3	2	-
Third Phase	-	1	-
Fifth Phase	-	3	-
Seventh Phase	-	-	2
<b>Total</b>	3	6	2

**Table 2: Interviewed Participants' phases in the program**

As it was stated above, the last criterion for the choice of participants was dependent upon the analysis of the questionnaire. After analyzing it, the researcher realized that some students differed in relation to their views on culture, some of them viewing culture in more

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<sup>14</sup> The criterion in this case was that students should not have more than six months of experience living in English-speaking countries in order to verify how this new 'language-culture' had been appropriated by students in a context where they are surrounded by their national language and culture.

<sup>15</sup> The criterion in this case was to select students who provided more complex answers in the questionnaire, demonstrating willingness to participate, and also students who had shown opposing views on the meanings of culture and its relationship to language.

traditional ways and others, viewing it in more critical ways. In the same token, some students regarded much importance to language when talking about culture, while others seemed to view culture and language separately. Moreover they also differed on their views regarding the importance of native speaking models of language use in their English learning. This way, students' distinct and sometimes contradictory views on these topics intrigued the researcher who afterwards invited these students to participate in the interviews.

In what concerns the content of the interviews, it is possible to say that it had two main parts. In the first part of the interview, the researcher aimed at getting to know better the participants' life stories and language learning trajectories that could explain their representations about culture and culture learning; in the second part the researcher asked students about their answers to the questionnaire, where they could reflect on their opinions about the role of culture in foreign language classrooms in a looser way, talking at their own pace, changing topics or focusing on an issue rather than on others. The questions asked in the interviews can be seen in Appendix II. I explain below how I went about analyzing the data.

### 3.5. DATA TRANSCRIPTION, SEGMENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The fifty three questionnaires collected were analyzed undergoing a thematic analysis in the tradition of Spradley (1979), taking into consideration what exactly students were saying about a determined topic, that is, the themes that emerged as important for each student. After this process of thematic and semantic analysis, the researcher tried to find common points of reference among the respondents' answers. These points of reference developed into categories later on. The reflection on these new emerging categories helped the researcher in the selection of the participants for the interviews. Riessman (2008) describing narrative methods for the human sciences, argues that thematic narrative analysis is methodical and painstaking and that it generates significant findings.

After the eleven interviews were held, they were transcribed following Hatch (1992), then segmented and analyzed in the same line as the questionnaires, that is, through an emic perspective (Pike, 1954) in which the categorization was performed after the thematic analysis and trying to use participants' own words and themes. After that, the interviews' excerpts used in the analysis, which were originally in

Portuguese, were translated into English. Therefore, students' answers to four questions in the questionnaire, namely questions 1, 2, 4, and 10 and their comments about their answers in the interviews form the data to be analyzed in the next chapter. The data were examined and interpreted in light of students' life stories and English learning experiences shared by them in the interviews as well as with the support of prior theory on language and culture.

### 3.6. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The objective of this qualitative research is to investigate English undergraduate students' representations about the role of culture in foreign language classrooms and specifically in their English classes at the undergraduate program in English at UFSC. Therefore, this study is especially interested at debating the teaching and learning of culture in EFL classrooms.

In the attempt to understand the role of culture in EFL classrooms from the perspective of the English students I will be pursuing specific research questions as follows:

- 1) What are English undergraduate students' representations about culture?
- 2) What are English undergraduate students' representations about culture learning in their English classes at UFSC?

As it was stated before, the data informing this study was derived mainly from two research instruments, a questionnaire and interviews. However, when refining the analysis, some students were contacted by email in order to clarify other questions that needed more explanation. Thus, in the data analysis I will report the representations of Juh, Gisele, and Regiane from Oral English I; Clara, Gisa, João Macedo, Olegas, Purple, and Will, from Oral English V; and Jane and Theo, from Oral English VII through questionnaires' answers, interview transcripts and email correspondences.

### 3.7. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter I have discussed the methodological frameworks for the current research. I started by narrating my interest in conducting a research dealing with culture in the language classroom. After that I described the context of the undergraduate program in English at UFSC and the participants of this research. The procedures and instruments for



data collection were presented next, which encompassed an open-ended questionnaire and private semi-structured interviews. After that, I presented the data transcription, segmentation, and analysis. Finally, I introduced the objectives of the study and the research questions addressed. The next chapter will cover data analysis and discussion.



## 4 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This data analysis will present some English students' representations about culture and culture learning in their English classes at UFSC. In order to answer research question number 1) "What are English undergraduate students' representations about culture?" I will consider students' answers to question number one of the questionnaire "*What comes to your mind when you think about culture? What is culture for you?*" where they could associate words to the word culture by means of a semantic map, and their comments about the meanings of culture in the interviews with the researcher.

As for research question number 2) "What are English undergraduate students' representations about culture learning in their English classes at UFSC?" I will examine their answers to questions number two "*Do you think culture is an important aspect in foreign language learning? Why?*" number four "*Do your English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of the English language?*" 4) a) *If so, do you think it helps you learn the language itself? How?*; and number ten "*When learning English, are you learning (have you learnt) things other than only the language? Which things?*" of the questionnaire and their comments and opinions about the topic in the semi-structured interviews. The participants' answers to these questions in the questionnaire and the transcriptions of the interviews can be seen in Appendix III.

### 4.1. REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT CULTURE

Having asked English undergraduate students' views on culture through a semantic map, in which they had to associate and relate words to the word culture (question number 1 of the questionnaire "*What comes to your mind when you think about culture? What is culture for you?*"), it was possible to perceive their overall views about this topic. Considering the 53 respondents of the questionnaire as a whole, the most common words used to describe culture was Language (40%), Knowledge (32%), Art (30%), Music (30%), History (25%), Customs or Habits (25%), People, Man and Human beings (21%), Religion (19%), Identity (17%), and Cinema, movies (16%). This way it was possible to notice students' views on culture as something that is produced and performed by human beings in interaction, such as Language, knowledge, Art, Music, etc.

This view is in accordance to that of Hall (1997) and Kramsch (1998), in which culture is regarded as the symbolic, the ‘human element’ in social life, which grows from the technology of words; unlike nature, something that grows organically, biologically. Furthermore, the words language, knowledge, art and music so strongly attached to culture in students’ representations can also show the influence of the immediate context of being a language student in a renowned public University, where they are expected to be surrounded by ‘legitimate’ knowledge and art of all kinds, where they are expected to acquire ‘legitimate’ cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

When analyzing all words and sentences students have used to describe culture in question number one I was able to arrive at four categories that seemed to be emerging from the data, they were – 1) cultural products and achievements, 2) behavior and customs, 3) knowledge, and 4) sociocultural practices connecting culture to language and identity. In the first category, *cultural products and achievements*, I located the study of countries, as is done in History and the great accomplishments of the target community, such as Arts in general, but also in sports or other achievements. The words related to this view were, for example, Art(s), Music, History, Cinema, Literature, Theater, dances, books, Culinary, expression, parties, games, leisure, Clothing, folklore, Poetry, soap opera, among others.

In the second category, *behavior and customs*, I grouped the words and sentences that referred to what Stern (1992) calls the ‘way of life’ or life-style’ of a community. This author argues that after the World War II, the growth of anthropology and sociology as sciences changed the emphasis of cultural studies from the great accomplishments of a society to its typical behavior in daily situations. Students’ semantic choices that characterized this view of culture were: customs, tradition, religion, habits, behavior, way of living, peoples, places, food, lifestyle, countries, groups, generation, family, community, origins, accents, heritage, among others.

The third category “*knowledge*” presents two different perspectives on culture. The first view would relate to the act of knowing something, of having acquired structured information about different cultures, for example. Words related to this view include: general knowledge, wisdom, learning, and means of learning. The second view associate knowledge to the formal instruction offered by schools and universities, for example. In this second view, a person can “have” or “not have” culture, which will mostly say if she is educated or not. The following words were chosen from the questionnaire’s answers

as an attempt to show this second perspective on culture: erudite knowledge, Education, reading, instruction, research, University, teaching, Science, good manners, informed, evolution, improvement, etc. This latter view on culture can be a perverse one in that it allows only some people to belong to the “prestigious” culture, while excluding others.

The final category chosen to explain students’ views on culture associates it to *sociocultural practices that identify individuals*, making a connection between culture and language. Some students appeared to have a more critical understanding of culture, acknowledging the complexity of the term and its connection to politics and power. Besides using words such as language, identity and people, they also employed many words that have currently been used in our postmodern times, to describe the new contexts of globalization of economies and internationalization of the English language, in which many cultures meet, blend or fight for recognition. These words are: diversity, differences, ideas, society, values, ways of seeing, ideology, belief, power, complex, politics, tolerance, subjectivity, experience, interaction, globalization, detachment, construction, influences, thought, respect, prejudice, reflection, attitude, between many others.

Even though these four categories were found, the most striking differences were recognized later in the interviews between English students’ representations of culture as formal or erudite knowledge and their representations of culture as sociocultural practices that identify individuals, regardless of the status and prestige of them in a given society. As regards this last representation, there were students who viewed culture in broader terms, as countries’ cultures, and there were students who viewed it in smaller terms, as individual or groups’ culture. In the next paragraphs, I will show textual evidence of students’ representations about culture as formal knowledge and as sociocultural practices. I will also try to capture moments of change in the student’s representations of culture due to their learning experiences in life, and more specifically, at the undergraduate program in English at UFSC. Thus, for the micro analysis of students’ representations about culture I will consider, in the interviews, their comments about their understanding of what culture is.

#### 4.1.1. Culture as formal knowledge – Valued culture and cultural capital.

Culture as formal or erudite knowledge in students' discourses is characterized as a specific kind of knowledge one has to acquire in order to feel integrated or included in one specific community – in this sense it is a specific kind of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). In this representation, there is only one possible culture for people to aspire affiliation to, and this culture is the prestigious culture of the educated elite, who has the means to consume cultural products, such as books, films, plays, concerts, etc. Thus, this view disregards people who do not belong to it as if they have no culture at all.

One of the students who present this view is Will. He is a 23 year-old boy from a poor neighborhood of Porto Alegre, the capital of Rio Grande do Sul<sup>16</sup>. Will is in the first phase of the program, enrolled in *Oral English V*. His father is a cabinet-maker and his mother is working as a waitress. The most impressive thing about Will is that he argues to have learnt the language by himself and using internet as an information source – he has never studied in language schools or travelled abroad and already teaches English in a private language course. In the questionnaire, Will admitted that he measures his success in speaking English alongside a native English paradigm. In his discourse below, it is possible to see how he constructed one of his representations about culture.

*Will: Culture + ((...)) I think it aggregates many words + other meanings + I don't know + culture + at first for me + from what I learned from my father and my mother + you see my first contact with the meaning of this word was to have good manners ((...)) it is not exactly that + it is not simply that + but + because they would say like this – look + people without culture + throw rubbish on the floor + there it was + good manners + bad manners + throwing rubbish on the floor + also my father would say + you see + back in Porto Alegre + the richer neighborhoods have more wooded areas + this is culture + so it was the idea I had about culture right? + ((...)) It is the person who*

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<sup>16</sup> The full description of students' profiles is offered in the methodology, under the section *participants*. In this analysis I only summarize the important points of their lives that could help interpret their representations about culture and culture learning.

*have background + it would be previous knowledge right? + A person who has something to say + then this is culture.*

*R: it is the thing about instruction right? + an instructed person*

*Will: but it is like this + I think that culture ((...)) this is one possibility + it is not the definition per se + ((...)) [culture] is two things at the same time + it is the attitude of searching for [knowledge] + and it would also be the result of having searched for knowledge + then for example + if the person has culture + she will read + and culture also it is not only to read + but to know how to express the result of what you have read ((...))*

*R: you even put family too + right?*

*Will: it is because the family teaches you with the practice + right? ((...)) the family teaches you to have ideas + concepts + right?*

In the first paragraph, Will represents culture as having “good manners” and “background” knowledge. One of the examples he provides to explain how he learnt about culture from his father tackles a social issue: the rich neighborhoods of Porto Alegre and Will’s own neighborhood, which he declares in the interview to be a poor neighborhood. When his father discusses the rich neighborhoods of their city, he is actually weighing up the knowledge, values and attitudes of the people who live in these regions, which form their cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Being from a lower-class, it is not surprising that Will’s father looks upon upper-classes’ values in his search for a more comfortable economic life and that he transmits these values to Will. In this representation, culture is synonymous of having appropriated the cultural capital of the educated elite. Will concludes his thoughts demonstrating that, to some extent, he has incorporated this discourse, when he asserts: “[culture] *is the person who have background + ((...)) previous knowledge + a person who has something to say + then this is culture*”.

Will continues his discussion about culture, stating that it implies “*the attitude of searching for [knowledge] + and it would also be the result of having searched for knowledge + then for example + if the person has culture + she will read*”. This representation acknowledges the investment of the individual in acquiring cultural capital. Bourdieu (1986) argues that “the accumulation of cultural capital in the embodied state” that forms what is called ‘the culture of the person’, “presupposes a process of embodiment, incorporation, which, insofar as it implies a labor of inculcation and assimilation, costs time, time which must be

invested personally by the investor” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 48). Therefore, in Will’s representation, an individual has culture if he or she has acquired a satisfying amount of cultural capital, available in books and transmitted by the educational system. Will also recognizes the importance of the family in teaching him the values and attitudes he appreciates, what Bourdieu (1986) terms the “domestic transmission of cultural capital”.

Another student who discusses this idea on culture is Olegas, a middle class, 24 year-old boy from Mato Grosso do Sul. He is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the program, enrolled in *Oral English V*. Olegas affirms to have had good education at school and good English instruction at a private language school in Campo Grande (MS). He studied Economics before starting the undergraduate program in English at UFSC. He has been teaching English in a private language school since he started the program at UFSC and he states to be certain about the career he decided to pursue – being an English teacher. In the excerpt below he discusses the representations he had about culture before starting Higher Education and the discourses he have appropriated at University.

*Olegas: the advantage of having studied Economics before + was that + we studied a little about culture + the concept of culture + then + before + when I was seventeen + I thought that culture was to study a lot + right? + or to go to the cinema + or to watch a movie + but then I saw that no + at college + culture is a way of seeing life + of producing life + of understanding life.*

As Olegas mentioned, before having experienced Higher Education, culture was represented monolithically, attached to one single cultural representation – the acquisition of specific forms of knowledge, values and attitudes – to study a lot, to go to the cinema, to watch a movie – associated with the cultural capital of the dominant classes, who benefits from holding the power and privilege in society. However, after going through his first undergraduate program, which was in Economics, he argues to have changed this representation to include all ways of understanding and producing life, that is, valuing all forms of cultural capital, not only the cultural capital of the class in power.

The third student who represented culture in a similar way is Gisele. She is a twenty eight year-old girl from Florianópolis who has just started the undergraduate program at UFSC. She comes from a very low class family and has always studied in the same public school near



her house, where she argues to have been a very dedicated student. Ten years after she finished High School, she reached a dream – she passed in the entrance exams for the undergraduate program in English at UFSC. She is very happy with the program and states that she loves English. In her discourse below, we can see Gisele's representations about culture before the undergraduate program in English at UFSC and her experiences in the program that, according to her, have made her change these representations.

*Gisele: we had a class with Marcia [master's trainee student] this week + and she clarified this culture thing + we were talking about culture + the two ideas on culture that the author was discussing + and then she said – look + because + there is a sentence that everybody says + that + you see + you don't have culture + this is ridiculous + everybody has culture + and I asked – what do you mean + Marcia? + culture is not the books you read + it is not the knowledge about art you have + ((...)) culture is what you are + it is your roots + the way you learned to see each thing + the way you identify + and everybody has that + ((...)) then I think it changed a little my view about thinking that culture is the things you accumulate over time + culture is what you already have + what you already are + so I changed my mind in this way + ((...)) but that is the difference + right? + Like being in this environment + and learning not only about things + but about yourself + right? ((...)) knowing that I don't need ++ of course it is important for me to know things + but I am already important for being who I am + I am somebody ((...))*

*R: starting the university only now + does not mean that you did not have culture before.*

*Gisele: exactly + I think I thought like this because I was told so + that until I did not go to the University + I would not be someone ((...)) but I am already someone + irrespective of that.*

In the above extract, it is possible to perceive three moments in Gisele's representation of culture. The first moment, before she was a student at the undergraduate program in English she regarded culture as being literate or having acquired formal knowledge, which she translates as having studied in a University. In this sense, she regarded culture such as Olegas did and as Will still does – culture as the process of acquiring valued cultural capital. In the second moment, Gisele comes into contact with a more sociological understanding of culture through

her undergraduate program in English, where culture is defined, according to Gisele, as the essence of people, irrespective of which culture they belong, or as Gisele discovers, irrespective of they having been through University or not. The third moment is the one where, after being faced with concepts of culture offered by the University, Gisele decided to redefine her previous representations – valuing her own life story as someone who came from a lower-class family with parents who did not go to University. In this new representation, it is not a matter of having culture but as being a cultural subject, and that is when she reconstructs her identity.

Sarmento (2004) in her study with English teachers from a language course found that they also represented culture as information or knowledge about something or some place, including the knowledge of literature. Similarly, Forlin (2009) studying English in-service teachers and teacher educators from PAC (Pedagogic Advisory Center) at the Federal University of Paraná, also revealed her participants' representations of culture as something that can be acquired by the individual in life – a product, the cultural capital. I turn now to a different representation of culture found in students' discourse.

#### **4.1.2. Culture as socio-cultural practices that identify persons or groups of persons**

In the above section I showed the three students of this research who, at some point in their lives or at the present moment, regarded culture as being literate or having acquired knowledge, values and attitudes of the community in power – the educated elite. Olegas (3<sup>rd</sup> phase) and Gisele (1<sup>st</sup> phase), however, argued to have changed this representation for an understanding of culture as seeing different ways of living and understanding the world of individuals or communities. The majority of the participants – 8 of them – represented culture in that way, even though it was possible to perceive that some of them had a representation of culture at a national level, while others emphasized regional or group cultures, in a more pluralized way. Due to space constraints, I will show the representations of culture as sociocultural practices of three students, Purple (5<sup>th</sup> phase), Jane (7<sup>th</sup> phase) and Theo (7<sup>th</sup> phase). Now I will present these students, their discourse and my interpretation of their representations.

Jane, from the 7<sup>th</sup> phase and enrolled in English VII, discusses the issue of value associated to knowledge when regarding culture. She is a 35 year-old elementary school teacher from Florianópolis (SC). She

studied her whole life in public schools and has always tried to pass the entrance exams for different programs in the city's public universities. She was accepted in the undergraduate program in English at UFSC in 2008, and now, almost finishing it, she is still not comfortable with the way she speaks English. In the extracts below, Jane is explaining her semantic choices to describe culture in the questionnaire applied in the first phase of the research. The words she employed there were – expression, idea, heritage, values, oral literature, written literature, typical dress and culinary.

*Jane: ((...)) I tried to associate culture with a literate person + and an illiterate person + that even the illiterate + he can pass his culture to his next generation + right? ((...)) the literate ++ he can do this stronger + right? + Because what is written stays as if it was documented + right? ((...)) the expression of it is bigger + right? ((...)) it is credited more value ((...)) but ((...)) irrespective of whether I am literate or illiterate to pass this to the next generation in the sense that I defend my culture + regardless of which culture it is + it is mine + it is my peoples' + and it is not inferior + right?*

*R: I see.*

*Jane: the culture of a country in the south + the culture of a country in the north + they are neither superior nor inferior + they have the same value of ++*

*R: ++ of complexity?*

*Jane: of complexity to the people that live in that culture ((...)) culture has to do with religion + with our heritage + with what we eat + with what we dress up ((...)) even the way we speak + some cultures speak faster + some cultures speak slow + there are cultures in which the speech + looks as if the person was smiling + there are cultures in which the speech seems like angrier + like tougher + more rigid + and all that expresses the own reality.*

In Jane's discourse above, she represents culture by comparing what she calls, a literate and an illiterate culture. She seems to recognize the plurality of cultures that exist in the world and shows a preoccupation to value illiterate cultures as well, stating that both literate and illiterate cultures should be acknowledged as pivotal contributors to the life of their respective communities. This view is in opposition to Will's representation of culture, in which being literate is synonymous of having culture. One of the explanations about the differences between

Jane's and Will's representations on culture may be the amount of experience they have had in the modules which discuss language, culture, and linguistics. Being in the seventh phase, Jane has already had contact with issues which probably are completely new to Will in the first phase.

Kramersch (1998), discussing print language and literate culture, argues that the dichotomy between the 'primitive' oral cultures and the 'civilized' literate cultures has come under increasing scrutiny in recent years, just like Jane's representations about culture demonstrate. Kramersch (1998) argues that scholars now recognize literacy not only as the ability to read and write, but as "the capacity to understand and manipulate the social and cultural meanings of print language in thoughts, feelings, and actions" (Kramersch, 1998, p. 56).

In discussing her meanings of culture, Jane touches on the issue of the relationship between language and culture, "culture is related to ((...)) *even the way we speak*". It is interesting to notice how Jane perceives the connection between someone's discourse and his or her social practice. However, in her discourse "*some cultures speak faster, some cultures speak slowly, there are cultures in which the speech looks as if the person was smiling, there are cultures in which the speech seems like angrier + like tougher + more rigid*" she demonstrates to believe that the knowledge she has about other cultures is true and not her own representations.

The issue of power that is attributed, in Jane's discourse, to literate cultures is also mentioned by another student, Purple, from the 5<sup>th</sup> phase and also enrolled in *Oral English V*, but from a different perspective. Purple is a middle-class, twenty one year-old girl from Florianópolis. Her father is a doctor and her mother, a psychologist, but they are also musicians and Purple had already started an undergraduate program in Music, which she abandoned in the first phase. She decided to enter the undergraduate program in English at UFSC because she always liked reading and composing songs in English. She argues that she is studying to be an English teacher. The excerpt below shows a dialogue between Purple and the researcher, when Purple was asked to discuss her semantic choices to describe culture in the questionnaire.

R: ((...)) *you put ++ politics + people + art + communication + history + identification + and power ++ I found it cool that you put these two words right together + politics and power + one next to the other ++ what did you mean by that?*

*Purple: This is a very complex matter + man ++ I think + ok + when I think about culture I think + which culture do we know? + We know the culture that is in power + when I studied History I did not study Africa + I studied who colonized Africa ++ Gosh + I wanted to know a little bit more + what China invented? + What came out of these places + you know + but no + I study the ++*

*R: ++ hegemonic culture?*

*Purple: Yes, it is the culture that is in power that you study, the one that is, the one that everybody follows,*

*R: and for you + this hegemonic culture ++ who is it? + What is this hegemonic culture? + Is there a name of a country in it?*

*Purple: no, because one time in society who was in power was Alexander, the Great + who was in power in another time + I don't know + Gengis Khan + then England of the XVIII century + the United States of the boom it had + and now China and the emergent countries + it goes always like that + you know?*

*R: Do you think that + nowadays + is there a + hegemonic culture in the world?*

*Purple: Nowadays no.*

*R: You think that cultures exist + but not one that has more power than the others?*

*Purple: this is very clear to me nowadays + you know? + Because of the internet + you know?*

*R: because of democratization ++*

*Purple: Yes + globalization + the social networks + that help us very much to realize that + nobody has the power of everything + you know?*

Purple, in the dialogue above, does not state directly her ideas about culture, but if we consider the words she connected to culture in the questionnaire and her arguments as regards power relations between cultures, we can apprehend she is representing culture as the diverse ways of living, of seeing the world of different communities. In her speech, however, she is more concerned about the power relations between countries, in which the nations holding power in specific times of History imposed their culture on other nations. On the other hand, she argues that, nowadays, because of globalization, internet and the social networks, there is not one hegemonic culture (country) influencing all other cultures (countries) in the world. Thus, it was possible to perceive that Purple reflects on the unequal power relations that existed between

countries' cultures, but if we consider culture as something local and nearby, her broad representation of it may prevent her from understanding, acting and changing her own culture.

Theo, a 20 year-old boy from a very small city in Santa Catarina state, tries to see culture from a micro perspective. He is at the 7<sup>th</sup> phase in the program and also enrolled in *English VII*. He comes from a low class family, he has always studied in the same public school and has always been regarded as a high score student at school and now at UFSC. Theo has always liked to read and since he started his program at university, he has been involved with many college projects, even as an exchange student in a university in the United States. In the excerpt below, Theo sees national cultures only as peoples' representations of culture, and not as culture 'per se'.

*Theo: ((...)) for me + culture is always associated with everything right? + Everything we do is cultural right? + Then it is even difficult to define culture + everything is socially constructed + then everything that is socially constructed is culture + then it is very complex right? But + some of the things I put there ((in the questionnaire)) + is thinking in the common sense really + right? + When we talk about the culture of a country + we talk about + you see + music + food + habits + accents + and differences + tolerance ((the words he used in the questionnaire)) + I think that + the one who can understand the differences between cultures + one important characteristic is tolerance + to understand that the different is neither worse nor better than ++*

*R: ++ very well ++ here in my question + is there an English language culture? + You said no ++ you said that + there are many cultures from which the English language is part + is that so?*

*Theo: aham + yes + it is like I said + for me there isn't a Brazilian culture + there isn't an American culture + culture is a much more complex thing + although we try to simplify + right? + But these are all representations + we try to represent things in a way to be easier for us to understand + it can be good + in a way + but it cannot be good + in another way + right? + Because we may end up working with prejudices + right?*

In the above excerpts, Theo connects the words music, food, habits, accents, differences and tolerance to culture when thinking, as he admits, about national cultures, but he recognizes the difficulty in defining the term, given that, as he sees it, culture is “*everything that is socially constructed*”. Similarly, a participant in Forlin's study (2009)

also refused to view culture as a ready-made and unified product, but in constant change in the social world. Just like Jane and Purple, Theo represents culture as all the sociocultural practices that identifies and differentiates groups, communities and countries, not only the valued practices. He also wants to emphasize that no culture should be given more value than any other. He is careful about stereotyping large national categories, for example, leaving to representations the explanation for the stereotypes present in societies. His discourse shows traits of an intellectualized, conceptual, and abstract representation of culture, probably demonstrating the influence of the context where he is inserted, the undergraduate program in English at UFSC.

#### 4.2. REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT CULTURE LEARNING IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS AT UFSC

In the section above, I have demonstrated how some English undergraduate students at UFSC represent culture, taking into account the experiences they had before entering the University and their current experience in the context of pursuing a BA in English at UFSC. In this section, I will present how these students are connecting culture to language, more specifically, to language learning. After analyzing the questionnaires, interviews and email correspondences between the students and myself on the topic, I was able to arrive at two main categories of representations about culture learning in English classes. In the first category, I placed students' representations about culture learning as the **learning about different English-speaking countries' history and achievements**. In the second category, I placed the representations about culture learning as **learning how to act appropriately using language in specific situations**.

In my analysis of students' representations about culture learning, I will make use of students' answers to questions number 2, 4, 4a), and 10 of the questionnaire, their comments about these answers in the interviews and email correspondence between myself and the participants about the same topic. The questions that guided students' answers and discussions about culture learning were the following: 2) Do you think culture is an important aspect in foreign language learning? Why?; 4) Do your English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of the English language? 4) a) If so, do you think it helps you learn the language itself? How? 10) When learning English, are you

learning (have you learnt) things other than only the language? Which things?

In quantitative terms, it is possible to state that the undergraduate students of English at UFSC believe cultural aspects to be important in foreign language learning, given that all the 53 respondents to the questionnaire (100%) from the three researched groups (English I, English V, and English VII) answered positively to question number two of the questionnaire. Most of them also believed that their English classes at UFSC approached cultural aspects of the English language, since around 75% of each researched group answered positively to question number four of the questionnaire: *Do your English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of the English language?*

Interestingly, in the interviews, when students were invited to discuss how culture was approached in their classes at UFSC, many of them stated that their English classes were not directly focused on cultural aspects and that discussing culture was not usually the objective of the modules concerning English language, leaving some of them to conclude that culture was more directly and explicitly taught in the Literature and Translation classes.

Therefore, the explicitness and implicitness of learning culture at *Letras Inglês* at UFSC arouse as a theme some students from all researched groups, namely, Will, 1<sup>st</sup> phase, English V; Clara, Gisa and Purple, 5<sup>th</sup> phase, English V, and Theo, 7<sup>th</sup> phase, English VII, were interested in discussing and so their discourse about culture being explicitly or implicitly taught in their program at UFSC will help me show their two representations about culture learning – culture learning as learning about different English-speaking countries (in a more explicit and direct way) and culture learning as learning how to act appropriately using language in different situations (in a more implicit and indirect way). It is also important to mention that, even though students were asked to comment on culture learning in classes concerning the teaching of English, many of them decided to discuss culture learning in the whole undergraduate program in English at UFSC, including modules such as Literature, Translation and Linguistic Studies.



#### 4.2.1. Culture learning as learning about different English-speaking countries' history, habits and achievements – Culture as content

The first representation I will analyze here regards culture learning in a more explicit and direct way, as learning about different English-speaking countries. This learning seems to involve the acquisition of knowledge, information and facts about the speech community under study, in the case of learning English, the English-speaking countries. Culture becomes the topic, the content of the lesson. As already stated, in the interviews, many students commented that culture is not usually the topic of their English classes at UFSC and that, cultural aspects can, more frequently, be the content of their literature and translation classes.

Will is one of the students who argue that the English classes at UFSC are not approaching cultural aspects of the English language. Will's background information can be seen on page 52, where I also showed his representations about culture as having acquired information, "background" knowledge. This knowledge is the one of the discursive community in power, the educated elite. In the excerpt below, I present Will's answer to question number four of the questionnaire and, in the interview with the researcher, his comments as regards his answer.

##### *Questionnaire*

*4) Do your English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of the English language?*

*Will: No.*

*Interview: commenting on this answer.*

*R: You said that + at least until that moment + you haven't seen these cultural aspects being approached ((...))*

*Will: It is not that + it was not approached because I did not detected it indeed + I did not see something like an immersion + something focused in the culture ((...)) What I learn about English culture is reading a book + right?*

In the excerpt above Will reaffirms that he had not perceived cultural aspects being worked out in his English classes until the present moment. For him, culture learning is the immersion in the culture to be learnt. When he states "*I did not see something focused in the culture*" he is arguing that culture was not being explicitly taught in his English

classes. Thus, if we consider that Will represents culture as having acquired information and “background” knowledge, as it was shown before, it is easier to understand his representation about culture learning as something that should be “more focused”, probably more content-oriented. As far as Will is concerned, he does not learn culture inside English classes, but by reading books, for example. This points to the importance of cultural products like books, movies, TV series, between others, in students’ contact with and understanding of a supposedly different culture.

Another student who states that the English classes at UFSC are not focused in cultural aspects is Gisa. Gisa is a black, thirty two year-old girl from a poor neighborhood of Florianópolis. She is in the 5<sup>th</sup> phase of the program, enrolled in *English V*. She has always had a scholarship to study in *Colégio de Aplicação UFSC* given that her mother worked as a lunch lady in this school. Gisa has always tried to pass the entrance exams for English at UFSC – she always knew this was the program she wanted to take. She reveals that she loves the “British culture”, unlike the “American culture”. She teaches Portuguese for foreigners and wants to teach English for children in the future. In the excerpt below, I present Gisa’s answer to questions number 4, 4a) and 10 of the questionnaire and her comments about these answers in the interview.

*Questionnaire:*

4) *Do your English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of the English language?* Gisa: No.

a) *Do you think that “learning cultural aspects of English” helps you learn the language itself? How?*

Gisa: Yes, because you get to know better the habits of other people and you start to better understand realities other than your own.

10) *When learning English, are you learning things other than only the language itself? Which things?*

*It depends, because I don’t think that the didactic material of English has such an emphasized cultural involvement. I think we learn more about the structure, about how language works.*

*Interview: commenting on her answer to questions 4 and 10 of the questionnaire.*

G: *Maybe cultural aspects are worked more in Oral English ((module)) + like this semester that we end up moving a little more to a British aspect + the professor who arrived this semester brought a British book to the classroom + and then we worked more cultural*

*aspects + for example + differences between some newspapers in England + and the Oral English classes + depending on the book that it is used + the method + they stay more fixed to form + more than to culture + culture we end up seeing in literature more often ((...)) and in Written English + this semester as it was more about the structural part than the content + it stayed more the question about what is happening around us + or here + it can be inside the university + in Brazil + but the focus of the professor in this semester was structure + no so much content.*

As Gisa states, she thinks that “learning cultural aspects of English” is important because she can learn about other people’s habits and understand other realities. She believes that in her English classes at UFSC, students learn more about the structure of the language than about cultural aspects related to the language, especially due to the didactic material and the method used in the classroom, which, as she argues, is concerned to form more than to culture. According to Gisa, culture is discussed more often in literature classes. It seems that, for Gisa, culture is somehow dissociated from language, evidenced when she states that her classes usually do not emphasize culture, but structure and form as if the forms and structures of a language did not have any socio-culturally and historically connection to the specific communities which use the language, that is, to specific cultures. Gisa’s representation about culture learning seems to be learning content as opposed to learning forms, structures “*they stayed more fixed to form, more than to culture*” or “*the focus ((...)) was structure, not so much content*”. Thus, equating language solely to structure and culture to content can give her the false impression that language and culture are completely different things.

Purple, a twenty-one years old girl from Florianópolis, also argues that culture has almost no space in her English classes. In the first section of this analysis, I demonstrated that Purple represented culture in quite broad terms, associating it to the ways of life of different countries and not seeing it in micro perspectives, as the ways of life of situated communities and groups. In the extract below, I present her answers to questions number 4 and 4a) of the questionnaire, where she exemplifies culture being addressed in her classes through comparisons between, assumedly, different cultures and I also present her comments as regards the referred answers.

*Questionnaire*

4) *Do your English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of the English language?* Purple: *Yes.*

a) *If so, do you think it helps you learn the language itself? How?*

Purple: *Yes, because the professor gives us an example of how a subject would be treated by the English or the North-American, I compare these examples and I learn with them.*

*Interview: commenting of the above answer.*

*R: Does that happen in your classes?*

Purple: *Not regularly + for example + the modules of English + no ++ Oral and Written English + they don't have ++ where I saw it more was in literature and translation + that I had access to that ++ for example + the professor said what was the food that was specialty of Brazil + rice and beans + in England + fish and chips + in the United States + I don't know + one there + then he compared both + something in England + something in the US + then I really saw the difference between the countries + the culture of the two.*

In the excerpts above, Purple, more than once, provides information about culture being explicitly taught in her classes, “((...)) *the professor gives us an example of how a subject would be treated by the English or the North-American ((...))*” or “*the professor said what was the food that was specialty of Brazil, rice and beans, in England, fish and chips ((...))*”. Based on these experiences in the program, she represents culture learning as learning about English-speaking countries. This overgeneralization of practices as characteristics of a determined group of people, in her example, entire countries, might make her believe that these practices mirror the society without struggle or contradiction. Nevertheless, Purple argues that the examples she offered do not reflect her English classes at UFSC, fact that is quite disappointing to her, given that in question 4a) she asserts she learns with these kind of overt discussions about culture. She claims that approaching culture in a more direct and explicit way is a feature of her literature and translation classes. Thus, based on her experiences in life, and as we have just seen, in her undergraduate program in English at UFSC, Purple represents culture learning as learning about English speaking countries, in a content-oriented perspective.

Clara is another student who represents culture learning as learning about the other people, but who seems to visualize, in a different way, the relationship between language and culture. She is a twenty year-old girl from São José (SC), studying in the 5<sup>th</sup> phase of the

program, enrolled in *English V*. Clara comes from a low class family and has always studied in two public schools near her house. Nowadays, she works at the University Library, argues that she entered the University mostly in order to learn the language and that she still does not know what she intends to do with English in the future. In the passages below, Clara is in the interview, discussing her answer to question number 1 of the questionnaire that concerns the meanings of culture, but she decides to talk about culture learning in language learning.

*Questionnaire:*

*Semantic map*

*1) What comes to your mind when you think about culture? What is culture for you?*

*Culture is – language, people, habits, place, party, clothing, food.*

*Interview: commenting on the above answer to the questionnaire.*

*Clara: ((...)) In order to learn a language ++ I think + right? ++ That it is a bit complicated to learn it by itself ++ I think that there must be some knowledge of the culture + and some things that happen with these peoples + why? ++ Because either you want it or not + the language is a socio-historic product + right? ++ Then it is good even to comprehend + sometimes + an idiomatic expression ++ you will only understand when you know the context of that expression ++ then you will understand why + what is the origin of that expression + it may be that bacon + is different from the way we would use here + because here it is another idiom + another culture + another history*

In the passage above, it is possible to see Clara's representation about culture learning as learning about the culture, about the peoples who speak the language, in her words "*In order to learn a language ((...)) there must be some knowledge of the culture + and some things that happen with these peoples*", giving culture the status of topic and content of lessons. For Clara, when someone knows about the target language culture, she can better understand aspects of language, such as idiomatic expressions due to the very socio-historic nature of language. Therefore, although Clara represents culture learning in foreign language classrooms as learning about the countries which speak the language, she also started to perceive, at a small scale, the relationship between language and culture. In the excerpt below, it is possible to

notice how Clara's representations about culture reflect and are reflected by her experiences in the undergraduate program in English at UFSC.

*Questionnaire:*

4) *Do your English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of the English language?*

*Clara: Yes (not too much focused).*

*Interview: commenting on the above answer.*

*Clara: Because + it is like this ++ you see + we do not have like + a lesson ++ you see – today we are only going to talk about American culture + British culture ++ it is to explain an idiomatic expression + that they added a little about the context + for us to understand the expression + for example + then maybe it was necessary + I don't know in England the expression cup of tea + it is one expression of the English language spoken in England because there they drink a lot of tea + for example right?+ Then it had + we learned for a reason + a better comprehension of the English language + or then the professor just commented on something as curiosity ++*

*R: like you were talking about a subject + then something cultural came up there + then the professor + ah + speaking of that ++*

*Clara: Yes + something like that + it is basically that or then just discussions + some moment + like we had a discussion in the Oral English class and then ++ ok + and how does that happen here in Brazil and in the other cultures + how does that happen + but the objective of the lesson was not that + it just opened a little bit for that + in that moment + right? + But the focus of the lesson was not it.*

In Clara's representations about culture learning, when she was commenting on question number one of the questionnaire, she asserted that students should have some knowledge about the culture from which they are learning the language. In this new excerpt, however, we see that this knowledge is not explicitly taught or planned in her representations about the English classes at UFSC “we do not have like, a lesson, you see – today, we are only going to talk about American culture, British culture” but it is a knowledge that appears during the lessons “it is to explain an idiomatic expression, that they added a little about the context, for us to understand the expression”, usually with a linguistic motive behind it “we learned for a reason, a better comprehension of the English language”, such as contextualizing idiomatic expressions or only as curious information about English-speaking countries. That is

why Clara believes that her English classes at UFSC are not focused in cultural aspects.

Another student who represents culture learning as learning content is Jane, a 35 year-old student from the 7<sup>th</sup> phase. In the first section of this analysis, I demonstrated that Jane represented culture as the ways of life of specific communities, regardless of the literacy of their counterparts. In the excerpt below I present her answers to questions number 2, 4) and 4) a) of the questionnaire and her comments on the topic in the semi-structured interview with the researcher.

*Questionnaire:*

*2) Do you think culture is an important aspect in foreign language learning?*

*Jane: Yes. Why?*

*Jane: because we can learn language and vocabulary through cultural, folkloric and specific themes of a region or a people.*

*4) Do your English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of the English language?*

*Jane: Yes.*

*4 a) If so, do you think it helps you learn the language itself? How?*

*Jane: Yes, disseminating, that is, taking into account all the countries that speak the English language, not only United States and England. To get to know a little bit of what is produced in the language through the globe in arts, science, music, literature, etc.*

*Interview: commenting on this answer.*

*Jane: [...] if it helps you learn the language + yes + because then we start to perceive other countries as producers too + not only as ex-colonies...*

*R: and is this something that you learned in the program?*

*Jane: Yes + it was + of relating other English speaking countries + of perceiving this [...] quality of what is being produced there that it is not inferior + [...] then we started to respect a little more other cultures as well + not only in the financial sense + but that it can be a very culturally representative country.*

In the passages above, Jane states that her English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of the English language and that it helps her learn the language because she becomes in contact with other contexts of English being spoken in different countries, not only in the

United States and England. Just like in her representations about culture, where Jane was keen to ensure that culture(s) of all communities were valued and recognized, in her representations about culture learning, Jane now viewing culture in broader terms, wants to make sure that all English-speaking countries were valued as owning important cultures, in order to take the focus away of the traditional American and British perspectives on culture learning.

Jane in this research, is also representing culture learning as learning about English-speaking countries, perceptible in her discourse above where she states that culture is an important aspect in foreign language learning because “*we can learn ((...)) through cultural, folkloric and specific themes*”, that the English classes should “*take into account all countries that speak English*” and that students should “*know a little bit of what is produced through the language in the globe ((...))*”. It even seems that in her discourse, Jane is actually discussing her literature classes given that she appears to be mentioning the production of art in different countries.

I have analyzed, in this section, students’ representations about culture learning as learning about English-speaking countries’ history, habits and achievements, in which culture was usually represented as content or knowledge to be acquired by students. This representation seems to involve a macro perspective on culture and culture learning, in that aspects such as the history of the English language and the cultural origins of expressions were highlighted. For some students, this learning of culture is not associated to learning the structures of the language, but the themes related to it; for others, overt discussions about the specific culture under study help them learn the ‘language-culture’ even better. In sum, students’ representations of culture learning as “*learning about*” seem to standardize countries’ cultures, viewing them as coherent communities susceptible of description.

#### **4.2.2. Culture learning as learning how to act appropriately using language in specific situations – Culture as pragmatics**

This section will discuss some undergraduate students’ representations about culture learning not necessarily as learning about different countries, for example, but as learning how to use language in appropriate ways, depending on the context of situation. For some students this learning is a more implicit and indirect way of learning culture. In students’ discourses in this subsection we are going to see that while some (Theo, for example) regarded the value of indirectly



learning culture so as to avoid the overgeneralizations and stereotyping that can happen when culture is the content or knowledge to be apprehended in class (such as in Purple's representations about culture learning above), it is also true that when culture learning is represented as implicit learning, it gives culture a secondary importance, a subordinate role in language learning. I will describe then the students who represented culture learning as learning contextual language forms and appropriateness, their representations and my interpretation of the latter.

João Macedo is one student who represents culture learning as learning how to behave in different situations using language. He is a middle-class, twenty eight year-old boy from Criciúma (SC)<sup>17</sup>. He lives with his parents in Florianópolis - his father is a retired engineer and his mother is a retired English teacher, from whom João learned English. He also studied it in a private English language school for many years. He decided to enter the undergraduate program in English at UFSC because he was already teaching English. Nowadays he gives private English classes and he is very excited about the program. In the questionnaire and interview, he stated his desire to speak English like a "native speaker" and he is very enthusiastic of what he calls "the American culture". João is enrolled in *Oral English V*, but he is in the first phase of the program. In the excerpt below, I introduce João's answers to questions number 4 and 4a) of the questionnaire and his comments about his answers in the interview.

*Questionnaire:*

*4) Do your English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of the English language?*

*João Macedo: Yes.*

*a) Do you think it helps you learn the language itself?*

*João Macedo: Yes, learning about culture, we can adapt better to the English language.*

*Interview: commenting on his answer to question 4a) of the questionnaire.*

*João Macedo: Of course + because if you learn culture + you know how to greet people in a more informal + or in a more formal way + if you learn culture + you know that sometimes an American does not*

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<sup>17</sup> João Macedo's complete profile can be seen on page 35 of this thesis, in the methodology.

*like you to + I don't know ++ to stare at him for no reason + or something like that + if you know culture you already get background to engage in conversations + if you meet an American + right?*

João Macedo states that his English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of English and that it helps him learn the language in the sense that he can adapt better to the language. The adaptation he pursues is exemplified in his commentaries about the content of culture learning *“if you learn culture you know how to greet people in a more informal or in a more formal way, if you learn culture you know that sometimes an American does not like you to, I don't know, to stare at him for no reason.”* If it is true, as João Macedo feels it, that learning culture helps the language student to adapt to the target language, then Norton's proposition that *“when people learn a second/foreign language, they also construct another self in this language, another identity”* (Norton & Toohey, 2002; Norton, 2010) can help us understand the influence of sociocultural factors in students' struggles to learn a language. Thus, we can see that João tries to discuss these sociocultural influences by addressing the sociolinguistics and pragmatics of learning a language that, for him, involved levels of formality and aspects of behavior of the community he wants to interact with.

At the same time, although it is undoubtedly important for students to sensitize to different contexts and situations of the foreign language, João's representation of culture learning as learning how to behave in interactions, especially, as he argues, with native speakers can mislead him to think that he (the language learner) is the one who has to change his behavior in order to fit in native-speaking contexts and conversations. According to Gimenez (2002) this way of thinking about culture learning (in only one direction) was a legacy of the communicative approach that, *“in an attempt to teach how to communicate in a foreign language, left aside the need to understand communication between native and non-native speakers as intercultural communication more than communication in the target-language”* (Gimenez, 2002, p. 112)

A similar representation to culture learning is provided by Juh, a seventeen year-old girl from São José (SC), who has just entered the undergraduate program in English at UFSC. She is an only daughter, has always studied in private schools and has always liked English. Besides studying at University, Juh is also doing an English course in a famous private language school in the city. She decided to study English at the University because she was always good in English at school, but she

never liked the idea of becoming a teacher. In the questionnaire and interview, Juh declared that she intends to speak English like a ‘native speaker’ and she still does not know which career she wants to pursue in the future. In the next excerpt, we perceive Juh’s representations about culture learning for communicational reasons.

*Questionnaire:*

2) *Do you think culture is an important aspect in foreign language learning? Why?*

*Juh: Yes, because through culture we can learn to communicate better with the native people.*

*Interview: commenting on this answer.*

*Juh: I meant to say like this +++there are many things + that we say + expressions we use + because it is difficult + because you see I want to write something + - teacher + I want to say + how do I say it? + then + ah + there they don’t talk like that + they say it in another way + then I think + oh + How am I going to know what they say there? + and what we say here + you see? ((...)) I think that a contact with the culture brings us closer to speak like the native speakers*

As Juh states, she is very much concerned about the inability to communicate successfully with a native speaker, due to the changes in translating from one language to the other. She argues that these changes are derived from the diverse expressions and ways of saying that are characteristic of different cultures and so are incorporated by the language. In the summary of Juh’s life story above, I showed how her ideal of oral competence in English is aligned to ‘speaking like a native speaker’, even though she does not say from where this native speaker would be. She seems to be voicing her teachers’ responses to her anxieties about translating between the two languages “*there they don’t talk like that*”, “*they say it in another way*”. Therefore, the influence of Juh’s teachers’ narrow views about native speakers as a homogeneous community “*there they don’t*” and “*they speak*” and her own idea of translation as a one-to-one correspondence not taking into account the different contexts of interaction, can cause her anxieties and frustration if she doesn’t recognize in herself the model of competence she is pursuing.

In the case of Juh’s representation above, I consider it to emphasize culture learning also as learning how to perform language, and most importantly for her, how to speak with and like ‘native

speakers'. Her representation of culture learning is very similar to João Macedo's representation above, in which culture learning is viewed as following native speakers' norms of interaction and pragmatics.

In a different way, Regiane, is concerned about how to use language in specific situations, regardless whom the interlocutors are. She is a middle-class, twenty six year-old girl from Florianópolis, in the first phase of the program. She graduated in Law from UFSC and decided to do the undergraduate program in English at UFSC only to improve her language skills. For her future, she wants to work for the United Nations or other international organizations as a lawyer. In the excerpts below, I present her answers to questions number 2, 4 and 4a) of the questionnaire and an email exchange between Regiane and the researcher, where Regiane continues to discuss the role of cultural aspects in foreign language learning.

*Questionnaire:*

*2) Do you think culture is an important aspect in foreign language learning?*

*Regiane: Yes. Why?*

*The language of a people materializes and transforms itself by the habits of the group, that is why knowing peoples' culture of the language you are studying can help in the right use of expressions, in phonemes' comprehension, and in understanding the utility of certain words.*

*4) Do your English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of the English language?*

*Regiane: Yes.*

*4) a) If so, do you think it helps you learn the language itself?*

*Regiane: Mainly in the understanding of expressions that, if they were translated literally, they would not make sense.*

*Email:*

*1) Regiane is explaining why she thinks culture is important in foreign language learning.*

*Regiane: Because it facilitates language comprehension, both from a structural viewpoint and a communicational viewpoint, as well as opening horizons for the student. Certain habits/ facts may explain language's sounds/ phonetics. Certain socio-historic facts may explain language expressions. I think it is important to have approaches in this sense.*

*2) Regiane is explaining how her English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of English.*

*Regiane: Subtle answers, more appropriate ways of making requests, of soliciting information.*

In her answers to the questionnaire and in her comments in the email exchange, Regiane wants to emphasize why she thinks culture to be important in foreign language learning. She considers that, because language and culture are intrinsically bound “*the language of a people materializes and transforms itself by the habits of the group*”, it is possible to perceive, in the very constitution of languages, the consequences of cultural influences, which according to Regiane can be observed in expressions, phonemes, vocabulary “*the utility of certain words*”, and pragmatics “*subtle answers, more appropriate ways of making requests, of soliciting information*”. It is interesting that Regiane asserts the importance of culture learning not only from a communicational viewpoint but also from a structural and formal viewpoint, taking into account smaller units of language, fact that was less evidenced in representations of culture learning as learning contents, themes, and topics of specific communities of language use.

Similarly, Olegas also regards the importance of contexts in order to better understand languages practices. In the first section of this analysis, I showed how Olegas representations about culture changed due to his experiences in higher education from regarding culture as formal knowledge to viewing it as all different ways of understanding and producing life of different communities. Olegas is enrolled in *Oral English V*, in the third phase of the program. In the excerpts below, I present his answer to question number 2 of the questionnaire and his comments about his answer during the interview with the researcher.

*Questionnaire:*

*2) Do you think culture is an important aspect in foreign language learning? Why?*

*Olegas: Yes, because I use cultural references to explain words through examples.*

*Interview: commenting on this answer.*

*R: Here we can hear the teacher's voice + right? You in the classroom. How is that?*

*Olegas: Yes + because there is where I teach right? [...] the most striking approach they use [in the language school where he teaches] is the Chomsky's grammar + then [...] the word + I notice many times that + they give meaning + they attribute meaning to the word + right?*

+ *And sometimes this generates some difficulties for students to learn in what kind of contexts + they can use that word + then I notice that always when I can + either because I know it + or because I have heard it + link that word or that use they are learning + communicative + to a cultural context + to a context of use + it becomes clearer for them + they understand it a lot better than simply throwing the word to them + and making them repeat.*

When asked about the importance of teaching and learning culture in foreign language classrooms, Olegas answered positively explaining that when he is teaching he tries to work with cultural aspects with his students. It is important to mention that being an English teacher is very important for Olegas – I explained, in his representations about culture that he even dropped out an undergraduate program in Economics when he was in the fifth year in order to start the program in English. So, the examples Olegas provides surely have to do with his teaching experiences. He explains that although he teaches in an institution where, pedagogically, meaning is attributed to words without considerations of different contexts and cultures, he does not conform to this approach. Thus, based on his experiences as a competent language user “*because I know it*” and a well-informed person “*because I have heard it*” he tries to show students that as contexts change, so can change the meanings.

In this representation of culture learning, it is possible to see how Olegas resists the institutional discourse of the school he teaches, where contexts are not considered a primary importance. Not without struggle, he exerts his agency in constructing his own pedagogical practices as regards culture learning in the classroom. Therefore for Olegas, culture learning in the EFL classroom is learning how to use language in different situations, when in different contexts.

Finally, in a similar fashion, Theo also represents culture learning as implicit learning of the contexts of a foreign language. In the first section of this analysis, I showed that Theo represents culture as “*everything that is socially constructed*” and views national cultures, for example, only as people’s representations of culture, and not the culture per se. The passages below consist of Theo’s answer to question number 4 of the questionnaire and his comments about this answer in the interview with the researcher.

*Questionnaire:*

4) *Do your English classes at UFSC approach cultural aspects of the English language?* Theo: *Yes.*

a) *If so, do you think it helps you learn the language itself? How?*

Theo: *Yes, because in order to learn a foreign language, one needs to study it inside its context (cultural).*

*Interview: commenting on his answer.*

Theo: *When I say that culture is approached + I don't mean to say that we have a class ++ you see + today we are going to see the habits + or how is breakfast + it is not that ++*

*R: because this would be that thing you said about labeling +*

Theo: *Yes + it is not that + what I mean is + once more + that the language is not viewed in an isolated way + but inside a context + then there is no way not to approach culture + maybe the word culture is not even said + but ++*

*R: implicitly ++*

Theo: *implicitly ++ it is there.*

In the examples above, Theo claims that one can only learn a foreign language if she studies it inside a cultural context, approach that, according to him, is commonly used in his English classes at UFSC. However, Theo, just like Clara, is convinced that in his classes culture is not addressed in an explicit way. If we consider the students who represented ‘*culture learning as learning about English-speaking countries*’ and *culture as content or knowledge*, we can see that Theo seems to be in opposition to them, given that he thinks culture is better taught and learned indirectly and implicitly and not as facts and information about English speaking countries. For him, explicit cultural content learning can easily cause generalizations and stereotyping.

His position seems to voice Jordão’s assertion that language and culture are indissociable, given that both are interpretative procedures arbitrarily and socially constructed and established (Jordão, 2006). For Jordão (2006), it is not possible to advise the language teacher to work with culture in the classroom because she will always be working with culture, even when she does not explicitly address it in the classroom.

Given that Theo seemed to have a very positive representation of culture learning in his English classes at UFSC, I was intrigued to ask him how these classes were handled. Thus, the excerpts below consist of email exchanges between the researcher and the participant, when he

was invited to give more details about how he viewed his English classes as regards cultural aspects.

*Email:*

*R: You said, in the questionnaire, that in your English classes at UFSC, cultural aspects (of English) are approached. Then I would like to know:*

*How these aspects are worked in your classes. If you want, you can give examples of how the professors work. Do you like their way of discussing/ teaching culture? Why?*

*Theo: In my view, our classes approach cultural aspects once it is impossible to teach a “neutral” language, dissociated from culture (language is also culture). But I can’t think of any example of activity in which we worked explicitly with cultural aspects. Unless one activity we did in Oral English V with Raquel. The students split in two groups and each group watched a movie in which the main character was a teacher [...] then we had to compare the two movies. I remember we worked how the teacher is usually seen in American movies, the situation of periphery schools, etc. During the Systemic Functional classes (English VII), cultural aspects were worked, once we had to analyze texts that involved gender, sexuality issues, etc...Not to mention that my group presented one text about the analysis of Chinese fairy tales (or were they Japanese? I don’t remember. Although it wasn’t specifically of the English language, it was very interesting. I think that cultural aspects do not need to be approached in an explicit way (for ex, “Did you know that the Americans eat a lot and that they are very obese?”), because there sometimes we end up calling too much attention to the very cultural aspect, causing generalizations, and spreading stereotypes.*

In this excerpt, Theo discusses cultural aspects being approached not only in his English classes but in the undergraduate program in English as a whole. He mentions two modules – *Oral English V* and *English VII* – as modules in which he had the opportunity to work with these aspects. He explains that the English VII comprised the study of *Systemic Functional Linguistics* and he gives very interesting examples of how this subject was approached more directly by professors – in *Oral English V*: “*I remember we worked how the teacher is usually seen in American movies*”; and in *English VII*: “*cultural aspects were worked once we had to analyze texts that involved gender, sexuality issues ((...)) my group presented one text about the analysis of Chinese fairy tales (or were they Japanese?) ((...))*



*Although it wasn't specifically of the English language, it was very interesting".* These examples of culture being discussed in English classes do not attach culture solely to the English language or to a national country. Even when students are asked to analyze American movies, they are not required to find information about how American teachers are, but how they are usually portrayed, in an attempt to avoid stereotypes.

In the second example, where culture is discussed in the module English VII, the interesting fact is how culture is approached from a local perspective, not as countries' cultures, but as the many subcultures people belong to, which involve ascriptions to gender, ethnicity, race, sexuality and social class. In the same way, when Theo talks about the Chinese or Japanese fairy tales he studied, he admits that this cultural aspect had no connection whatsoever to the English language specifically, but that he enjoyed learning about it. All the three examples Theo provides seems to demonstrate culture being taught and learnt, not in a bilateral scheme – between students' national culture and the national culture of a specific target language country, but in a multilateral dynamics in which culture is viewed in a pluralized way, even including countries where English is not the native language. This is exactly the suggestion that Risager (2007) provides as how culture could be approached in English classes.

In sum, I have demonstrated in the first extract of Theo's discourse, how he represented culture learning as learning how to use language in different contexts and situations. In the second extract, the email exchange between the researcher and himself, I have shown how he viewed culture learning in a much broader way, not as learning the culture of the English language itself, but as learning to identify the socio-construction of ideas, beliefs, values, that happen inside diverse groups, communities and interactions. He is the only student in the research who represented culture learning in this multilateral and ample way. For him, emphasizing the 'culture' of a specific English-speaking country when learning English can cause generalizations and stereotypes. Once more, just like in his representations about culture, his intellectualized repertoire about culture learning reveals an important part of his identity – being a high score student.

In this subsection named "Culture Learning as Learning How to Act Appropriately Using Language in Specific Situations – Culture as Pragmatics" I have presented English undergraduate students' representations about culture learning as learning how to use language

in appropriate ways, depending on the context of situation. For João Macedo and Juh this learning meant that they had to comply with native speakers' norms of interaction and in the case of João, even to make some changes in his behavior so as to adapt better to the language. For Regiane and Olegas, this learning involved learning how to use the language in different contexts, where the meanings of words are constantly changing. Finally, for Theo, this culture learning also means, just like for Regiane and Olegas, learning the language with the background of the context, only that he wanted to make sure culture was not viewed as knowledge to be apprehended, as content, but from a micro perspective, as influencing people and their language.

#### 4.3. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter, I have shown the results of my analysis of English undergraduate students' representations about culture and culture learning. I have argued that, in general terms, they represented culture in four ways – 1) cultural products and achievements, 2) behavior and customs, 3) knowledge, and 4) socio-cultural practices, but I have gone deep into their representations about culture as 3) knowledge or instruction and as 4) socio-cultural practices. I have also demonstrated that although they consider culture as important to language learning, they see the learning of culture in different ways. There were some students who viewed culture learning as learning contents about the target language countries, while others viewed it as learning how to use language in different situations. Finally, I have presented how learning to use the language appropriately might mean different things for different students. I now turn to the discussion of these results in the conclusion of the research.

## 5 FINAL REMARKS

This study has investigated English undergraduate students' representations about culture and culture learning in their English classes at University in an attempt to understand the role of culture in foreign language teaching and learning and in foreign language education. As regards students' representations about culture, it is possible to say, in the questionnaire, that they touched upon this subject in four ways; culture as a product such as a play, movie or book; culture as the behavior or customs of different peoples; culture as knowledge to be apprehended; and finally culture as connected to people's socio-cultural practices. It seems that in the first three categories, culture is viewed as more stable and fixed and as something that the individual can acquire through life, while in the last category, of culture as sociocultural practices, culture is perceived as something that individuals belong to, something that identifies them in their location in time and space, where they have to negotiate their position in frequently unequal relations of power. In this last representation culture is more fluid and variable.

In the interviews, students have shown representations of culture especially as formal knowledge, emphasizing a valued culture, and as sociocultural practices that identifies individuals regardless of the value attributed to the specific culture. Culture as formal knowledge is close to Bourdieu's contentions about individuals' acquisition of cultural capital from the family and from social institutions such as schools or Universities (Bourdieu, 1986). The participants Will and Gisele come from low class families and view culture as a kind of capital that they can acquire by reading books or entering the University – practices that could provide them with social mobility and economic well-being. However, Gisele, just like another participant, Olegas, shows that she went through a process of changing her views of culture as formal knowledge when she started University.

Sarmento's (2004) and Forlin's (2009) studies with English teachers have also encountered representations of culture as products or knowledge to be apprehended and Sarmento's study has shown representations of culture as behavior or customs of specific countries, more connected to Purples' representation of culture (see page 69). As already stated, from this viewpoint culture is viewed as a more fixed and stable entity, not amenable to transformation and change.

Students' representation about culture as practices seems to be the one they acquire at University. It became clear from the interviews that many students enter the University with the practical objective of having a degree which would allow them more professional opportunities – for that matter, they sought after economic and cultural capital. At the University, they get in touch with more humanistic views on culture as sociocultural practices and not only as formal knowledge. This seems to be the case in Olega's, Gisele's, Jane's and Theo's discourse on culture as every form of group practices, not only the dominant prestigious ones.

In what concerns the second research question – about students' representations of culture learning in their English classes at UFSC – I have demonstrated two main representations found in students' discourse in the interviews, they are culture learning as a) learning about different English-speaking countries' history and achievements and b) learning how to act appropriately using language in specific situations. Many times these two main ways of learning culture were discussed by students as explicit and direct learning in the first case and implicit, indirect learning in the second case. It should be noted, however, that this is not a straightforward correspondence and that there are sufficient contradictions in students' discourse that can lead to the opposite direction.

In the first representation about culture learning, this was viewed as learning contents, topics, facts about the people who speak the language as opposed to learning ways of speaking or the structures of language. The students who represented culture in this way seemed to be missing more content-oriented English classes focusing on cultures of different English-speaking countries; they stated that literature and translation classes were more representative of culture classes. According to Corbett (2003), English classes favoring the communicative approach do not leave space for cultural exploration in the classroom due to their extreme focus on functional skills.

According to Stern (1992), the commonly skill-oriented language programs mentioned by Corbett (2003), associated to other reasons – the vastness of the culture concept, the problem of goal determination and lack of accessible information – functions as obstacles in order to accommodate the cultural component of language teaching in classroom practice. Although all these difficulties might undermine even more the space and role of culture in the language classroom, treating culture solely as the content of the lesson in overt discussions, might give students the false idea that culture is fixed and stable and not likely to

change. This preoccupation is acknowledged by the participant Theo in his representations of culture learning.

The second main representation of culture learning regarded it as learning how to use language in appropriate ways, depending on the context of situation. The word 'context' was frequently used by students who were placed under this category and their concerns on 'how to do things with words' gave extra prominence to language as connected to contexts and cultures. There were, however, diverse ways of understanding culture learning as learning how to use language appropriately. João Macedo and Juh, for example, represent it as having to adapt to the language so as to speak 'like a native speaker'. Both of them state that their ideal in English learning is to attain native speakers' oral skills and norms of interaction. Many researchers (Kramsch, 1993; McKay, 2003; Corbett, 2003) have criticized research and language teaching which influence students to believe that the ultimate goal of language learning is to achieve nativelike competence. McKay (2003) for example, argues that especially with the current status of English as an international language, "there is no reason why some speakers of English, the 'native speakers', should be more privileged and provide standards for other users of English" (McKay, 2003, p. 19).

Olegas' and Regiane's representations about culture learning were also placed under the category in which culture learning is learning how to use language appropriately in diverse contexts. In fact, all students whose representations were categorized this way (João, Juh, Olegas, Regiane and Theo) attributed a great importance to language as connected to culture in the English classroom. Both Regiane and Olegas talked about the use of expressions that is different depending on the language one is speaking, but most importantly they considered contexts as vital to the understanding of how language works. Corbett (2003) argues that the contribution of sociolinguist Dell Hymes (1972) to language studies was exactly to highlight the importance of contexts and levels of appropriacy to peoples' use of language, what would form their communicative competence.

Similarly, the study by Sarmento (2004) with English teachers from a language course showed teachers' representations of culture learning also as learning culturally-bound aspects of language. In her study, these aspects were presented in the English classroom as ways to make invitations, requests; vocabulary differences between American and British English; and the connotation of words that form expressions. Almost all these examples found in Sarmento's study were also

mentioned by the participants in my research as moments when they consider that they are learning culture in their English classes. In this sense, the relationship between language and culture could more easily be perceived by the students who represented culture as practices and culture learning as learning how to use language in different contexts.

Theo's representation of culture learning is, to some extent, similar to Regiane's and Olegas' given that he considers it as learning the language inside the contexts. Nevertheless, Theo does not attach the learning of culture solely to the learning of the English language and to the countries where it is spoken as a first language, be it United States or India. He believes he is learning culture when, in the classroom, he discusses the representation of teachers in some American movies as well as gender and sexuality issues or just when he analyzes Japanese fairy tales. Risager (2007) advises English teachers to work with culture in the classroom in this multilateral scheme and not in a bilateral one that focus only in students' national culture and the national culture of English-speaking countries.

In sum, this research offered some English undergraduate students' representations about culture as formal and valued knowledge and culture as sociocultural practices that identify individuals. At the same time, the role of culture in the English language classrooms was seen as either a topic or content of the lesson, at times dissociated from language or as the pragmatics of learning a language that reflects specific world views, frequently connected to the forms, structures or history of the own language under study, in which the relationship between language and culture is explicitly stated.

The pedagogical implications of this research to the EFL classroom are many. If culture is understood solely as a specific knowledge one has to acquire or as a product, culture learning may end up meaning merely learning about particular books, films, and plays or about determined English speaking countries' habits and history in an overgeneralized way. On the other hand, when culture is understood as practices it can be constructed and transformed depending on individual's participation and interaction in diverse groups in society at different times. Therefore teachers could construct with students meanings of culture which allow them to recognize the fluid and changeable nature of culture, while at the same time making them aware of the social construction of meanings so they can perceive the intrinsic relationship between language and culture.

## 5.1. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While this research may have helped us better understand some of the representations English undergraduate students hold about culture and culture learning in their English classes at UFSC, it has also certain limitations. My objective was to get to know how the English students were viewing the role of culture in their language classes and for that reason I applied questionnaires and interviews with the participants. However, it would also have been interesting to get to know the representations about culture and culture learning of the professors from the program<sup>18</sup> and compare the representations of the two groups if possible. Another limitation of this study is that it only used elicitation techniques, questionnaires and interviews, to understand students' representations about culture and culture learning. I could also have used classroom observation to see how culture was being approached in classroom practice by the professors themselves and how students were responding to the 'cultural components' under study in their language classrooms.

## 5.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Having considered the above limitations, suggestions for further research would then include: a) a comparative study between English students' and English teachers' representations about culture and culture learning in English classes in diverse contexts, especially in teacher education programs; b) an ethnographic study to understand how culture is approached in English classrooms in undergraduate programs in English by means of classroom observation; c) qualitative studies about culture learning in other classroom contexts portraying teachers' in-service practice, such as regular schools – public and private, and language courses; d) qualitative studies in teacher education programs to understand whether or how student-teachers' or in-service teachers' representations about culture influence the construction of their identities in English. In sum, studies aiming at understanding the role of culture in language classrooms would serve language teaching and

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<sup>18</sup> Because the objective of the undergraduate program in English at UFSC is to educate bachelors and teachers, may times the professors who teach at the program play the role of, simultaneously, English professors and English teacher educators.

language education a great deal, given that, as Kramersch (1996) admits, language plays a crucial role not only in the construction of culture, but in the emergence of cultural change.



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## APPENDIX I - THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionário – Identidade cultural dos aprendizes de inglês

Nome:

Email:

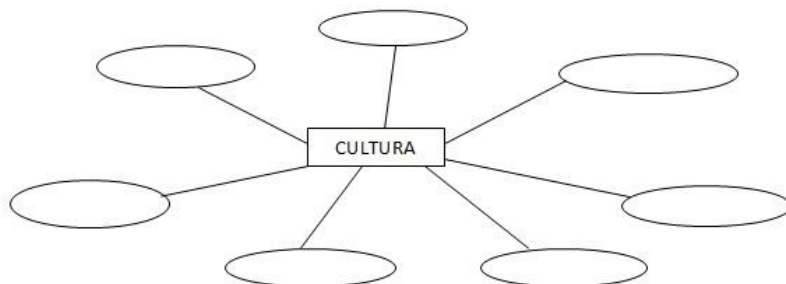
Pseudônimo:

Idade:

Semestre em inglês:

Semestre no curso:

1) Mapa semântico: O que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? O que você entende sobre cultura?



2) Você acha que cultura é um aspecto importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras?

sim ( ) não ( )

Por quê?

3) Na sua opinião, existe uma “cultura da língua inglesa”?

Sim ( ) não ( )

Exemplifique

4) As suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa?

Sim ( ) não ( )

a) Se sim, você acha que isso o(a) ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? Como?

5) De que forma estar aprendendo inglês influencia você como pessoa (quem você é)?

6) Você tem a perfeição do inglês nativo como objetivo na sua aprendizagem da língua inglesa?

Sim ( ) não ( )

Por quê?

7) Você se sente inferior por conta do modo como você fala? Pelo seu sotaque em inglês, por exemplo?

Sim ( ) não ( )

Explique.

8) Você se sente mais a vontade falando inglês ou português?

Inglês ( ) português ( ) não importa ( )

9) Tente descrever com alguns adjetivos o que você sente quando fala inglês.

10) Ao aprender inglês, você está aprendendo alguma coisa além de somente a língua? Quais coisas?

11) Além do contexto acadêmico, você também utiliza o inglês em contextos pessoais, na sua vida cotidiana no Brasil?

Não ( ) sim ( )

a) Se sim, em quais contextos?

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b) Com quais propósitos?

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12) Você já morou em algum país(es) onde o inglês é língua oficial de ampla comunicação?

Não ( )

Sim ( ) qual? \_\_\_\_\_

quanto tempo? \_\_\_\_\_

a) De que forma essa experiência influenciou a sua vida?

13) O que você pretende fazer com o inglês daqui para frente? Quais são suas perspectivas profissionais ou pessoais quanto à “saber inglês”?

Indique as suas prioridades numerando de 1 a 8:

( ) me tornar professor de inglês;

( ) me tornar tradutor;

( ) me tornar pesquisador na área de língua inglesa (pós-graduação);

( ) trabalhar em outras áreas onde saber inglês é indispensável (comércio, serviços);

( ) viajar para outros lugares;

( ) me comunicar com pessoas de diferentes países através da internet;

( ) consumir produtos culturais produzidos em língua inglesa: músicas, séries de tv, filmes, entre outros.

( ) produzir conteúdos, arte, conhecimentos em língua inglesa;

( ) outros. Descreva:

---

14) Você acha importante discutir aspectos culturais do Brasil nas suas aulas de inglês na universidade? Por quê?



**APPENDIX II – THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

(asked in Portuguese)

- 1) De onde você é? O que você faz? Como você aproveita o seu tempo livre? Você participa de alguma tipo de grupo ou comunidade, mesmo que seja online?
- 2) Você poderia falar um pouco sobre sua família?
- 3) Quando você começou a aprender inglês?
- 4) Como foram suas experiências de aprendizagem de inglês durante seu período de educação formal na escolar regular?
- 5) Por que você decidiu cursar Letras Inglês?
- 6) Como você avalia suas experiências de aprendizagem no curso de graduação em inglês da UFSC?
- 7) Você poderia comentar sobre suas respostas ao questionário, enfatizando especialmente como você vê a relação entre língua e cultura?



### APPENDIX III – QUESTIONAIRES’ ANSWERS AND INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS<sup>19</sup>

#### Oral English I

Juh, 17 years old, 1<sup>st</sup> phase

#### Questionnaire’s answers

1) Mapa Semântico: O que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? O que você entende sobre cultura?

*Língua, música, pessoas, filmes, lugares, gastronomia, dança*

2) Você acha que cultura é um aspect importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras? Sim. Por quê?

*Porque através da cultura aprendemos a nos comunicar melhor com as pessoas nativas.*

4) As suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? Sim. a) Se sim, você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? Como?

*Por exemplo: aprender a falar através de músicas, podemos aprender o sotaque dependendo de onde essa música vem.*

10) Ao aprender inglês, você está aprendendo alguma coisa além de somente a língua? Sim. Quais coisas?

*A cultura de cada país como por exemplo: como cada país fala o inglês de forma diferente e até mesmo as variações de fala existentes no mesmo país.*

#### Interview’s transcription

R: Aí eu peguei o seu questionário + né? E na pergunta um + associar palavras com a palavra cultura + aí você colocou cultura como língua + pessoas + música + filmes + lugares + gastronomia + dança + você colocou várias palavrinhas + o que você quis dizer com essas palavrinhas?

Juh: ah + que cada lugar é único + né? + cada lugar tem as suas particularidades + gastronomia + músicas + então eu acho que é cultura + né? então a gente sai daqui pra ir pra outro lugar + a gente aprende músicas novas + tipos de danças novas + gastronomia

R: outro lugar que você fala são outros países + assim?

Juh: tanto dentro de um mesmo país assim + quanto outros países

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<sup>19</sup> The transcriptions presented here concern the parts of the interviews in which students discussed about culture as related to language

R: muito bem + aí eu perguntei + você acha que cultura é um aspecto importante na aprendizagem de língua estrangeira? + Você disse que sim + daí + Por que? + Você disse porque através da cultura aprendemos a nos comunicar melhor com as pessoas nativas + O que você pensou nessa hora?

Juh: ++ Porque eu acho que não sei + uma pessoa que nunca saiu + que nunca teve contato + assim o contato mesmo + nunca vivenciou aquilo + não sei se ela é apta pra falar igual + sempre vai ter as diferenças + tu nunca vai saber se realmente + ah o que eu to falando tá certo + eu não sei se eles falam isso + ah eles falam + isso existe lá? + Eu vou falar + mas isso existe lá realmente? + Essa expressão existe? +

Juh: ((...)) Eu quis dizer assim tipo ++ tem várias coisas + é + que a gente fala + expressões que a gente usa + porque é difícil + porque ai eu quero escrever uma coisa + professor ai eu quero falar + como que eu falo isso + ah lá eles não falam assim + eles falam de outro jeito + daí eu penso + ai + como eu vou saber o que a gente fala lá + e o que a gente fala aqui + entendesse?

R: seria mais como expressões + expressões que são difíceis de traduzir?

Juh: é + e às vezes expressões são ligadas à nossa cultura + né? por exemplo + os ditados populares mudam muito + então eu acho que o contato com a cultura aproxima mais a gente a falar como os falantes nativos.

R: ((...)) aí aqui eu perguntei + as suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? + Você disse que sim + aí eu perguntei + você acha que isso ajuda você a aprender a própria língua inglesa? + Aí você disse que sim + aí você deu um exemplo + aprender a falar através de músicas + podemos aprender o sotaque dependendo de onde a música vem.

Juh: Sim + então a nossa professora ela trabalha isso com a gente aqui + a professora de oral + né? no começo do semestre todo final da aula ela botava uma música + a gente recebia uma folha com a letra + a gente completava + essas coisas assim + passou um filme pra gente também pra gente ir escutando sem legenda em português + com legenda em inglês + então eu acho que isso ajuda bastante + porque o que a gente via na aula + depois a gente revia no filme + sabe?

### **Regiane, 26 years old, 1<sup>st</sup> phase**

#### **Questionnaire's answers**

1) Mapa Semântico: O que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? O que você entende sobre cultura?

*Comunicação, história, holismo, povos, conhecimento, construção, pensamento.*

2) Você acha que cultura é um aspect importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras? Sim. Por quê?

*A língua de um povo se materializa e se transforma pelos costumes do grupo. Por isso, conhecer a cultura do povo da língua que se estuda pode auxiliar no uso correto de expressões, no entendimento de fonemas, na compreensão da utilidade de certas palavras.*

4) As suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? Sim. a) Se sim, você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? Como?

*Principalmente no entendimento de expressões que, se fossem traduzidas ao pé da letra, não teriam sentido.*

10) Ao aprender inglês, você está aprendendo alguma coisa além de somente a língua? Sim. Quais coisas?

*Várias. Por exemplo, aprendi que para negar um convite educadamente, deve-se dizer "I'd like, but..." ou seja, um aspecto cultural dos povos que usam a língua inglesa.*

### **Interview's transcriptions**

R: Aqui quando você respondeu seu questionário sobre seus entendimentos de cultura + daí você diz + comunicação + história + povos + conhecimento + a construção + que eu achei bem legal + né? + que a cultura é construída + pensamento + aí você diz na pergunta + você acha que cultura é um aspecto importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras + você diz sim porque a cultura nasce do grupo + das pessoas fazerem as coisas em grupo + e daí quando eu pergunto + na sua opinião + existe uma cultura da língua inglesa + você diz + sim + a diferença entre o inglês britânico e o inglês americano mostra a experiência da cultura de um povo + diferente + que vem a influenciar a língua + eu queria que você falasse um pouco mais + né? que você colocou essas diferenças entre o inglês britânico e o americano como exemplos de + na verdade + duas culturas diferentes +

Regiane: Posso te diferenciar tanto países que falam a mesma língua + mas que tem uma trajetória histórica diferente + como línguas diferentes + expressões + não sei + vamos dizer + feito nas coxas + é uma expressão do período colonial do Brasil + que os escravos faziam as telhas de barro nas pernas + e aí como cada escravo tinha um tamanho de coxa + as telhas não saíam do mesmo tamanho + e o telhado não ficava muito bom + então isso é uma expressão que tem um fundo

cultural + fundo histórico daquele povo + e assim como o Brasil tem as suas construções + as outras línguas também tem + ((...)) mas essa é a idéia + de que muitas coisas que são faladas na língua inglesa + como qualquer outra + vem da sua cultura + da sua trajetória histórica +

### **Gisele, 28 years old, 1<sup>st</sup> phase**

#### **Questionnaire's answers**

1) Mapa Semântico: O que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? O que você entende sobre cultura?

*Ter estudo, conhecimento, opinião própria, ter hábito de leitura, manter-se informado, origens.*

2) Você acha que cultura é um aspect importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras? Sim. Por quê?

*Porque é através do conhecimento que temos do mundo que nos faz querer estar inserido nele. E a língua estrangeira abre portas para a comunicação sem barreiras.*

4) As suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? Sim. a) Se sim, você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? Como?

*Porque eu não quero aprender a falar a língua apenas, mas também entendê-la. Por exemplo, a palavra Halloween, como saber o significado sem entrar no contexto cultural do vocábulo.*

10) Ao aprender inglês, você está aprendendo alguma coisa além de somente a língua? Sim. Quais coisas?

*Gisele: sim, outra cultura, outra forma de ver o mundo.*

#### **Interview's transcriptions**

Gisele: ((...)) eu fiz uma resenha agora sobre um artigo acadêmico pro Marcos + que ele pediu + sobre variação linguística + então a gente aprende muito + a minha visão sobre o que que era por exemplo + cultura + norma culta + que eu tinha quando eu respondi o teu questionário é diferente de hoje ((...))

R: ((...)) Eu pedi pra você associar a palavra cultura com outras palavras que vem à cabeça + aí você associou algumas coisas aqui + e eu achei que as palavrinhas que você associou + elas se relacionam muito entre si + elas tão muito relacionadas + por exemplo + cultura é ter hábito de leitura + manter-se informado + ter estudo + conhecimento + opinião própria + e aí a palavra origens também + né? então eu achei que essas palavrinhas estudo + elas tem muita relação entre si né? a coisa da opinião própria + aí eu queria que você + se pudesse falar um



pouquinho sobre esse entendimento que você colocou aqui + se já mudou + ou se você ainda tem essa ideia

Gisele: é ++ a gente teve uma aula com a Marcia ((estagiária de mestrado)) essa semana e ela esclareceu essa coisa da cultura + a gente tava falando sobre cultura + as duas ideias de cultura que o autor tava colocando + e aí ela falou assim + olha ++ porque tem uma frase que todo mundo fala que + ah + você não tem cultura + isso é ridículo + todo mundo tem cultura + eu assim ++ Como assim + Marcia? Ela então + cultura não é os livros que você lê + não é o que você tem de conhecimento de arte + de todas essas coisas + não sei se isso foi exatamente o que ela quis dizer + mas foi o que eu entendi + cultura é o que você é + são as suas raízes + a forma como você aprendeu a ver cada coisa + a forma como você se identifica + e todo mundo tem isso + então não dá pra ter uma cultura pensando que só porque o cara não sabe Shakespeare o cara não tem cultura + então acho que mudou um pouquinho nesse sentido de eu pensar que cultura é as coisas que tu vai acumulando ao longo do tempo + cultura é o que tu já tem + é o que tu já é + então mudou o meu pensamento nesse sentido + ficou muito primário isso aí + mas essa é a diferença + né? +

R: claro

Gisele: tipo estar nesse universo e aprender não só de coisas + mas aprender sobre ti mesmo + né? + tipo te conhecer melhor e saber que eu não preciso + claro que é importante que eu saiba as coisas + mas eu já sou importante + eu sou alguém + e eu acho que a partir desse pensamento é que tu consegue ver as coisas que tu vai pegando + que o professor vai falando tu consegue pegar pra ti sem perder as tuas origens + sem perder o que tu já é +

R: não é porque você entrou na faculdade agora + que você não tinha cultura antes +

Gisele: que eu não tinha cultura + exatamente + e eu acho que eu pensava assim porque me falavam isso + que enquanto eu não fosse pra faculdade eu não seria alguém (...) mas eu já sou alguém independente disso.

R: (...) aí aqui na perguntinha + cultura + aspecto importante na aprendizagem de LE + você disse que sim + que através do conhecimento que temos de mundo que nos faz querer estar inserido nele + e a LE abre portas pra comunicação sem barreiras + aqui você colocou só a coisa da instrução

Gisele: era o meu ponto de vista naquela época

R: mas aí depois você colocou a coisa do conhecimento de mundo + né?

Gisele: de outras culturas + de entender de uma forma mais geral o que acontece com outras pessoas + e não tentar achar estranho mas só perceber isso como mais uma forma diferente de se expressar + de ser +

R: ((...)) na próxima + eu perguntei + as suas aulas de inglês na UFSC abordam aspectos culturais da LI + você disse que sim + e aí eu perguntei + você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? + Você disse sim + porque eu não quero aprender a falar a língua apenas + mas também entendê-la + por exemplo + a palavra Halloween + como saber o significado sem entrar no contexto cultural do vocábulo + pra saber o significado você tem que ter um contexto cultural por trás +

Gisele: Ai + eu + teve um professor meu + eu acho que foi a professora Debora que falou + que países que precisam do inglês como segunda língua + pra poder estar inserido no mercado + e pra poder melhorar o desenvolvimento econômico daquele país + eles acabam tendo que aprender inglês + mas existe muita resistência quando eles vem com cultura + que eles não querem a cultura + mas fica uma coisa muito vaga + ne? Tipo + quanto mais tu tem medo de saber a cultura + mais parece que tu é fraco + que tu vai te render + então por que não? + Isso não me afetaria negativamente + eu acho que eu posso aprender a cultura sem me deixar influenciar por ela + e se eu me influenciar positivamente + que mal isso vai fazer? + É + eu acho que é + porque vai + tu é tão inseguro assim a ponto de achar que vai +

R: você acha que você não perderia a sua cultura + as suas raízes + por estar aprendendo uma outra língua + e no caso do inglês que é uma língua hegemônica

Gisele: é aquilo que eu te falei sobre variação linguística que eu aprendi + ensinar o aluno a falar a norma culta da língua não vai fazer com que ele perca + ou esqueça como ele vai se relacionar com os amigos dele do ambiente social dele + não vai esquecer de se comunicar em gíria e tal + mas quando ele for pra um outro lugar que precise usar a norma culta + a norma padrão + ele vai conseguir se sair bem + então eu acho que aprender várias coisas não te impede de +

R: ele vai

Gisele: ((o aluno)) ele vai ficar habilitado em mais de uma coisa + ele vai saber mais de uma coisa + não quer dizer que ele vai + que ele vai perder +

## Oral English V

Will, 23 years old, 1<sup>st</sup> phase

### Questionnaire's answers

1) Mapa Semântico: O que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? O que você entende sobre cultura?

*História, família, leitura, instrução, bons-modos, estudo, ensino.*

2) Você acha que cultura é um aspect importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras? Sim. Por quê?

*Ao meu ver, o estudo de qualquer língua estrangeira requer, de certo modo, conhecimento e uma boa base na língua-mãe.*

4) As suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? Não. Talvez aspectos culturais de países cuja língua nativa é o inglês.

a) Se sim, você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? Como? (-)

10) Ao aprender inglês, você está aprendendo alguma coisa além de somente a língua? Sim. Quais coisas?

*Estou automaticamente entrando em contato com aspectos culturais (mesmo em programas dublados) dos países de língua inglesa.*

### Interview's transcriptions

R: Agora vou fazer perguntas aqui do questionário + em relação à parte de pergunta sobre cultura e língua + Na primeira pergunta do questionário + o que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura + aí você colocou + cultura é + ensino + estudo + leitura + instrução + bons modos + história + família + porque eu pedi pra vocês associarem palavras né? + vocês associaram + aí eu achei interessante + você colocou muitas palavras que tem muita relação entre elas + então + ensino + leitura + estudo + instrução + são palavras bem relacionadas semanticamente + né? Essas quatro + e aí eu queria então + qual o teu entendimento de cultura + a partir dessa perspectiva + ensino + leitura + estudo + instrução + é adquirir um conhecimento + é isso?

Will: Cultura + eu acho que cultura é uma palavra que tem até mais de um significado até + mas eu acho que antes disso ela agrega várias palavras + outros significados + não sei + cultura + a princípio pra mim + pelo que eu aprendi do meu pai e da minha mãe + assim + o meu primeiro contato com o significado dessa palavra era ter bons modos +

R: ah + você colocou aqui

Will: não é exatamente isso + simplesmente isso + mas o primeiro contato que eu tive com o significado + era bons modos + porque eles falavam assim + olha + gente sem cultura + joga o lixo no chão + pronto + bons modos + maus modos + jogar lixo no chão + também assim o meu pai falava + tu vê + lá em Porto Alegre isso + os bairros que são mais ricos assim + são arborizados + isso é cultura + então era a ideia que eu tinha de cultura + né? Cultura + claro que com o passar do tempo né? + é a pessoa que tem background + seria conhecimento prévio + né? + tem algo a dizer + então isso seria cultura

R: é a coisa da instrução mesmo + né? + uma pessoa instruída

Will: só que assim + eu acho que cultura + isso é uma possibilidade + não é a definição por si só + é uma possibilidade + é duas coisas ao mesmo tempo + a atitude de buscar + e também seria o resultado de ter buscado o conhecimento + então por exemplo + se a pessoa tem cultura ela vai ler e cultura também é não só ler + mas saber expressar aquilo que é o resultado de tu ter lido + de ter estudado + por isso que eu acho que eu coloquei ensino + estudo

R: até você colocou família também + né?

Will: é porque a família te ensina com a prática + né? + às vezes nem tudo o que os pais ensinar + vai ser passado pros filhos da maneira que eles queriam + mas a família ensina a ter ideias + conceitos + né?

R: ((...)) ah + aí na outra pergunta + as suas aulas de inglês na UFSC abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa + você disse que não + pelo menos até o momento você não tinha visto abordar tantos aspectos culturais da língua inglesa no curso + aí você disse + talvez aspectos culturais de países cuja língua nativa é o inglês ((...))

Will: Não é que não foi abordado + porque eu não detectei isso mesmo + eu não vi algo assim uma imersão + algum foco na cultura + eu tenho um professor de produção oral que ele morou na Inglaterra + então arquivos de áudio que ele leva na sala + coisas assim + é mais britânico + é sempre sotaque britânico + mas eu acho que o fato de ele mostrar sotaque não diz sobre a cultura

R: não exatamente

Will: O que eu aprendo sobre cultura inglesa é lendo um livro + né? + pelo menos até o momento não vi nenhum foco nisso

### **João Macedo, 28 years old, 1<sup>st</sup> phase**

#### **Questionnaire's answers**

1) Mapa Semântico: O que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? O que você entende sobre cultura?

*Filmes, TV, teatro, TV Globo, linguagem, visitas, USA.*

2) Você acha que cultura é um aspecto importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras? Sim. Por quê?

*Porque a cultura engloba a língua estrangeira aprendida.*

4) As suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? Sim. a) Se sim, você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? Como?

*Aprendendo sobre a cultura, podemos nos adaptar melhor à própria língua inglesa.*

10) Ao aprender inglês, você está aprendendo alguma coisa além de somente a língua? Sim. Quais coisas?

*Estou aprendendo a ser gente, porque a minha profissão é dar aulas de inglês e trabalhar com isso.*

### **Interview's Transcriptions**

R: Agora no questionário + eu pedi pra vocês associarem palavras à palavra cultura + Aí você relacionou algumas palavras + linguagem + filme + tv + teatro + Estados Unidos + TV Globo + e revistas ++ Aí eu queria que você falasse um pouco sobre essas palavras que você associou + vendo agora essas palavras + o que você ++

João: ((...)) mas então quando eu falo de linguagem e filme + TV + teatro + eu acho que quando eu respondi a pergunta eu tava pensando em cultura mais no sentido + talvez + porque a nossa cultura é muito influenciada pela cultura americana + né? principalmente quem tem tv a cabo + quem gosta de inglês + então normalmente eu vejo muitos programas que são em inglês + ne ? seriados + filmes + né? e tem também lógico + a tv globo + ((...)) mas na cultura uma coisa que tá sempre presente é a questão da linguagem né? + porque é um meio de comunicação que a cultura se difunde + através da linguagem + né? ((...)) mas eu respondi porque a cultura no caso + a apropriação que eu tenho da cultura vem justamente desses meios de comunicação + exatamente +

R: ((...)) Aí na segunda pergunta+ se você achava que cultura era um aspecto importante na aprendizagem de LE

João: NOSSA

R: ai você disse que sim +

João: Extremamente importante

R: que a cultura ela engloba a língua estrangeira aprendida + seria talvez a cultura como uma coisa maior + e a língua ela estaria dentro dessa cultura + seria mais ou menos isso?

João: aham + aham + seria mais ou menos isso + eu acho que o que acontece é assim + né? + quando você quer aprender uma língua estrangeira + se você tem acesso àquela cultura fica muito mais fácil + e aí então + repete por favor a minha resposta + desculpa +

R: Por quê? + Porque a cultura engloba a língua estrangeira aprendida

João: É + exatamente +

R: tá em volta de tudo isso + né?

João: exatamente isso eu percebo na escola pública + que os alunos tem dificuldade pra aprender porque às vezes a cultura inglesa não faz parte da vida deles + eles não veem programas em inglês + não tem contato com muitas músicas em inglês + às vezes tem + mas até muito menos do que + por exemplo + o meu aluno + o Edson + que eu dou aula pra ele + ele vê um monte de vídeo em inglês + escuta um monte de música em inglês + então ele aprende muito mais fácil + porque ele já tem um contato + né? é nesse sentido

R: Aí você também disse em uma outra pergunta + que aprendendo a cultura a pessoa também pode + se adaptar melhor à língua inglesa + é mais fácil a adaptação

João: claro + porque se você aprende a cultura você sabe como cumprimentar de uma maneira mais informal ou mais formal + se você aprende a cultura você sabe que às vezes o americano não gosta que tu + sei lá + fique olhando diretamente no olho dele sem nenhum motivo + ou algo assim + se você sabe a cultura já fica com um traquejo pra se relacionar + se entrar em contato com um americano + né?

### **Olegas, 24 years old, 3<sup>rd</sup> phase**

#### **Questionnaire's answers**

1) Mapa Semântico: O que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? O que você entende sobre cultura?

*Afinidade, língua, viagens, reflexão, hábitos, estudo (livros), educação.*

2) Você acha que cultura é um aspect importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras? Sim. Por quê?

*Pois uso referências culturais para explicar palavras através de exemplos.*

4) As suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? Sim. a) Se sim, você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? Como?

*As referências do tipo contraste entre inglês britânico e inglês americano tem importância linguística. Além disso, a tradução de expressões idiomáticas é relevante para o aprendiz de inglês.*

10) Ao aprender inglês, você está aprendendo alguma coisa além de somente a língua? Sim. Quais coisas?

*No momento estudo violão através da internet. Os vídeos são em inglês. Estudo espanhol também da mesma forma.*

### **Interview's transcriptions**

R: Aí aqui eu to com o seu questionário + né? + eu achei muito legal seu questionário + por isso que eu fiquei te enchendo o saco + então a primeira pergunta que eu fiz foi + o que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? + O que você entende sobre cultura? + Aí tinha a palavra cultura no meio + e os balões assim + aí você colocou cultura é língua + viagens + reflexão + hábitos + estudo + livros + educação + e afinidade + e aí você colocou vários entendimentos de cultura + né? + até diferentes assim + né? + educação e estudos ta bem relacionado + né? + afinidade + hábitos talvez né? + língua também + reflexão achei bem legal + queria que você falasse um pouquinho sobre essas palavrinhas que você colocou e tal

Olegas: A vantagem de ter estudado economia antes foi que a gente estudou um pouco sobre cultura + o que era cultura + o conceito de cultura + então antes quando eu tinha dezessete anos eu achava que cultura era estudar bastante né? + ou ir ao cinema e assistir filme + mas aí eu vi que não + na faculdade + cultura é um modo de ver a vida + de produzir a vida + de compreender a vida + e de + como eu posso dizer + de aprender realmente uma realidade + e transformar essa realidade + então num sentido mais amplo assim + né? + ela se relaciona com várias coisas + na nossa área se relaciona com a língua + com a questão da educação + né? + do estudo + e em outras áreas se relaciona com outras coisas + então eu tentei dar essa visão

R: entendi + mais abrangente + né? + mais geral + muito bem + e aqui na segunda pergunta + você acha que cultura é um aspecto importante na aprendizagem de língua inglesa? + Você disse que é + aí por quê? + Porque uso referências culturais pra explicar palavras através de exemplos + aqui bem a voz do professor + né? + você na sala de aula + né? + como é que é isso?

Olegas: é porque lá onde eu dou aula + né? + eles seguem um conjunto de abordagens + né? + mas a abordagem mais marcante é a gramática do Chomsky assim + então eles são muito estruturalistas

assim + a palavra eu noto que muitas vezes eles dão um significado + atribuem um significado à palavra + né? + e isso às vezes gera um pouco de dificuldade nos estudantes + pra aprender em que tipos de contextos eles podem usar essa palavra + então eu noto que sempre que eu consigo + ou por conhecer + ou por ouvir falar e tal + ligar aquela palavra ou aquele uso que eles estão aprendendo + comunicativo + à um contexto cultural + a um contexto de uso + tal + fica mais claro pra eles + eles entendem muito melhor do que simplesmente eu jogar a palavra pra eles e fazer eles repetirem +

R: entendi + você tenta colocar no contexto que vai fazer mais sentido pra eles + vai ter mais significado +

Olegas: Exatamente.

R: E aí aqui eu perguntei na quatro + as suas aulas de inglês na Universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? + Você disse que sim + você pode me falar mais ou menos + nas aulas de inglês da UFSC + onde que você tem visto alguma coisa assim + sobre cultura abordada nas aulas?

Olegas: Bem naquela disciplina que eu tava fazendo inglês oral cinco + o professor ele trouxe um texto bastante interessante + a gente fez um trabalho em grupo que cada grupo ficou responsável por uma parte dele + e o texto tratava justamente das questões culturais associadas ao inglês + então esse foi um dos professores que fez isso + né? + na primeira fase também teve um professor bastante interessante de introdução à linguagem + e ele era muito erudito assim + tinha muito conhecimento + então ele trazia vários exemplos de usos diferentes do inglês ao longo do tempo + ou então de línguas diferentes + de códigos de linguagem diferentes + mesmo que não sejam línguas e tal + então o que eu consigo ver é assim mais esses dois professores + né?

R: É + teve bastante alunos que falaram sobre o professor da quinta fase + ah porque ele tem o sotaque mais britânico + ele trouxe algumas coisas sobre a Inglaterra + sobre diferenças entre os jornais + eles falaram bastante desse professor ((...))

### **Clara, 20 years old, 5<sup>th</sup> phase**

#### **Questionnaire's answers**

1) Mapa Semântico: O que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? O que você entende sobre cultura?

*Língua, pessoas, costumes, comida, vestuário, festa, lugar.*

2) Você acha que cultura é um aspect importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras? Sim. Por quê?



*Acredito que a cultura dos falantes influencia a língua que eles falam.*

4) As suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? *Sim (pouco, nada muito focado)*

a) Se sim, você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? Como?

*Conhecer a cultura da língua te ajuda a saber como usá-la, tipo: local, quando, em que situações. A cultura te ajuda em outros aspectos como vocábulo e expressões.*

10) Ao aprender inglês, você está aprendendo alguma coisa além de somente a língua? *Sim. Quais coisas?*

*Cultura, o conhecimento em si que um texto oral ou escrito traz, modo de ver e classificar o mundo de modo diferente.*

### **Interview's transcriptions**

R: na primeira perguntinha do questionário + eu perguntei pra vocês + o que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura + o que você entende sobre cultura? ((...)) Aí você associou as palavras + língua + costumes + comida + vestuário + festa + lugar + e pessoas + aí eu queria que você falasse um pouco porque que você escolheu essas palavras

Clara: assim + eu acho que tinha balão que tinha que ser preenchido né? + então o que que eu posso preencher + né?

Eu: é, veio na sua cabeça né? + foi exatamente o que surgiu né? + aí você foi colocando

Clara: mas eu acho assim + ó + a língua depende do que? + Do povo dela + então de certa forma tudo que tem aí + vestuário + os costumes deles + relacionamento político deles com outros povos + vai influenciar essa língua + então por exemplo + pra se aprender uma língua eu acredito + né? + que é meio complicado aprender ela só por ela em si + eu acho que tem que ter um conhecimento da cultura + e de algumas coisas que acontecem com esses povos + por quê? + Porque querendo ou não + a língua é um produto histórico + social + né? + então é bom até pra compreender + às vezes uma expressão idiomática + tu só vais entender + quando souber qual o contexto daquela expressão + aí tu vais entender o porque + qual é a origem daquela expressão + pode ser o bacon é diferente do modo com a gente usaria aqui + porque aqui é outro idioma + é outra cultura + é outra história

R: muito bem + aí aqui + as suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? + Você disse que sim +

você disse assim + sim + mas não muito focado + aí a próxima pergunta era + se sim + você acha que isso ajuda você a aprender a própria língua inglesa? + Você disse que sim + porque conhecer a cultura da língua te ajuda a saber como usá-la + tipo local + quando + em que situações ++ A cultura te ajuda em outros aspectos como vocábulo e expressões + mas você já falou sobre isso + né?

Clara: porque + é assim + ó + a gente não tem tipo uma aula + ó + hoje a gente vai falar sobre + só a cultura americana + britânica + é pra explicar uma expressão idiomática + que eles trouxeram um pouquinho do contexto + pra gente compreender assim a expressão + por exemplo + então talvez foi necessário + sei lá + na Inglaterra a expressão cup of tea + é uma expressão do inglês que é falado na Inglaterra + porque eles tomam muito chá + por exemplo + né? + então teve + a gente aprendeu + teve um motivo + uma compreensão melhor do inglês + ou então o professor só comentou alguma coisa assim como curiosidade

R: tipo tava num assunto + aí surgiu uma coisa cultural ali + o professor ah + falando nisso

Clara: isso + uma coisa assim + é basicamente isso ou então só umas discussões + algum momento + tipo a gente teve uma discussão na aula de produção oral + aí daqui a pouco + tá + e como acontece isso aqui no Brasil + e nas outras culturas + como que acontece + mas não que o objetivo dela fosse aquilo + só abriu um pouquinho pra aquilo naquele momento né? + mas não o foco da aula por exemplo + fosse isso

### **Purple, 21 years old, 5<sup>th</sup> phase**

#### **Questionnaire's answers**

1) Mapa Semântico: O que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? O que você entende sobre cultura?

*Poder, política, povo, arte, comunicação, história, identificação.*

2) Você acha que cultura é um aspect importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras? Sim. Por quê?

*Através da cultura da língua estrangeira estudada, o estudante terá base para compreender a língua, pois terá acesso ao contexto que a língua está inserida.*

4) As suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? Sim. a) Se sim, você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? Como?

*Por exemplo, o professor dá um exemplo de como um assunto qualquer seria tratado pelos ingleses ou norte-americanos, comparo estes exemplos e aprendo com eles.*

10) Ao aprender inglês, você está aprendendo alguma coisa além de somente a língua? Sim. Quais coisas?

*Literatura, cultura, um mundo novo por trás de uma língua.*

### **Interview's transcriptions**

R: ((...)) No questionário eu perguntei + o que vem na sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? + ((...)) Aí você colocou + política + povo + arte + comunicação + história + identificação + e poder + Achei bacana que você colocou essas duas palavras bem junta + política + e poder + uma do lado da outra + o que você quis dizer com isso?

Purple: Isso é um assunto muito complexo + cara + Eu penso + ok + quando eu penso em cultura eu penso + a gente conhece que cultura? + A gente conhece a cultura que está no poder + quando eu estudei história + eu não estudei a África + eu estudei quem colonizou a África + Pô + eu queria saber um pouco mais + o que que a China inventou + o que que saiu dos lugares + sabe? + mas não + eu estudo a +

R: Cultura hegemônica?

Purple: é + é a cultura que tá no poder que se estuda + a que tá + a que todo mundo segue +

Eu: e pra você essa cultura hegemônica quem que é? + o que é essa cultura hegemônica? + Tem o nome de um país essa cultura + tem o nome

Purple: Não + porque uma época da sociedade quem tava no poder era Alexandre + o Grande + quem tava na outra era + sei lá + Jengiskan + depois + a Inglaterra do século dezoito + Estados Unidos + do boom que teve + e agora a China e os países emergentes + é sempre assim que tá indo sabe +

R: você acha que hoje em dia existe uma cultura hegemônica no mundo?

Purple: Hoje em dia + não +

R: você acha que existem culturas + mas não uma que tem mais poder do que outras?

Purple: Tá bem claro isso pra mim hoje em dia + sabe? + Pela internet + sabe?

R: Pela democratização

Purple: É + a globalização + as redes sociais + que ajudam muito a gente perceber que ninguém tem o poder de tudo + sabe?

R: ((...)) cultura é um aspecto importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras? + Você disse que sim + porque daí o estudante vai ter mais base pra entender a língua porque vai ter acesso ao contexto da língua ++ É isso mesmo?

Purple: É

R: ((...)) aulas na Universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? + Você disse que sim + que isso ajuda a aprender a língua + pois o professor dá um exemplo de como um assunto seria tratado pelos ingleses ou norte-americanos + que você compara esses exemplos + e aprende com eles + Isso acontece nas aulas? + dos professores compararem essas duas ++

Purple: Não regularmente + por exemplo + as disciplinas de inglês + não + produção Oral e escrita + não tem + onde eu vi mais isso foi na literatura + e na tradução que eu tive acesso a isso + por exemplo + o professor falava qual a comida era especialidade do Brasil + arroz com feijão + na Inglaterra + fish and chips + e nos Estados Unidos + não sei + uma lá + aí ele comparava as duas + alguma coisa assim + na Inglaterra + alguma coisa nos Estados Unidos + aí eu via a diferença mesmo dos países + a cultura dos dois +

R: A partir desse contraste que o professor fazia você conseguia ver o contraste entre as duas culturas + os dois países?

Purple: É.

### **Gisa, 31 years old, 5<sup>th</sup> phase**

#### **Questionnaire's answers**

1) Mapa Semântico: O que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? O que você entende sobre cultura?

*História, povo, respeito, costume, identidade, língua, imersão.*

2) Você acha que cultura é um aspect importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras? Sim. Por quê?

*A língua faz parte da cultura de todos os povos.*

4) As suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? Não. a) Se sim, você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? Como?

*Você conhece melhor os costumes de outras pessoas e passa a compreender melhor outras realidades diferentes da sua.*

10) Ao aprender inglês, você está aprendendo alguma coisa além de somente a língua? Depende. Quais coisas?

*Às vezes, sim, às vezes, não, porque não acho que o material didático de inglês tem um envolvimento cultural tão enfatizado. Em relação à estrutura, de como é a língua, acho que aprendemos mais.*

### Interview's transcriptions

R: E você depois fez o secretariado executivo + tinha inglês?

Gisa: Tinha + o professor era britânico + daí eu adorei + eu gosto muito da língua britânica + Eu acho que é porque eu sou meio virginiana + daí quando eles falam mais ou menos a forma que a gente tá lendo + por exemplo assim + o exemplo da garrafa + bottle “borvou” (USA) + e bottle + talvez por causa do som do T eu me prendi mais assim ++ A cultura também + eu vou te dizer assim + eu tenho que perder um certo preconceitozinho que eu tenho ainda com os Estados Unidos + mas por uma questão política + não por causa das pessoas

Eu: pela política geoeconômica e tal

Gisa: desde criança foi assim + mas eu nunca fui de evitar ou

Eu: ah + você já tinha isso + já desde criança

Gisa: forte + porque os meus amigos iam muito pra Disney assim + meus amigos nunca foram de classe abaixo da minha + eles sempre foram de uma classe mais alta + né? + porque o aplicação na época era filho de professores e funcionários ((da UFSC)) que entravam + não era sorteio + então o sorteio democratizou a escola

R: ((...)) você disse + cultura é respeito + identidade + povo + história + língua + achei muito legal + né? + até a palavra respeito + né? + respeitar todas as culturas + né?

Gisa: é aceitação assim + né?

R: E você disse aqui que as suas aulas de inglês na Universidade não abordam muito aspectos culturais + não + que não é esse o foco + que você diz que + até os livros o foco deles + não tem um envolvimento cultural muito grande + em relação à estrutura + de como é a língua + você acha que vocês aprendem mais

Gisa: talvez os aspectos culturais sejam mais trabalhados no inglês oral + como esse semestre que a gente acabou mudando um pouco mais pro britânico + o professor que chegou esse semestre ele trouxe um livro britânico pra sala + e aí a gente trabalhou aspectos mais culturais + por exemplo + diferenças entre alguns jornais da Inglaterra + e as aulas de oral + geralmente + dependendo do livro que é usado + o método + fica mais preso à forma + mais do que a cultura + a cultura a gente acaba vendo mais na literatura mesmo

R: que é a parte que vem junto com história e tudo

Gisa: e no writing + esse semestre como era mais parte estrutural do que conteúdo + ficou mais a questão do que está acontecendo a nossa volta + ou aqui + pode ser dentro da universidade + no Brasil + mas o

foco maior do professor neste semestre era estrutura + não era tanto content

### **Oral English VII**

**Theo, 20 years old, 7<sup>th</sup> phase**

#### **Questionnaire's answers**

1) Mapa Semântico: O que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? O que você entende sobre cultura?

*Language, tolerance, ways of behaving, accent, differences, food.*

2) Você acha que cultura é um aspect importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras? Sim. Por quê?

*A língua é indissociável da cultura.*

4) As suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? Sim. a) Se sim, você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? Como?

*Sim, porque para aprender uma língua estrangeira, é preciso estudá-la dentro de seu contexto (cultural).*

10) Ao aprender inglês, você está aprendendo alguma coisa além de somente a língua? Sim. Quais coisas?

*Aspectos culturais, aprendo a lidar com a diferença.*

#### **Interview's transcriptions**

Theo: aham + é as pessoas veem assim + ah + agora que você já tem um diploma + você já tá treinado + você já pode ser sei lá + um psicólogo + você já tem esse procedimento + não é assim + né? + e que a universidade + isso que eu gostei muito + da formação humana + que muda tua visão de mundo + principalmente estudando estudos culturais na graduação + mudou a forma como eu via muitas coisas + né? + assim eu sou uma pessoa muito mais crítica agora + só que às vezes eu até digo + parece que eu sou uma pessoa muito mais chata + porque as pessoas falam uma coisa + e aí eu + não + mas peraí [risos]

R: ((...)) O que você entende sobre cultura + eu pedi pra vocês associarem palavras + aí as palavrinhas que você colocou + interessante que você colocou em inglês + né? e as outras respostas você deu em português + aí você colocou + language + ways of behaving + music + accents + differences + food + tolerance + achei bem interessante + queria que você falasse um pouco o que você entende assim sobre cultura + né? + associada a aprendizagem de línguas assim + como você entende

Theo: é o que eu acho + que eu coloquei em algum momento do questionário + é que pra mim a cultura tá sempre associada a tudo né? +

tudo que a gente faz é cultural + né? então é até difícil definir cultura + tudo é socialmente construído então + tudo que é socialmente construído é cultura + então é bem complexo + né? + mas assim + algumas das coisas que eu coloquei é pensando assim no senso-comum mesmo + né? quando a gente fala da cultura de um país a gente fala + ah música + comida + os hábitos

R: sotaque

Theo: é o sotaque + e as diferenças + e a tolerância + é que eu acho que deve + que quem consegue entender as diferenças entre as culturas + é uma característica importante a tolerância + de compreender que o diferente não é pior nem melhor do que ++

R: ((...)) aí eu perguntei + as suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa + você disse que sim + e aí eu perguntei + se sim você acha que isso ajuda você a aprender a própria língua + como? + Você disse que ajuda porque pra aprender a língua estrangeira + é preciso estudá-la dentro de um contexto + cultural + É isso + Theo?

Theo: sim + quando eu falo que a cultura é abordada + eu não quero dizer que a gente tem uma aula + ah hoje a gente vai ver os costumes + ou como é o café-da-manhã + não é isso +

R: mesmo porque isso seria aquela coisa de enquadrar +

Theo: é + não é isso + o que eu quero dizer + é que mais uma vez a língua não é vista de forma isolada + mas dentro de um contexto + então não tem como não abordar cultura + talvez a palavra cultura nem seja dita + mas

R: implicitamente

Theo: é + implicitamente ela tá lá

### **Jane, 35 years old, 7<sup>th</sup> phase**

#### **Questionnaire's answers**

1) Mapa Semântico: O que vem à sua cabeça quando você pensa em cultura? O que você entende sobre cultura?

*Culinária, expressão, ideia, herança, vestuário típico, literatura oral/ escrita, valores.*

2) Você acha que cultura é um aspect importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras? Sim. Por quê?

*Porque podemos aprender língua e vocabulário através de temas culturais, folclóricos e específicos de uma região e/ou povo.*

4) As suas aulas de inglês na universidade abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? Sim. a) Se sim, você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? Como?

*Disseminando, ou seja, levar em conta todos os países que falam a língua inglesa. Não somente Estados Unidos e Inglaterra. Conhecer um pouco de tudo que é produzido na língua através do globo nas artes, ciência, música, literatura, etc*

10) Ao aprender inglês, você está aprendendo alguma coisa além de somente a língua? Sim. Quais coisas?

*Melhorar relacionamento pessoal e profissional em nosso cotidiano, ser mais aberto à ideias alheias, ser menos crítico e mais sensível ao outro sujeito.*

### **Interview's transcriptions**

R: muito bem + Jane + agora tou com o seu questionário + a primeira pergunta + relação entre língua e cultura + eu pedi pra vocês colocarem palavrinhas que viessem à cabeça que pra vocês se relacionassem com cultura + você colocou + expressão + ideia + herança + valores + literatura oral + literatura escrita + vestuário típico + e culinária

Jane: ta + a palavra lá do meio é cultura + né? + Pelo que eu me lembro mais ou menos na época + eu tentei associar cultura com uma pessoa letrada + e uma pessoa não letrada + que mesmo o não-letrado + ele consegue passar a cultura dele pra uma geração seguinte + né? + vamos supor + um índio não escreve + né? + mas ele consegue passar essa cultura oral + essa relação de religiosidade + de vestuário + de comida + pra geração seguinte + né? + e daí o letrado já + ele já consegue fazer isso mais forte + porque o que está escrito fica como se fosse documentado + né? + eu acho que tem daí uma difusão maior de ideias + a expressão é maior assim + né? + a expressão disso no sentido de valor + né? + acho que é mais palpável + tem mais crédito + uma coisa que está escrita do que eu só dizer + mesmo que a palavra tem muito poder + na nossa sociedade também a palavra ainda tem muito poder + mas nesse sentido de cultura + eu vou conseguir transmitir a minha cultura de uma maneira escrita ou de uma maneira oral + nao só + e eu acho que carrega um traço muito forte isso + né? + na herança + o tanto que eu me relaciono com a minha cultura + a minha língua + elas me deixam poderosos + independente de eu ser letrado ou iletrado pra passar isso pra geração seguinte no sentido de que eu defendo a minha cultura + independente da cultura que seja + ela é minha + é do meu povo + e ela nao é inferior + né?



R: entendi.

Jane: a cultura de um país do sul + a cultura de um país do norte + elas não são superior nem inferior + elas tem o mesmo valor de

R: de complexidade?

Jane: de complexidade pra quem vive dentro daquela cultura + eu vou me expressar + eu vou me vestir + eu vou comer + o que a gente produz não só como hábito + mas como uma expressão daquilo que a gente faz + a gente não quer se igualar ao outro + a gente não quer copiar o outro + mas a gente tem tudo isso dentro da gente + esse sentido assim de que cultura tem a ver com a nossa religião + com a nossa herança + com o que a gente come + com o que a gente veste + da maneira que a gente se expressa + da maneira até com que a gente fala + tem cultura que fala mais rápido + tem cultura que fala mais devagar + tem cultura que a fala parece que a pessoa tá mais sorrindo + tem cultura que parece que a fala é mais assim + brava + mais dura + assim + mais rígida + e isso tudo eu acho que expressa também na própria oralidade

R: tem todos os aspectos

Jane: em todos os aspectos + se a gente for levar em consideração o Brasil + tem gente que acha que brasileiro é muito simpático + é muito solto + é muito carinhoso + porque tá falando contigo + mesmo sendo uma pessoa que te conhece há pouco tempo + já vai colocar a mão em ti + então eu acho que carrega tudo isso a cultura + tanto oralmente quanto escrito + assim + e daí essa importância que tem de uma pra outra + quando tu tá inserido dentro da tua cultura + mesmo que tu vá pra outra + e viva muito tempo dentro daquela + tu não vai absorver somente aquela nova que tu foi + mas tu vai continuar te remetendo aquela outra que tu nasceu + e tu vai dar o valor tanto pra uma + quanto pra outra + em termos de viver entre uma e outra + pra tu não vai ser uma maior + nem melhor do que a outra + pra ti as duas vão ter o mesmo valor assim + de respeito + né? tu vai respeitar as duas do mesmo jeito + então eu acho que não tem essa diferença + uma maior + uma menor + elas podem se equivaler + né?

R: ((...)) aí aqui na perguntinha número dois + cultura é aspecto importante na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras + você disse que sim + eu perguntei por quê? + Você disse que + podemos aprender língua e vocabulário através de aspectos culturais + folclóricos + e específicos de uma região ou um povo

Jane: deixa eu ver a pergunta ++ é + é um aspecto importante + mas +++ há um tempo atrás assim + hoje eu consigo perceber melhor isso + eu não tenho mais essa +++ Há um tempo atrás + o inglês era

muito associado aos Estados Unidos + tudo que era em inglês + mas remetia aos Estados Unidos + tinha mais um sentido de verdade + né?

R: isso você vê em geral + ou na tua vida?

Jane: não + no geral assim + no pensamento popular + assim + né? + ah + porque quando o meu filho se formar + na minha ideia + assim + né? + na minha experiência + quando as meninas completavam quinze anos + na minha época ia pra Disney + não que não se vá pra Disney ainda hoje + hoje ainda se vai + mas hoje se usa inglês pra ir pra outros lugares + que tem uma expressividade diferente + não só os Estados Unidos + as pessoas hoje em dia procuram mais o Canadá + a Inglaterra + outros países + então teve um determinado momento que a cultura + o inglês representava só os Estados Unidos + era só isso + era Disney + a estátua da liberdade + não era outra coisa + os Estados Unidos era tido como exemplo de língua inglesa + parecia que não tinha outro lugar no mundo que se falava inglês + mas eu acho que agora nessas últimas décadas + as pessoas começaram a ver que outros países falam inglês + outros países grandes + outros países financeiramente importantes + e que era um discurso de exportar a cultura dos Estados Unidos + tanto que não tinha outra comida de quem ia viajar + que não fosse McDonald's + tanto que ninguém trazia uma camiseta que não fosse aquela que tem um coraçãozinho com o N e com o Y + então começou a mudar um pouco isso + eu acho que no sentido até de não diminuir as outras culturas + de outros países que tem a língua inglesa como a língua-mãe + Os Estados Unidos era muito focado + acho que anos oitenta + anos noventa + né? + parecia assim + ah + só se tem MBA nos Estados Unidos + só se faz mestrado lá + só se faz doutorado lá + não + outros países que tavam fazendo pesquisa + que tavam avançando muito em estudo e em ciência ((...)) eu acho que agora isso tá mais +++

R: evidente?

Jane: evidente + e tá mais assim equiparado + as pessoas já começam + ah + mas quem sabe né? + se eu fosse pro Canadá + se eu fosse pra Inglaterra

R: você acha que essa coisa da cultura americana influenciar tanto

Jane: desmistificou um pouco + né? + desmistificou + eu acho que as pessoas começaram a procurar outros destinos de língua inglesa + descobriram que tinha outras culturas tão boas quanto a norte-americana + né? + que se falava inglês tão bem nesses países quanto nos Estados Unidos + eu acho que desmistificou um pouco isso + ah meu sonho de

consumo é ir pros Estados Unidos + eu acho que tinha mais isso na década de oitenta e de noventa mais forte

R: ((...)) Pergunta quatro + a suas aulas de inglês na UFSC abordam aspectos culturais da língua inglesa? + Você disse que sim + eu perguntei se sim + você acha que isso o ajuda a aprender a própria língua inglesa? + Como? + Você disse disseminando + né? + ou seja levar em conta todos os países + não somente Estados Unidos e Inglaterra + conhecer um pouco de tudo o que é produzido na língua através do globo nas artes + ciência + música e literatura + etcetera + então na sua opinião o curso + ele aborda aspectos culturais e isso ajuda você a aprender a língua + no sentido de aprender outros contextos + não só contextos de Estados Unidos e Inglaterra?

Jane: Não só hegemônicos + né? + como até então a gente não sabia + né? + que tem um amigo nosso que saiu daqui + e foi apresentar trabalho no Canadá ((...)) tem outro + se eu não me engano tá na Austrália + né? + então + e na Nova Zelândia + teve pessoas da nossa turma que foram pra Nova Zelândia + teve uma menina que foi + voltou + casou + ficou um tempo + fez mais uma fase + convenceu o marido a voltar pra Nova Zelândia de novo + porque ela achou que lá é + o país + é todo mundo muito culto + todo mundo é muito educado + eles dão muito valor pra educação + pra pesquisa + pra higiene? + ela achou isso lá + sem contar que é um lugar muito bonito + então assim eu acredito que cresceu esse +++ se isso ajuda a aprender a própria língua? + porque daí a gente começa a perceber os outros países como produtores também + não só como ex-colônia + a gente começou a ver por exemplo + que a Índia não tem o inglês como língua mãe + mas a Índia é um dos maiores países do mundo que se fala inglês + e eles não tem a língua mãe o inglês né? + então a gente começou a relacionar esses aspectos assim + ah + porque no Canadá também se faz muita pesquisa + porque no Canadá também se dá muito incentivo ao esporte + às Universidades + a gente começou a ver +++

R: outras possibilidades

Jane: outras possibilidades + e a tirar esse foco dos Estados Unidos e da Inglaterra ((...)) se a gente for perceber bem + em todos os aspectos + os outros países tão se representando mais + hoje em dia a gente tem mais produtores de filmes de países de língua inglesa que não só os Estados Unidos + né? ((...)) a gente tem mais artistas que cantam em inglês que não são americanos + a gente tem uma representatividade maior de outros países + de outros grupos nesse sentido da cultura ta se mostrando mais + né?

R: e isso é uma coisa que você também aprendeu no curso?

Jane: foi + foi + de relacionar outros países falantes da língua + e a perceber essa quantidade + essa qualidade do que tá sendo produzido lá que não é inferior + é uma outra + é um outro eixo que tá emergindo + né? + não é só + daí a gente começou a respeitar um pouco mais também essas culturas + não só no sentido financeiro + que pode ser uma potência + um país não tão representativo financeiramente + mas que ele é um país representativo culturalmente + nos aspectos do próprio país + se faz representar bem