

Spanish as a Third Language



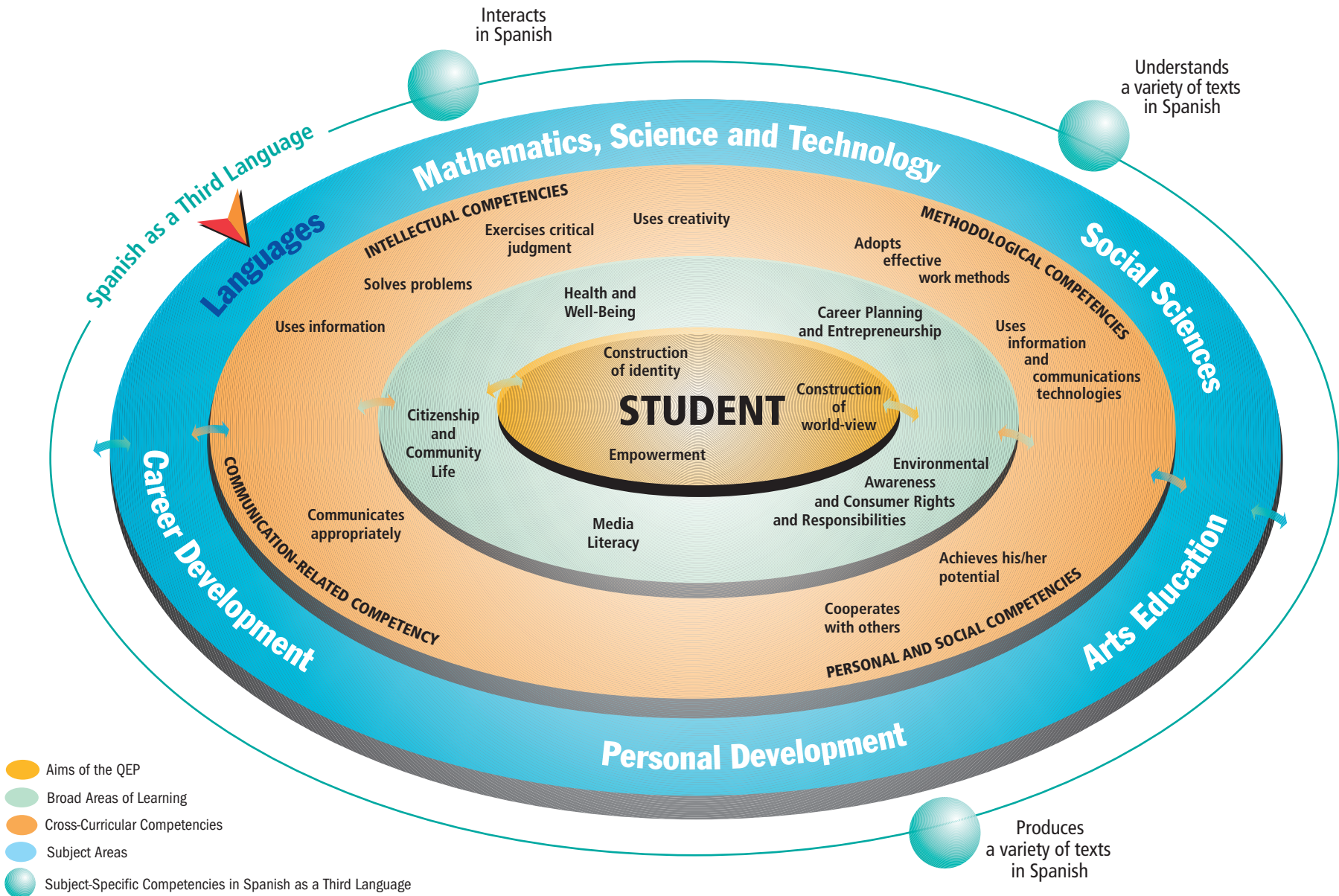
Table of Contents

Spanish as a Third Language

- Introduction to the Spanish as a Third Language Program 1**
 - The Spanish as a Third Language Program 1
 - Competencies in Spanish 2
- Making Connections: Spanish as a Third Language and the Other Dimensions of the Québec Education Program 4**
 - Connections With the Broad Areas of Learning 4
 - Connections With the Cross-Curricular Competencies 5
 - Connections With the Other Subject Areas 6
- Pedagogical Context 7**
 - Classroom Environment 7
 - Role of the Students 7
 - Role of the Teacher 7
 - Differentiated Instruction 8
 - Teaching Language and Culture 8
 - Human and Material Resources 9
 - Characteristics of a Learning and Evaluation Situation 9
 - Evaluation 10
- Competencies in the Spanish Program 12**
- Competency 1 Interacts in Spanish 13**
 - Focus of the Competency 13
 - Key Features of Competency 1 14
 - Evaluation Criteria 14
 - End-of-Cycle Outcomes 14
 - Parameters of the Learning and Evaluation Situations for Developing the Competency *Interacts in Spanish* 15
- Competency 2 Understands a variety of texts in Spanish 17**
 - Focus of the Competency 17
 - Key Features of Competency 2 18
 - Evaluation Criteria 18
 - End-of-Cycle Outcomes 18
 - Parameters of the Learning and Evaluation Situations for Developing the Competency *Understands a variety of texts in Spanish* 19

- Competency 3 Produces a variety of texts in Spanish 21**
 - Focus of the Competency 21
 - Key Features of Competency 3 22
 - Evaluation Criteria 22
 - End-of-Cycle Outcomes 22
 - Parameters of the Learning and Evaluation Situations for Developing the Competency *Produces a variety of texts in Spanish* 23
 - Program Content 26**
 - Elements of the Communication Situation 27
 - Communicative Purpose 29
 - Linguistic Elements 31
 - Grammar 31
 - Lexicon 33
 - Phonetics 34
 - Cultural References 35
 - Strategies for Learning and Using Language 37
 - Interaction, Comprehension or Production Process 39
- Bibliography 41**
- Appendix – Example of a Plan for Developing a Learning and Evaluation Situation in Spanish 42**

Making Connections: Spanish as a Third Language and the Other Dimensions of the Québec Education Program (QEP)



Introduction to the Spanish as a Third Language Program

Understanding several languages is an undeniable advantage as it allows students to converse with people from other countries and helps them to develop an attitude of openness, respect and tolerance.

Knowledge of a foreign language exposes students to other communities and cultures, and to the richness, diversity and complexity of the world and human beings. Within the current context of globalization of trade and communications, understanding several languages is an undeniable advantage as it allows students to converse with people from other countries and helps them to develop an attitude of openness, respect and tolerance.

The Québec curriculum provides Secondary Cycle Two students with an opportunity to learn a third language¹ by enrolling in one of the electives offered. Third-language courses are intended for students who have little or no

knowledge of the language in question; they thus provide an introduction to a new language and the culture that it conveys.

In its own way, learning a third language helps students achieve the aims of the Québec Education Program. By coming into contact with cultures that are different from their own, students become more aware of their own culture, learn to recognize the contribution of other cultures and discover universal values in the process. They are also encouraged to develop their sense of place in the world, to define their own beliefs and personal values, and to call them into question when necessary. All this helps them to enhance their world-view and construct their identity. In addition, knowledge of a third language provides students with another communication tool, which is a significant asset for empowering them in a society that is increasingly open to the world.

The main characteristic of third-language learning is that it takes place almost exclusively at school and within a limited number of hours. It is well known that frequent exposure to a language promotes learning. To make

1. Defined as a language taught in addition to French and English, the third language is a modern language with a global reach.

up for the lack of contact with speakers of the third language, the classroom should be a rich and stimulating environment that immerses students in a new linguistic and cultural world. To this end, the teacher's role and the students' commitment are critical for the development of third-language competencies.

The Spanish as a Third Language Program

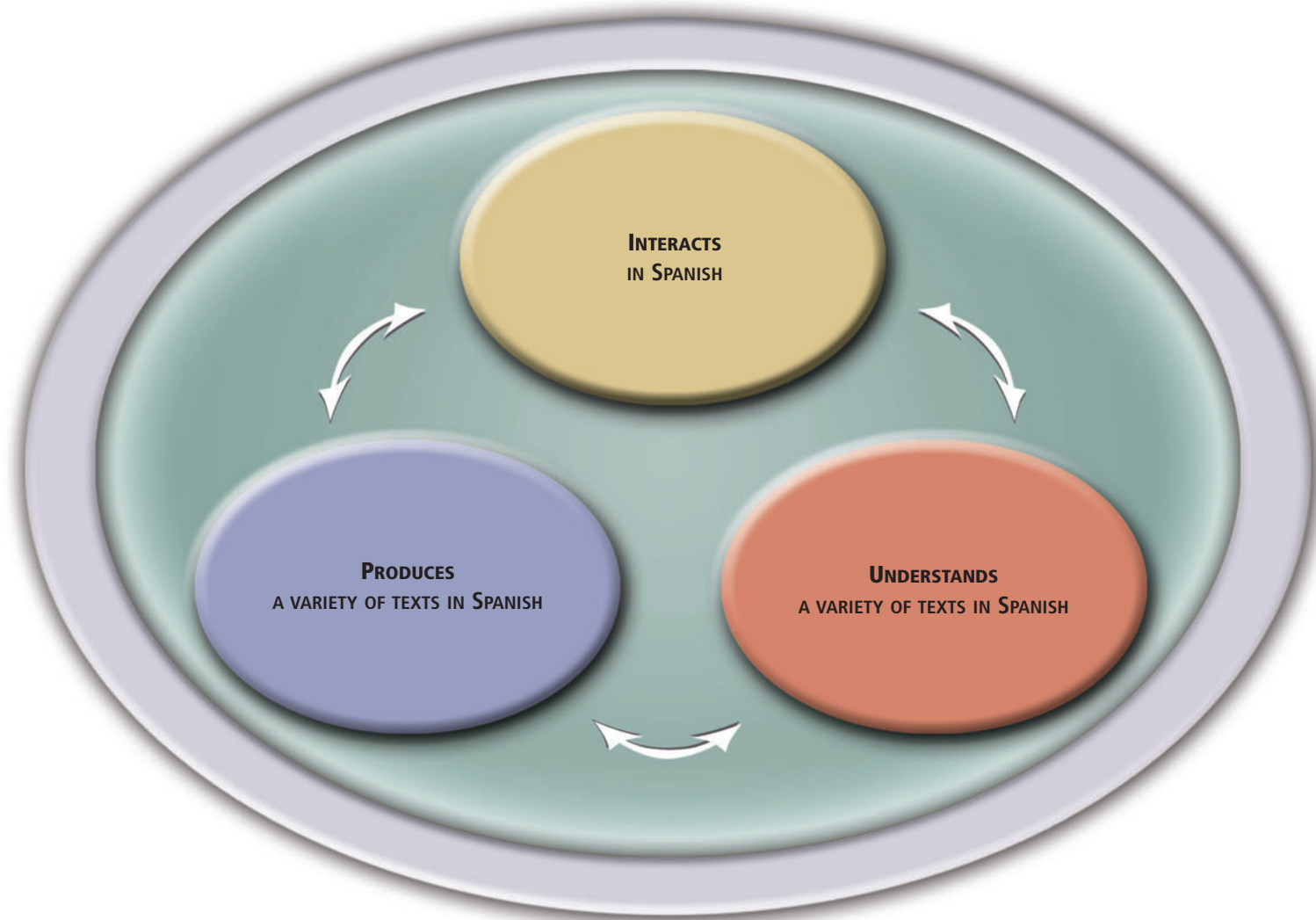
This program reflects the growing interest in learning Spanish, which is one of the third languages that are most widely taught in Québec secondary schools. Knowing how to speak Spanish is a valuable tool in many respects. It provides insight into the realities and vibrant cultures of many Spanish-speaking countries, and makes it possible to communicate with native speakers of this language. It is also extremely useful when trying to find a job in Québec or elsewhere, particularly in light of the increase in trade with Spanish-speaking countries. Students may also wish to learn Spanish simply for the pleasure of discovering a new language.

The Spanish program aims to help teach non-Spanish-speaking students in Québec to communicate in this language, to become familiar with the cultures associated with it, and to encourage them to develop an interest in these cultures that will continue after the end of secondary school. The curriculum will provide them with the basic tools to understand Spanish and communicate in this language, both orally and in writing, in everyday situations. It will also allow them to discover and understand some of the cultural characteristics of a number of Spanish-speaking countries. This new knowledge can be put to good use in other contexts.

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Competencies in Spanish

The Spanish program aims to develop the following three competencies: *Interacts in Spanish*, *Understands a variety of texts² in Spanish* and *Produces a variety of texts in Spanish*. These competencies are complementary and are developed in synergy. Everything the students hear, read or see can be a source of inspiration for interaction or production, which, in turn, can give them ideas to expand upon in texts they listen to, read and view.



2. The concept of text refers to a meaningful structure that may be in oral form (e.g. discussion, recording, song, oral presentation), written form, visual form (e.g. poster) or combined form (e.g. video excerpts, PowerPoint presentation).

The competency *Interacts in Spanish* is the main focus of the program. It essentially refers to the ability to communicate spontaneously in Spanish, both orally and in writing. Students interact in Spanish in different contexts in order to express their needs or voice their opinion.

When developing the competency *Understands a variety of texts in Spanish*, students discover and explore different types of texts. By hearing, reading and seeing the language, students develop their comprehension of Spanish, start to understand how it works and become familiar with the cultures associated with it.

Development of the competency *Produces a variety of texts in Spanish* is reflected by the creation or production of oral, written, visual or combined texts targeting expression and communication. In addition to offering students the opportunity to continue learning Spanish, the production of texts allows them to show their comprehension of this language and its cultural roots.

The three competencies build on one another, and their development is based on the understanding and integration of ideas and concepts presented in the program content.

The development of these three competencies is based on the understanding and integration of ideas and concepts presented in the program content: elements of the communication situation, linguistic elements, cultural references, strategies for learning and using language, and the interaction, comprehension or production process. It should be mentioned, however, that the program content is not taught in a systematically decontextualized manner.

Rather, resources are chosen and mobilized according to the needs linked to the tasks introduced in learning and evaluation situations. In using the program content to accomplish concrete tasks, students realize its usefulness and relevance, and are more inclined to draw on it in other contexts.

Making Connections: Spanish as a Third Language and the Other Dimensions of the Québec Education Program

Competencies in the Spanish program are developed through situations that introduce issues associated with the broad areas of learning. They are practised and enriched through contact with other subject areas and contribute to the development of cross-curricular competencies, which are also sources of enrichment for the competencies of this program.

The broad areas of learning deal with major contemporary issues. Through their specific approaches to reality, the various subjects illuminate particular aspects of these issues and thus contribute to the development of a broader world-view.

Connections With the Broad Areas of Learning

The five broad areas of learning reflect current issues that are of particular concern to young people in different areas of their lives. Their inclusion in the Spanish program encourages students to make connections between what they learn at school, their everyday lives and certain past and present-day events, which helps to make their learning more meaningful.

The media constitute an invaluable source of authentic documents that may or may not deal with current issues and that provide useful information about Spanish-speaking countries. The media are also user-friendly, and encourage the systematic exploration of the broad area of learning *Media Literacy*. Students will thus have an opportunity to use their critical judgment with respect to ideas conveyed in media texts³ and to discover some of the codes and conventions governing them. By producing short media messages of their own, they will be able to apply this knowledge while becoming more familiar with the techniques and material needed to produce this type of text.

3. Texts whose format and type respect the codes, conventions and techniques used in the media (e.g. advertising, articles, variety show).

Working with problems relating to the broad area of learning *Citizenship and Community Life* will help students discover the habits and customs of the different Spanish-speaking countries and understand their political system, while allowing them to understand how this affects the daily lives of citizens and their way of acting or thinking. By thus increasing their understanding of these other cultures, students will be better able to grasp the reality of Spanish speakers of different origins, adopt a feeling of respect and tolerance for them, and maintain egalitarian and harmonious relationships.

The broad area of learning *Career Planning and Entrepreneurship* has a multitude of applications in learning a third language. For example, investigating various occupations for which knowledge of Spanish is useful will encourage students to speak about their talents, interests and their personal and professional goals. They will realize that Spanish is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world and that acquiring this language gives them greater employment opportunities (e.g. in tourism, the food service industry, international cooperation, translation and international trade).

The broad area of learning *Health and Well-Being* provides a rich context for learning a third language like Spanish. Students can use Spanish to express personal concerns, interests and feelings, or to talk about their lifestyle, and compare it with that of Spanish speakers. This broad area of learning thus helps students become aware of the fact that living conditions are not the same for all and that their own quality of life is not a universally enjoyed phenomenon. These exchanges can also help students reflect on the impact of their personal choices and, if need be, adopt a more active lifestyle and safer behaviour.

The broad area of learning *Environmental Awareness and Consumer Rights and Responsibilities* provides students with the opportunity to become more familiar with the environmental and socioeconomic realities of Spanish-

speaking countries. It gives students an opportunity to discover the similarities and differences between their consumption habits and those of young people in other countries, and they can discuss the repercussions of these habits on environmental protection. As well, the fact of becoming familiar with the manufacturing conditions of environmentally friendly products and workers' rights helps students to become more informed and responsible consumers.

Connections With the Cross-Curricular Competencies

The competencies of the Spanish program are directly linked to the cross-curricular competencies. Learning Spanish draws on the cross-curricular competencies and, in turn, promotes their development.

To increase their understanding of different aspects of the Spanish language and cultures, students are required to develop their *intellectual competencies*. They learn how to use information, and as a result, acquire new concepts that they will use in other communication contexts. Faced with a comprehension problem in Spanish, students try to resolve the

problem using different strategies that will help them correctly interpret an initially unclear message. Exposure to different social realities will help them to question their own biases as well as stereotypes about other cultures, and thereby help them to develop their critical judgment. Students must also use creative thinking when they develop new ideas in their interactions and productions, or when they are trying out new knowledge, strategies or resources.

Methodological competencies play an important role in all learning processes. In Spanish class, students must adopt effective work methods, compare them with those used in other subjects or with their peers' practices, and evaluate the effectiveness of the

means they use to develop the subject-specific competencies. In addition, students can use ICT to learn more about Spanish cultures. They can conduct research or exchange information about Spanish-speaking countries over the Internet, create documents about the culture of these countries using multimedia software, or chat on-line with Spanish speakers.

Learning a third language also greatly contributes to the development of students' *personal and social competencies*. Through different learning and evaluation situations in Spanish, students learn to better understand their strengths and interests, and to assert themselves, persevere and acquire self-confidence. This is the case, for example, when they are asked to describe their skills or express their likes, opinions and aspirations, regardless of the difficulties they may have expressing themselves. There are many opportunities for each student to develop his or her potential. Moreover, students are often required to perform tasks that necessitate teamwork; they must then develop and draw on the competency *Cooperates with others*, which requires listening skills, receptiveness and tolerance toward their peers.

Lastly, the *communication-related* competency is the main focus of all language learning. It is applied in each of the three subject-specific competencies of the Spanish program, as students are required to communicate appropriately when they interact, read, listen to, view or produce texts in Spanish, taking into consideration elements of the communication situation.

The cross-curricular competencies are not developed in a vacuum; they are rooted in specific learning contexts, which are usually related to the subjects.

Connections With the Other Subject Areas

Because the Spanish program introduces students to other social and cultural realities, it is closely linked to several subjects within the subject areas Languages, Arts Education, Social Sciences and Personal Development.

Because learning a third language draws strongly on students' prior linguistic knowledge in their first and second languages, the Spanish program is closely tied to the subjects in the Languages subject area. By applying strategies and knowledge acquired in these languages, students develop a greater capacity for metacognition⁴ with regard to language learning. In return, their new Spanish language skills may prompt students to re-examine concepts in their mother tongue (e.g. the form and function of words) and reinforce them.

Reality can rarely be understood through the rigid logic of a single subject; rather, it is by bringing together several fields of knowledge that we are able to grasp its many facets.

Arts Education allows students to become familiar with artistic, musical and dramatic works from different places and eras. Students enrolled in the Spanish program may take a particular interest in works from Spanish-speaking countries, and, by comparing them with works from here, may learn about the social and cultural differences and similarities they display. In this way, the students become more aware of their own cultural identity.

Interpreting social phenomena is one aspect of the Spanish program that is closely related to the pursuits of the Social Sciences subjects. As students discover new cultural references associated with different Spanish-speaking countries, they begin questioning the related social phenomena and establishing ties with those they are studying in History and Citizenship Education. For example, discussing a topic about the colonization of Québec may give rise to comparisons with the colonization of Hispanic American countries.

Some subjects in the area of Personal Development invite students to take an interest in other cultures and appreciate their diversity. In this way, they can discover how perspectives on ethical issues and religious beliefs differ from country to country, even by regions, and how this can influence people's behaviour and their daily lives.

As with all subjects in the Québec Education Program, Spanish contributes to developing analysis, reasoning and critical judgment capabilities. It is also useful in designing learning and evaluation situations that draw on several subjects, thus allowing students to build upon their network of general knowledge.

4. According to Britt-Marie Barth, professor at the Institut Supérieur de Pédagogie de Paris, "metacognition means being aware of what we know, understanding how we learned what we know, and being able to reproduce this process consciously in another context." (*Schoolscapes*, Vol. 5, No. 5, June 2005, p. 6)

Pedagogical Context

Classroom Environment

The classroom is the first place that students really become exposed to Spanish. In addition to being friendly and stimulating, it must also allow

As students receive their introduction to Spanish in the classroom, it must be friendly and stimulating, an environment reflecting the language and culture.

students to learn in an environment sufficiently rich in the language and culture that they can become totally immersed (e.g. through posters, cartoons, magazines, students' work). Spanish class thus becomes an environment of discovery that motivates students to learn a new language and become familiar with new cultures.

The classroom climate must encourage students to speak and to express themselves without worrying about being judged by their peers. A positive, dynamic atmosphere is likely to encourage students to put more and more effort

into learning Spanish and to use the language whenever an opportunity arises, within and outside the classroom. Having fun while learning Spanish is essential in order to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. A context where games are incorporated into learning activities helps students overcome their shyness and can encourage them to communicate more spontaneously in Spanish.

Role of the Students

Students take responsibility for developing their own competencies. To do so, they actively participate in the learning process and become involved in interaction, comprehension and production tasks. They must learn to develop autonomy, which means taking initiative, making an effort to communicate in Spanish as often as possible, showing their creativity, and taking risks. When they make errors, they must demonstrate tolerance toward themselves and their peers, and they must be willing to repeat certain tasks several times in order to improve.

Throughout their learning, students must develop an attitude of respect and openness with regard to Spanish and the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries. They must also show a certain interest in current events in these countries. They will discover value systems that are different from their own, which allows them to find their own place in their cultural and social environment and to broaden their world-view. They thus learn to respect the ideas and opinions of others.

Students must try to apply all prior knowledge (including what they know about their first and second languages) in new communication situations, both within and outside the classroom. They must also reflect on their learning, take into consideration all feedback received from their teachers and other students, and adopt means to improve in Spanish.

Responsible for developing their own competencies, students must actively participate in the learning process, make an effort to speak Spanish as often as possible, and carry out any assigned tasks.

Role of the Teacher

The Spanish teacher plays a particularly important role. As the main linguistic model, the teacher speaks to students in Spanish and interacts with them using an appropriate level of language. The teacher encourages students to participate actively and stimulates their interest, motivates them and encourages them to get involved. The teacher also introduces students to different information and media sources in Spanish (e.g. magazines, newspapers, radio and television programs, songs, videos, Internet) and, as often as possible, facilitates real or virtual exchanges with Spanish speakers.

To encourage students to communicate in Spanish, the teacher must give them positive feedback, and organize different oral and written activities, as well as meaningful and stimulating learning and evaluation situations that reflect their interests and present reasonable challenges. The teacher also shows students how to use the knowledge and strategies they acquired

The teacher stimulates interest in the Spanish language and culture, and motivates students, encouraging them to participate.

when learning other languages, and presents them with situations that help them to transfer⁵ their learning, even though it may lead to linguistic errors. As this is part of the normal process of learning a language, the teacher will help students become aware of and correct their errors. The teacher will encourage students to find ways to continue the learning process outside the classroom (e.g. recreational activities, travel, work, studies), and

stimulate their curiosity as much as possible so that they take the initiative and become increasingly motivated and active learners.

With a view to exposing students as much as possible to the language and different cultures of Spanish-speaking countries, the teacher assists students in their discoveries and keeps well informed of current events in these countries, using these events to provide a rich learning experience. The teacher also encourages students to be more open to cultural differences and to understand the similarities and differences between their own culture and those of Spanish-speaking countries. The teacher helps students realize the advantages of learning this language, and of becoming familiar with its respective cultures.

Differentiated Instruction

In order to offer students challenges within their reach, and to help them use their full potential, it is important for the teacher to consider some of

To accommodate the different cognitive styles of students, the teacher provides situations that have common challenges but that can be carried out in different ways.

their individual characteristics (e.g. cognitive styles, learning pace). The teacher must also ensure that everyone progresses, regardless of each student's level of competency development. To accommodate the various cognitive styles (e.g. synthetic/analytical; visual/auditive), the teacher provides situations that have common challenges but that can be carried out in different ways (e.g. teamwork, cooperative work, individual work). Differentiated instruction does not imply the creation of

individual activities for each learner; rather, it reflects a certain flexibility in daily educational practice.

Teaching Language and Culture

Teaching Spanish is based primarily on a communicative approach that emphasizes the meaning of the message and aims to develop the student's ability to communicate. Because oral interaction plays a major part in this approach, authentic communication situations involving simulations and role-playing are favoured in order to create as much dialogue as possible among the students. In fact, given their limited possibilities for meeting Spanish speakers in the normal course of their daily lives, it is through frequent practice speaking in class that students will develop their ability to communicate.

In this light, teaching Spanish grammar focuses on communication and the construction of meaning. Looked at in context, grammar then becomes a tool to help students develop both oral and written competencies, rather than decontextualized knowledge. In this way, the teacher is able to help students understand the rules of usage for this language, which will help them adapt the terms and expressions they learn according to the situation and the communicative purpose. Vocabulary will also be seen in context (e.g. while reading, viewing video sequences, listening to recordings) rather than in the form of lists of isolated words. This approach helps learners understand the meaning of words in addition to making it easier to remember them. Moreover, introducing grammatical concepts and vocabulary using a spiral approach will make it possible to reflect on past learning, build upon it, expand it, and apply it in new situations.

Teaching Spanish is based primarily on a communicative approach that emphasizes the meaning of the message and aims to develop the student's ability to communicate.

5. The teacher can help students develop the habit of drawing on the knowledge they have of their first or second language by emphasizing the similarities (e.g. syntax, vocabulary) between Spanish and these other languages.

Grammar, vocabulary and culture should be explored in context.

Like language, culture should be explored on an ongoing basis and in context. Activities and learning and evaluation situations should allow students to discover certain cultural characteristics specific to different communities of Spanish-speaking countries and to adopt appropriate behaviour with respect to culture in different circumstances. It is the teacher's responsibility to guide students in their discoveries and teach them to consider these cultural characteristics in different contexts. He or she may use resources available within the community and organize activities that expose students to the cultures associated with Spanish. These potentially very rich contexts make students aware of life in Spanish-speaking countries, encourage their motivation to learn and consequently help them acquire the language and become familiar with its respective cultures. They are instrumental in developing an intercultural conscience that enables students to witness the richness that the other culture can bring to their own culture.

Human and Material Resources

Students can be encouraged to mobilize resources to meet a need relating to the form of the message, its content or its presentation. These resources can be grouped into two major categories:

- human resources: a peer, a teacher, a member of the school staff, a neighbour, a member of a cultural community, a correspondent, a restaurant employee, etc.
- material resources: unilingual or bilingual dictionaries, conjugation tables, grammar books, textbooks, magazines, newspapers, Web sites, CD-ROMs, films, software programs, electronic slide presentations, video cameras, etc.

The teacher should stimulate students' interest in using these resources, and show them how to find and use them appropriately. When students use these resources to increase their knowledge about the language and culture or to communicate with Spanish speakers (e.g. on-line chat), the teacher takes the opportunity to help students develop their critical judgment with respect to the information conveyed by the resources and to teach them to

follow the rules respecting intellectual property, privacy and the ethical use of information.

Characteristics of a Learning and Evaluation Situation

A learning and evaluation situation that favours competency development integrates the different elements of the Québec Education Program, and allows students to develop or activate one or more subject-specific and cross-curricular competencies, in addition to dealing with an issue associated with a broad area of learning. It also targets the construction and organization of knowledge relating to concepts, facts or rules, to ways of doing things (skills), and to ways of applying knowledge (know-how).

A situation must be meaningful, that is, meet the students' interests or concerns, and clearly show the usefulness of the knowledge to be acquired. Used as a background to the situation, the real or potential issue raised must be closely aligned to the students' reality or concern the Spanish-speaking world. The situation must also motivate students to take action and present a challenge that takes into account their level of competency in the third language. It is through tasks that become increasingly complex throughout the cycle that students will reach their goals, while acquiring new knowledge and learning how to use more and more resources appropriately.

A learning and evaluation situation opens the door to developing or activating one or more subject-specific and cross-curricular competencies, in addition to dealing with a problem associated with a broad area of learning.

Evaluation

As an integral part of the teaching and learning process, evaluation is not an end in itself. Although it must report on the students' level of competency development at the end of the cycle, it must first and foremost support and regulate learning. For this reason, the teacher must plan evaluation at the

same time as the learning activities and provide each student with frequent feedback on his or her process as well as productions, highlighting the student's successes and abilities, and pointing out problem areas and challenges yet to be met.

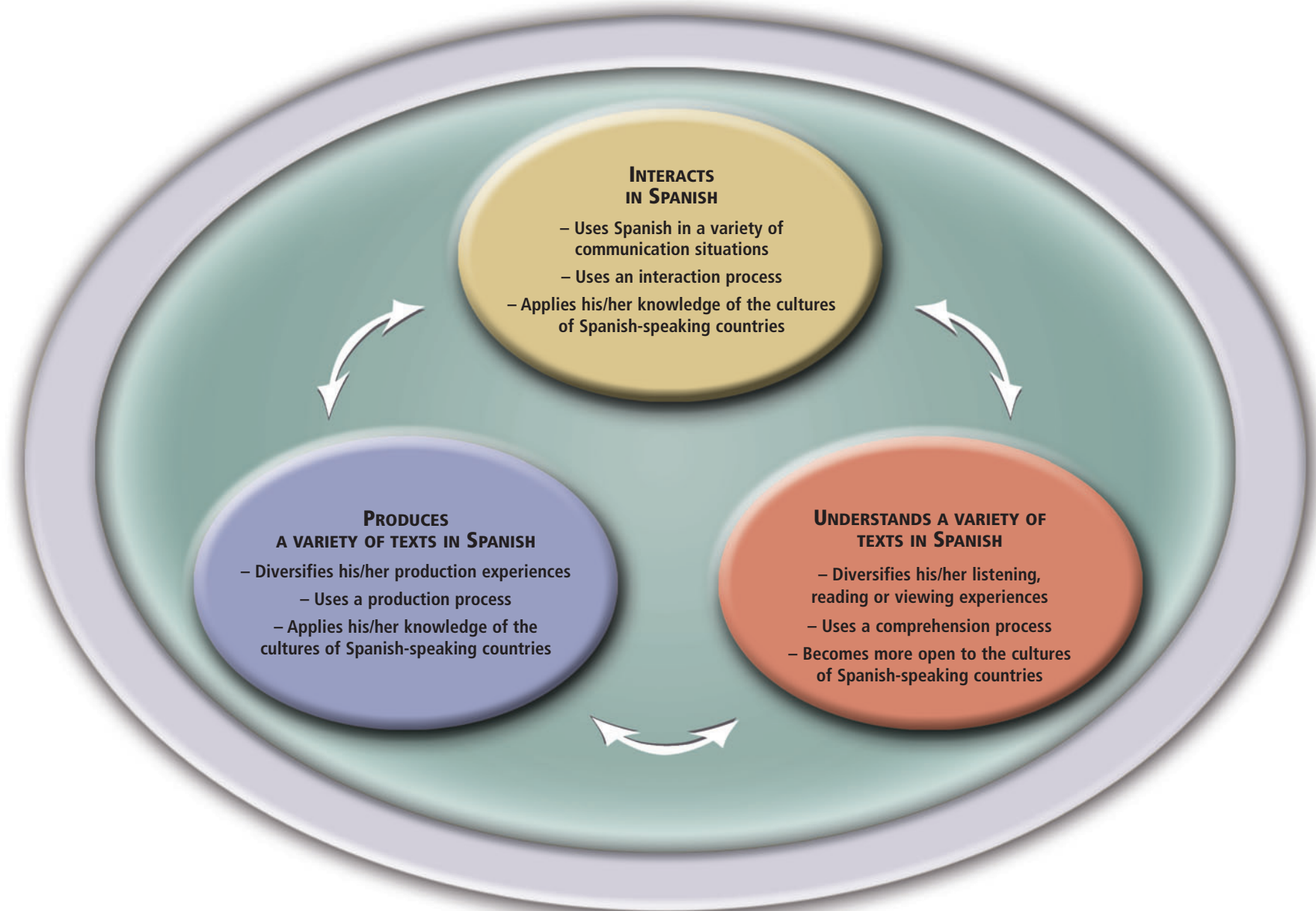
Although it must report on the students' level of competency development at the end of the cycle, it must first and foremost support and regulate learning.

To be fair, evaluation must reflect what takes place in the classroom and be based on appropriate and varied instruments (e.g. assessment grids, checklists, journals, portfolios). In addition, it must be carried out at different points during the term, during the year or during the cycle.

Students can also play an active role in the evaluation of their learning if the teacher uses co-evaluation, for example, or involves students in designing evaluation tools. Moreover, by participating in the choice of criteria or the establishment of specific points to be examined, students will be better able to understand the link between the tool, the work they have to do, and the teacher's expectations.

The teacher must set aside a time to analyze and interpret the information collected in order to make an overall judgment on the development of the competency to be evaluated. The teacher may evaluate certain specific elements on a regular basis. However, the teacher must always remember that a global judgment of the competency cannot be made unless he or she has sufficient information at hand, collected at different times and in different contexts.

COMPETENCIES AND KEY FEATURES IN THE SPANISH PROGRAM



Competencies in the Spanish Program

Students start to study Spanish at the beginning of Secondary Cycle Two, and gradually develop their competencies in this language over the three-year cycle. They must interact in Spanish, and understand and produce texts in increasingly complex and varied situations.

Presented in this section are the focus of each competency (*Interacts in Spanish, Understands a variety of texts in Spanish and Produces a variety of texts in Spanish*); the key features of the competency; evaluation criteria;

During the course of the three-year cycle, students must interact in Spanish, and understand and produce texts in increasingly complex and varied situations.

and the end-of-cycle outcomes. The table following these elements contains the established parameters that must be considered to gradually increase the level of complexity and difficulty of the learning and evaluation situations in order to ensure the development of each competency. These parameters are divided into three main interrelated categories—learning context, resources to be mobilized, and self-regulation. The table can be interpreted vertically, if one wants a representation of the level of difficulty expected throughout the year, or horizontally, to see how learning and evaluation situations can become more

complex from one year to the next. It goes without saying that the elements introduced during one year are reinforced and expanded upon the following year.

In addition to allowing the teacher to get an idea of the nature of the competencies to be developed and their components, the information provided in this section will help in planning learning and evaluation situations or the tasks assigned to students in the course of the cycle to help them develop their Spanish competencies.

COMPETENCY 1 Interacts in Spanish

Focus of the Competency

Learning to interact in Spanish in Québec is a challenge because, as this language is not widely used, examples are rare and opportunities to practise it are almost nonexistent. To interact,⁶ students must understand what is being said by the speaker, which is the first difficulty when beginning to learn a language, and then, in turn, they must be capable of expressing themselves spontaneously.

To interact, students must first understand what is being said by the speaker, and then, in turn, be capable of expressing themselves spontaneously.

From the beginning of their learning, students must be encouraged to **use Spanish in a variety of communication situations** and to actively participate in exchanges in this language, even if the form and structure of their sentences are not perfect. The Spanish classroom must thus provide conditions that favour spontaneous interaction and allow everyone to participate, seek out the participation of others and react to what they are saying. To accomplish this, the teacher presents situations that are authentic in nature and deal with topics that are relevant to teenagers. Students may be asked to answer questions, initiate a conversation, ask for information or an explanation, express their interests, preferences or opinions, or communicate their needs in Spanish, either orally or in writing. The teacher must also encourage students to take risks so that they become involved as quickly as possible in exchanges and thus develop their autonomy.

During their exchanges, students are encouraged to **use the interaction process**⁷ proposed by the teacher, gradually adapting it to suit their needs. They must first determine various elements of the communication situation (e.g. audience, context) and clearly identify the communicative purpose in order to respect it during interaction. To initiate, maintain or end an exchange, students draw on resources, including strategies, that they already use in their first or second language, and experiment with new ones. They reuse ideas, vocabulary, sentence structures and cultural elements that they find in texts they have listened to, read or viewed in class or elsewhere.

With the teacher's help, students learn to adjust their interactions and reflect on their process and participation in exchanges and on the quality of their interactions by considering the feedback of their peers and that of the teacher, or by using self-evaluation tools.

During their interactions, students are encouraged to **apply their knowledge of the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries** and to gradually introduce several communication conventions specifically related to Spanish. For example, they make certain gestures or facial expressions and are aware of the effect that they may have on the other speaker. It is by listening, reading or viewing different Spanish texts that students will be able to discover the sociocultural practices related to this language (e.g. distance from speaker, using the pronoun *usted* in a formal situation) and incorporate them in practice. Students will thus be able to demonstrate that they are taking into account the sociocultural context when they participate in role-playing or exchanges in which they refer to, for example, traditional holidays, eating habits, or customs of certain Spanish-speaking countries.

6. It is important to clearly understand the difference between the competencies *Interacts in Spanish* and *Produces a variety of texts in Spanish*. Interaction, whether oral or written, real or virtual, takes place in a specific context in which students are required to communicate spontaneously. Although a certain amount of preparation by students is necessary in order to interact (e.g. do research on a given topic, develop arguments), their interaction is spontaneous, is not memorized in advance and requires direct or nearly direct contact with one or more individuals (e.g. exchange of short messages, discussion, on-line chat). The production of oral, written, visual or combined texts, on the other hand, takes place without direct contact with the audience and without discussion between speakers: everything that students verbalize is planned or memorized (e.g. skits, short reports).

7. See *Interaction, comprehension or production process* in the Program Content section.

Key Features of Competency 1

Uses Spanish in a variety of communication situations

Actively participates in exchanges • Encourages others to participate • Reacts to what the other speaker says

Uses an interaction process

Identifies the elements of a communication situation
• Respects the communicative purpose • Uses appropriate resources • Regulates his/her interactions
• Reflects on his/her process and on the quality of his/her interactions

Interacts in Spanish

Applies his/her knowledge of the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries

Respects communication conventions • Uses linguistic and cultural elements in his/her interactions that are drawn from texts he/she has listened to, read or viewed

End-of-Cycle Outcomes

By the end of the cycle, students use Spanish to communicate their needs, feelings, interests, opinions, assessments and questions. They interact in contexts dealing with their identity, social world and interests, and they do so appropriately in a variety of situations (e.g. role-playing, simulations, improvisations, discussions, debates or on-line chat sessions). They are able to understand their peers and teacher or other speakers, and react and adapt to what they say. They help maintain the interaction by encouraging others to participate. They also convey short messages in writing to a correspondent (peer, e-pal, teacher). They communicate clearly (e.g. correct word stress) and convey their ideas using appropriate vocabulary and simple, understandable sentences. They may sometimes need their peers' or teacher's help to do so.

Students manage their interaction process with occasional assistance, adapt it to the proposed communication situation and reflect on their interactions in order to improve them in the future. During exchanges, they respect most of the communication conventions specific to the language and culture of Spanish-speaking countries (e.g. use of the pronoun *usted*). They are also able to discuss cultural elements (e.g. public figures, current sociopolitical events, leisure activities or cultural events) drawn from texts they have listened to, read or viewed, and which may or may not have been presented by the teacher.

Evaluation Criteria

- Participation in interaction activities in Spanish
- Coherence of the message
- Clarity and form of the message
- Management of the interaction process
- Integration of cultural aspects

Parameters of the Learning and Evaluation Situations for Developing the Competency *Interacts in Spanish*

	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
Learning context			
Type of topics covered	Simple, concrete questions relating to the student's personal and daily life	Simple, concrete issues relating both to the student's personal life and to his/her life within society	More complex and abstract issues relating both to the student's personal life and to his/her life within society
Type of context and messages	Familiar context known to the student	Slightly less familiar context, but still known to the student	Less familiar context, sometimes unknown to the student
	Messages with limited content already familiar to the student	Messages with predictable content	Messages with more or less predictable content
Type of interactions expected	More or less spontaneous interactions, very simple and of very short duration	More spontaneous interactions, simple and of short duration	Spontaneous interactions, more complex and of variable duration
	Very few language productions	Increasing number of language productions	
Resources to be mobilized			
Linguistic elements	Basic grammatical structures in simple sentences	Varied grammatical structures in generally simple sentences	Varied grammatical structures in increasingly complex sentences
	Basic vocabulary limited to a specific situation	Everyday vocabulary not limited to one situation	Diversified vocabulary
Cultural references	Cultural references relating to the student's personal and daily life activities	Cultural references relating to life within society	

		1st year	2nd year	3rd year
Resources to be mobilized (cont.)				
Process and strategies		Process presented by the teacher and implemented by the student	Process gradually adapted to the situation by the student	
		Strategies that facilitate interaction (understanding of the message and appropriate response)		
Human and material resources		Spanish-speakers in the student's immediate environment	Spanish-speakers within or outside the student's immediate environment	
		A limited number of similar material resources	An increasing number of diversified material resources	
Self-regulation				
Interaction		Evaluation of the quality of the student's understanding and the relevance of responses		
Process		Reflection on personal strengths and on difficulties in applying the process	Reflection on the management of the entire process	

COMPETENCY 2 Understands a variety of texts in Spanish

Focus of the Competency

Comprehension is a key component of learning and practising a language, since it is based on what students understand of the language that they are

able to use it to express themselves orally or in writing. In order for students to understand what they listen to, read or view in a third language, they must use several cognitive processes and draw on their linguistic knowledge in their first and second languages, in addition to the knowledge they gradually acquire in the language they are learning. Their general knowledge and experiences also help them to understand the meaning of Spanish texts.

It is important that, from the beginning of their learning, students **diversify their listening, reading or viewing experiences** by exploring a variety of oral, written, visual or combined texts in Spanish (e.g. instructions, songs, advertisements, video sequences, Web pages, magazine articles for young people). Wide exposure to the Spanish

language will allow them not only to increase their comprehension abilities, but also to enrich their vocabulary, as well as discover cultural elements unique to Spanish-speaking countries. In addition, by applying the knowledge and experiences they have already acquired in other languages and in their Spanish class, they gradually learn to recognize syntactic elements (e.g. placement of the negative particle in Spanish sentences), lexical elements (e.g. vocabulary from a semantic field, idiomatic expressions), or morphological elements (e.g. *ísimo*, *ito* suffixes). As students progress in their learning of the language, they are better able to understand and interpret the meaning of different texts, including media texts, and to recognize some of their characteristics.

To understand texts more easily, students are encouraged to **use the comprehension process**⁸ presented by their teacher, and gradually adapt it to their needs. They are first asked to specify their listening, reading and

viewing purpose, depending on the task to be carried out. They then identify graphic and audio elements (e.g. images, sound effects, size of titles), as well as contextual clues (words that are familiar or related to those in languages the student knows, verb tenses) that make it possible to get an idea of what the text is about. They use appropriate strategies, including resources, in order to clearly grasp the text's general meaning and to find the main and supporting ideas. They reflect often on their process in order to adjust it, if necessary, and to ensure the accuracy of their comprehension. For example, they can verify their understanding with their peers or teacher, or use a reference tool to find the meaning of a word. At the end of a task, they reflect on the entire process, either alone, using self-evaluation tools, or with others, using discussion questions. At this point, they recognize their strengths and reflect on the difficulties encountered and the means they used to overcome these difficulties. They become aware of the quality of their comprehension and their level of competency development. Finally, students demonstrate their comprehension of the text or apply certain ideas in oral or written interactions (e.g. class or team discussions, on-line chat) or in a subsequent production (e.g. summary of a text, research presented in the form of a slideshow, presentation in front of the class).

Because students are exposed to a variety of texts in Spanish, many of which depict unfamiliar contexts, **they will become more open to the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries** (e.g. customs and beliefs, political systems, idiomatic expressions, regional expressions), and adopt an attitude of respect for them. By observing these expressions of other cultures, they learn to take a more critical stance with regard to their own culture and those of different Spanish-speaking countries or communities. They may also make connections between certain sociocultural customs with which they are familiar and among others that have been dealt with in class, thereby increasing their general knowledge of the world.

8. See *Interaction, comprehension or production process* in the Program Content section.

In order to understand what they listen to, read or view, students must use several cognitive processes and draw on their prior linguistic knowledge, in addition to the knowledge they gradually acquire in the language they are learning.

Key Features of Competency 2

Diversifies his/her listening, reading or viewing experiences

Explores a variety of oral, written, visual or combined texts • Recognizes the characteristics of different types of texts

Uses a comprehension process

Specifies his/her listening, reading or viewing purpose

- Finds key elements in the text's content and form
- Uses appropriate resources
- Regulates his/her process
- Reflects on his/her process and the quality of his/her comprehension

Understands a variety of texts in Spanish

Becomes more open to the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries

Adopts an attitude of respect for these cultures • Recognizes social and linguistic cultural elements in a text • Compares these elements with those of his/her own culture

End-of-Cycle Outcomes

By the end of the cycle, students understand oral, written, visual or combined texts of varying complexity that are relevant to them and that may relate to Spanish cultures. They demonstrate their comprehension of a variety of texts and documents (e.g. radio programs, videos, newspaper articles, comic strips) in oral and written interactions (e.g. discussions, reading circles) or in the work they produce (e.g. answers to questions, summary).

With occasional assistance, they manage the proposed comprehension process and adapt it to the situation. They find essential information, such as the topic, the main ideas, the context and the audience. They make connections among the form, graphic and audio elements and the content of the document concerned. At the end of the task, students reflect on the quality of their process and comprehension by identifying their strengths, things that need to be improved and the means used to improve them. They identify social and linguistic cultural elements (e.g. customs and beliefs, gestures, idiomatic expressions, phonetic and lexical differences) in the texts covered and compare them with elements of their own culture.

Evaluation Criteria

- Use of a variety of texts
- Demonstration of his/her comprehension
- Management of the comprehension process
- Identification of cultural elements

Parameters of the Learning and Evaluation Situations for Developing the Competency *Understands a variety of texts in Spanish*

	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
Learning context			
Type of topics covered	Simple, concrete questions relating to the student's personal and daily life	Simple, concrete issues relating both to the student's personal life and to his/her life within society	More complex and abstract issues relating both to the student's personal life and to his/her life within society
Type of context and text	Familiar context known to the student	Slightly less familiar context, but still known to the student	Less familiar context, sometimes unknown to the student
	Text with limited content already familiar to the student	Text with predictable content	Text with more or less predictable content
Type of comprehension expected	Written: identification of a few ideas and overall understanding of simple texts varying in length	Written: identification of the main idea and some secondary information, enabling a better understanding of texts varying in complexity and length	Written: identification of the majority of ideas, enabling good understanding of texts varying in complexity and length
	Oral: understanding of very simple texts spoken very slowly and with very accentuated pronunciation	Oral: understanding of simple texts spoken slowly, with rather accentuated pronunciation	Oral: understanding of texts varying in complexity and spoken in a natural manner
Resources to be mobilized			
Linguistic elements	Linguistic skills improving and better adapted to the task of understanding		
Cultural references	Cultural references relating to the student's personal and daily life activities	Cultural references relating to life within society	
Process and strategies	Process presented by the teacher and implemented by the student	Process gradually adapted to the situation by the student	
	Strategies that facilitate understanding		

		1st year	2nd year	3rd year
Resources to be mobilized (cont.)				
Human and material resources		Spanish-speakers in the student's immediate environment	Spanish-speakers within or outside the student's immediate environment	
		A limited number of similar material resources	An increasing number of diversified material resources	
Self-regulation				
Comprehension		Evaluation of the quality of the student's understanding of texts reviewed		
Process		Reflection on personal strengths and on difficulties in applying the process	Reflection on the management of the entire process	

COMPETENCY 3 Produces a variety of texts in Spanish

Focus of the Competency

The production⁹ of texts allows students to express themselves and consolidate their linguistic and cultural knowledge. It is a complex action, difficult in itself, and even more so when carried out in a foreign language that the student is trying to learn. To produce an oral, written, visual or combined text, the student must generate, organize and put ideas into writing in Spanish, discern any problems relating to their organization or expression, and then correct them. By regularly producing texts, students are able to better understand the mechanics of the language and to integrate their language learning. Moreover, whether a first, second or third language, the competency of production is directly linked to that of understanding, which, in turn, is a prerequisite for the former.

To produce texts, the student must generate, organize and put ideas into writing, discern any problems relating to their organization or expression, and then correct them.

To develop this competency, students are encouraged from the start to **diversify their production experiences** by using Spanish in different texts, including media documents, to meet a variety of purposes, such as providing information (e.g. a narrative, short biography, newspaper article, short report presented in the form of a slideshow), communicating (e.g. letter, e-mail, postcard, personal Web page), or persuading (e.g. invitation letter, slogan or advertisement, tourist brochure). Students will have to apply everything they know about this language, particularly grammatical, lexical and phonetic elements, taking into account the communicative purpose, the audience and the type of production involved. They may also draw inspiration from authentic documents that they have listened to, read or viewed. In the production of oral texts (e.g. skit, radio advertisement) students will endeavour to improve their intonation and pronunciation.

When they produce texts, students **use the production process**¹⁰ presented by the teacher, gradually adapting it to their needs. They must first specify their purpose and plan the content of their text accordingly. During the production process, they ensure that the text they are preparing is meaningful and that it respects the purpose they established at the outset. To do so, they draw upon different resources, using new strategies or ones familiar to them in other languages. They review their work, and adapt it to the situation, as necessary. They regulate their process and ask for feedback from peers and the teacher when needed in order to improve the form, content and presentation of their production. With the teacher's support, students reflect on the process, make any necessary adjustments and verify the quality of their production.

Where possible, students **apply their knowledge of the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries** acquired in different comprehension or interaction activities with their peers and teacher. They do their best to respect Spanish communication conventions. For example, they apply formulas of courtesy appropriate to the context, or correct Spanish punctuation. They also use cultural aspects drawn from texts they have listened to, read or viewed when they adapt their productions to the purpose, audience and topic covered, or when they want to enrich them.

9. In this program, production refers to creating an oral, written, visual or combined text without direct contact with the reader or audience, that is, there is no discussion or negotiation about meaning with them. For example, during a presentation, the student delivers his or her written or oral production without directly interacting with the audience.

10. See *Interaction, comprehension or production process* in the Program Content section.

Key Features of Competency 3

Diversifies his/her production experiences

Varies the types of texts and communicative purposes • Varies communication medium

Uses a production process

Plans the content of the text based on his/her purpose • Conveys his/her ideas in a text • Uses appropriate resources • Reviews his/her text • Regulates his/her process • Reflects on his/her process and the quality of his/her production

Produces a variety of texts in Spanish

Applies his/her knowledge of the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries

Respects conventions • Uses, in his/her productions, ideas or linguistic and cultural elements drawn from texts he/she has listened to, read or viewed

Evaluation Criteria

- Variety of the texts created
- Coherence of the message
- Clarity and form of the message
- Management of the production process
- Integration of cultural elements

End-of-Cycle Outcomes

By the end of the cycle, students produce simple oral, written, visual or combined texts (e.g. skit, letter, newspaper article, advertisement, oral presentation) that allow them to fulfill different purposes (e.g. to inform, to convince, to entertain). They may cover topics or issues that reflect their interests or talk about public figures and discuss past or current events. These texts may use different communication media (e.g. in printed form, audio or video recording, slideshow, multimedia presentations). Students also ensure that their ideas are relevant and that their text is coherent. They generally use simple sentence structures and appropriate vocabulary for the topic covered. Their texts are comprehensible but may contain errors. In oral texts, students focus on certain aspects such as intonation, pronunciation and tonic stress.

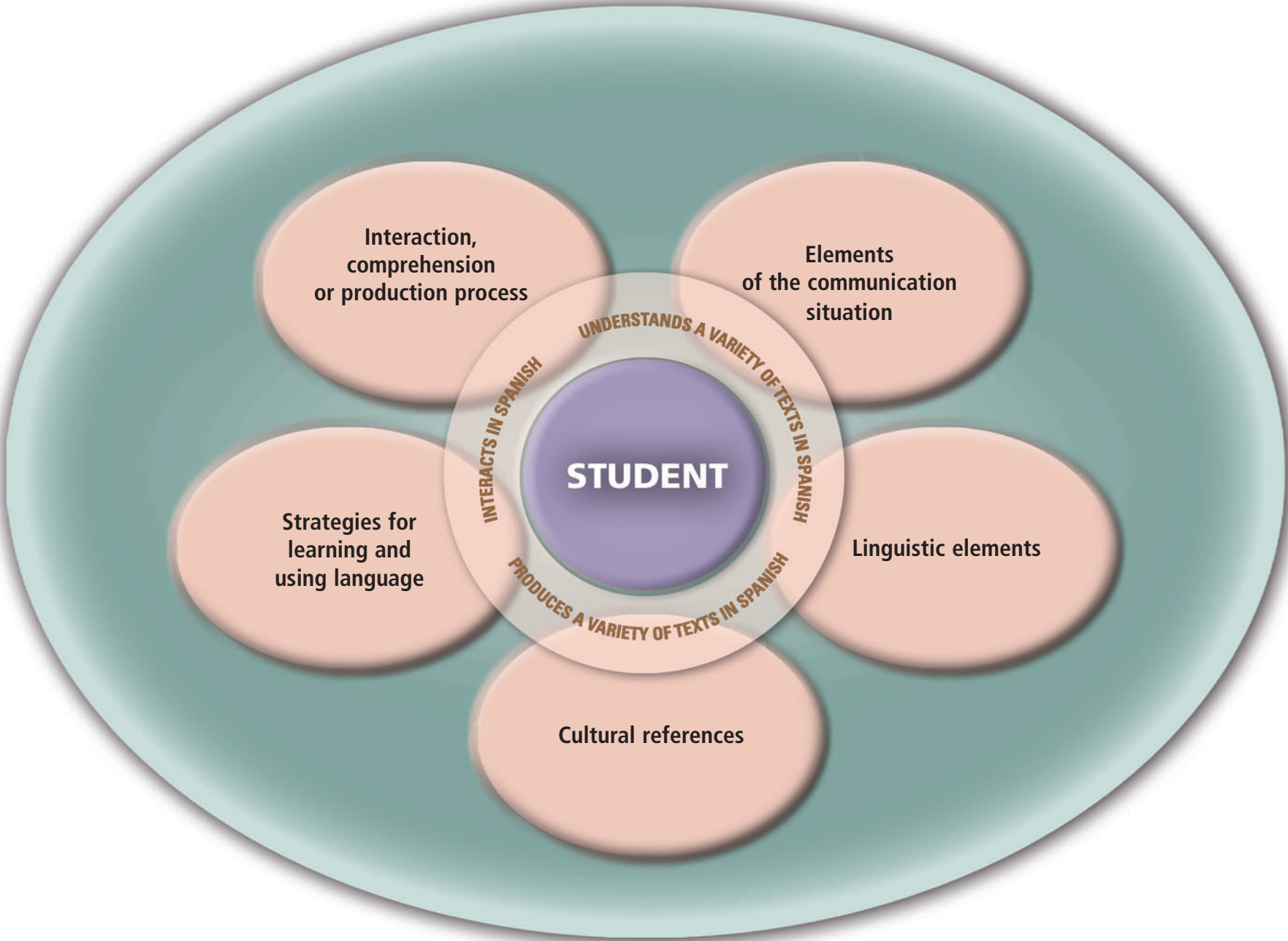
When they produce their texts, students manage and adapt the proposed production process with occasional assistance. To do so, they plan, develop and review their text, taking into account the communication situation and their purpose. At the end of the task, they reflect on the quality of their process and their production by identifying their strengths, aspects that need to be improved and how to go about improving them. In their productions, students apply knowledge about linguistic and cultural aspects acquired in the texts that they have listened to, read or viewed in Spanish; as a result, they can discuss some of the typical sociocultural aspects of Spanish-speaking countries. They also respect most Spanish communication conventions, both in speech and in writing.

Parameters of the Learning and Evaluation Situations for Developing the Competency *Produces a variety of texts in Spanish*

	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
Learning context			
Type of topics covered	Simple, concrete questions relating to the student's personal and daily life	Simple, concrete issues relating both to the student's personal life and to his/her life within society	More complex and abstract issues relating both to the student's personal life and to his/her life within society
Type of context and text	Familiar context known to the student	Slightly less familiar context, but still known to the student	Less familiar context, sometimes unknown to the student
	Text with limited content already familiar to the student	Text with predictable content	Text with more or less predictable content
Type of productions expected	Very short, very simple texts in which ideas are few and undeveloped	Simple texts of variable length in which ideas are more numerous, but are not necessarily well developed	Texts of variable length and complexity in which ideas are both numerous and fairly well developed
Resources to be mobilized			
Linguistic elements	Basic grammatical structures in simple sentences	Varied grammatical structures in generally simple sentences	Varied grammatical structures in increasingly complex sentences
	Basic vocabulary limited to a specific situation	Simple, everyday vocabulary not limited to one situation	Diversified vocabulary
Cultural references	Cultural references relating to the student's personal and daily life activities	Cultural references relating to life within society	
Process and strategies	Process presented by the teacher and implemented by the student	Process gradually adapted to the situation by the student	
	Strategies that facilitate production		

		1st year	2nd year	3rd year
Resources to be mobilized (cont.)				
Human and material resources		Spanish-speakers in the student's immediate environment	Spanish-speakers within or outside the student's immediate environment	
		A limited number of similar material resources	An increasing number of diversified material resources	
Self-regulation				
Production		Evaluation of the quality of the student's production		
Process		Reflection on personal strengths and on difficulties in applying the process	Reflection on the management of the entire process	

PROGRAM CONTENT



Program Content

The program content includes five sections that group together the resources required to develop the student's competencies in Spanish:

- elements of the communication situation
- linguistic elements
- cultural references
- strategies for learning and using language
- interaction, comprehension or production process

The concepts covered in these sections play an important role in accomplishing a task, and it is in complementarity that they derive their meaning. The order in which they appear has no bearing on their relative importance.

The concepts of the program content include all the resources that students are required to mobilize to develop their competencies.

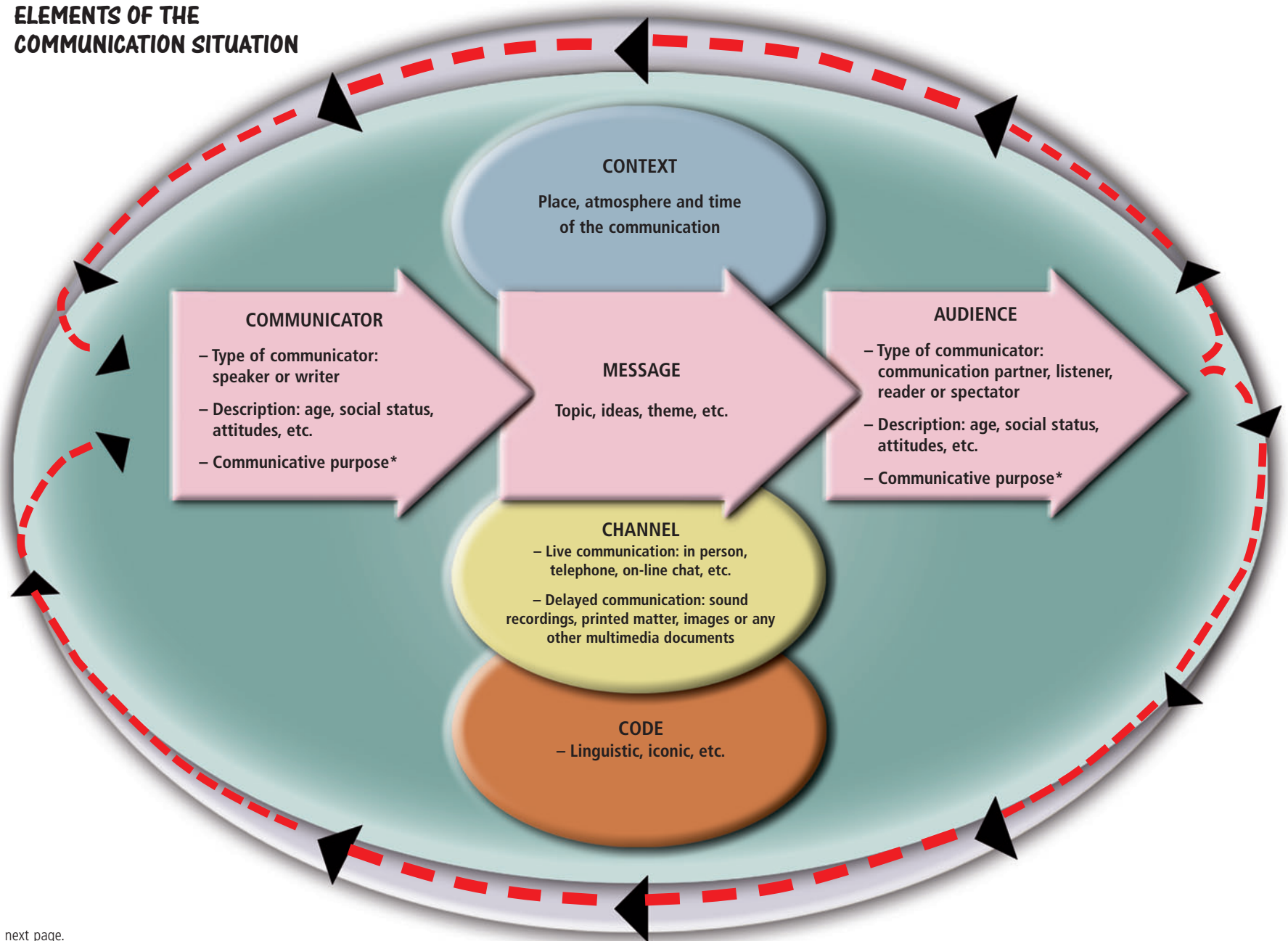
During a learning and evaluation situation, students use a process that serves as a framework. They take into consideration those elements that influence the communication situation, notably purposes, and use different strategies for learning and using language to help them with the task. Students must also have a certain level of understanding of the linguistic elements both to understand the meaning of a text and to express themselves as clearly and fluently as possible. It is also important for students to become aware of different cultural references, to help them to better understand the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries.

Elements of the Communication Situation

The introduction of the communicative approach in teaching and learning languages emphasized the important role that communication plays, characterized notably by the communication context, the speakers concerned, and their respective purposes. Students learn to communicate or understand the meaning of texts they are introduced to by learning to choose and adapt their words to the communication situation. The following diagram represents those elements normally associated with the communication situation: the arrows show that there is two-way communication between the communicator and the audience, indicating that communicators negotiate meaning during their exchanges.

It is important for students to properly understand the elements of the communication situation (communicator, message, code) and their influence on the meaning of the text. Thus, the teacher must place them in communication situations in which the characteristics of the different elements vary (e.g. type of communicator, topic).

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION SITUATION

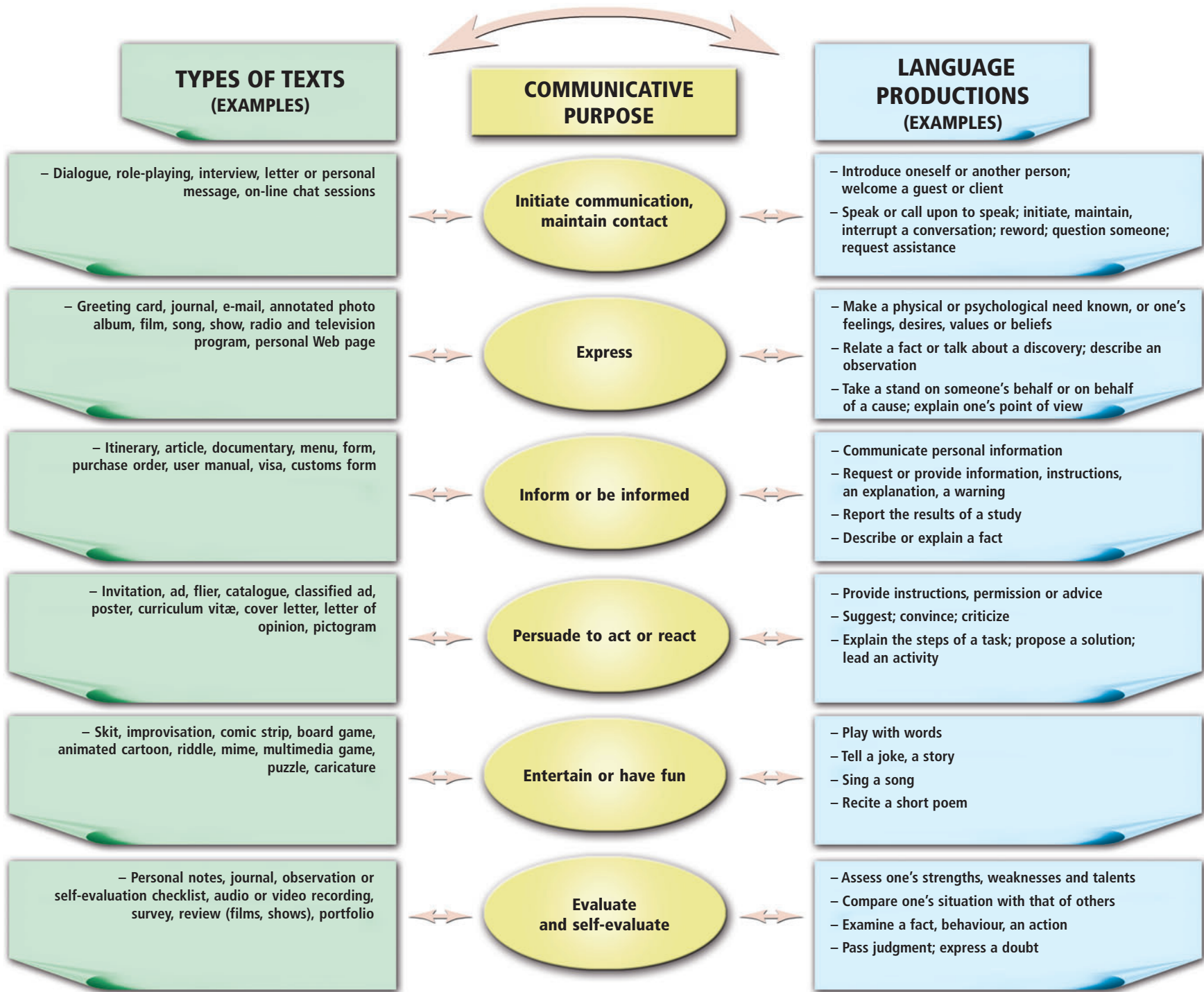


* See next page.

Communicative Purpose

The communicative purpose may be the starting point for many meaningful communication situations. The following diagram illustrates the relationship that exists between the communicative purpose, language productions and different types of texts.

Whether oral, written, visual or combined, a text generally reveals the intent of its communicator. This purpose may be manifested in different language productions, just as a language production may be generated by more than one purpose. A language production that introduces a person may cover several communicative purposes (e.g. initiate communication or inform) and take various forms (e.g. a conversation, letter, application). As well, a text such as a letter or personal note may reflect different purposes (e.g. to initiate communication, to express oneself or to have fun). The audience will try to grasp this intent in order to better understand the message that is heard, read or seen. The following categories are shown as examples and should not be seen as rigid divisions.



Linguistic Elements

Linguistic elements (grammar, lexicon and phonetics) are essential resources that students must learn in order to understand Spanish and communicate in this language. Knowledge of these elements is therefore not an end in itself, since students must use them in context rather than in isolated situations. It is in learning and evaluation situations that the students will learn to recognize them, select them and put them into practice. Thus, the teacher must always consider linguistic elements as tools for developing competencies.

Grammar

To enable students to understand a text and to communicate with the greatest linguistic accuracy possible in their interactions and productions, the teacher must make them aware of the importance of recognizing and

properly using the different grammatical elements. Proper use of verb tenses, pronouns and other grammatical elements in a text ensures its coherence and clarity. Thus, when asked to narrate an event, students will inevitably call upon their knowledge of verbs in the past tenses. As well, when starting a text, students will make use of different grammatical elements in the text to allow them to understand its meaning more easily (e.g. pronouns, gender of adjectives, verb tense).

The following list of grammatical elements is not exhaustive or limited. Furthermore, the order in which the elements are presented does not imply a hierarchy or a progression. Since the terminology used to describe the grammatical concepts varies from one language to another, the terms specific to the language to be learned (i.e. Spanish) have been selected.

La frase	
– Frase declarativa, interrogativa y exclamativa	– Formas afirmativa y negativa
	– Voz pasiva
Clases de palabras	
El sustantivo – Género y número El adjetivo – Género y número – Superlativos absolutos (ej. <i>-ísimo</i>) y relativos (ej. <i>más, menos</i>) – Apócopos (ej. <i>gran, buen</i>) – Posición del adjetivo	El determinativo – Determinativos artículos (ej. <i>el, los</i>) – Determinativos indefinidos (ej. <i>un, unos</i>) – Determinativos demostrativos (ej. <i>este, ese</i>) – Determinativos posesivos (ej. <i>mi, mío</i>) – Determinativos numerales: cardinal y ordinal (ej. <i>uno, dos, tres; primero, segundo, tercero</i>) – Determinativos interrogativos y exclamativos (ej. <i>qué, cuánto, cuánta, cuántos, cuántas</i>)

Clases de palabras (cont.)

El pronombre

- Pronombres personales
 - sujetos (ej. *yo, nosotros*)
 - complementos directos o indirectos sin preposición (ej. *me, te, lo, la*)
 - complementos con preposiciones (ej. *para mí, contigo*)
- Pronombres relativos (ej. *que, quien, el cual*)
- Pronombres demostrativos (ej. *este, ese*)
- Pronombres posesivos (ej. *el mío, el tuyo*)
- Pronombres interrogativos y exclamativos (ej. *quién, cuál*)
- Pronombres indefinidos (ej. *algo, nada, alguien*)
- Posición de los pronombres

El adverbio

- Adverbios de lugar (ej. *aquí, lejos*)
- Adverbios de tiempo (ej. *hoy, todavía*)
- Adverbios de modo (ej. *mejor, mal*)
- Adverbios de cantidad (ej. *nada, más*)
- Adverbios de afirmación (ej. *sí, claro*)
- Adverbios de negación (ej. *no, tampoco, nunca*)

La preposición

- Usos generales (ej. *en, a, con, sobre, hasta, entre*)
- Usos especiales (ej. *por, para*)
- Locuciones prepositivas (ej. *a causa de, de acuerdo con*)

La conjunción

- Coordinantes (ej. *y, pero*)
- Subordinantes (ej. *que, porque, sí*)

El verbo

- Verbos regulares (*-ar, -er, -ir*)
- Verbos irregulares (ej. *hacer, tener, decir*)
- Verbos pronominales (ej. *levantarse, acostarse, despertarse*)
- Verbos auxiliares (ej. *haber*)
- Verbos *gustar, interesar, fascinar, encantar, etc.*
- Diferencia entre *ser* y *estar*
- *Ser* + participio (oración pasiva)
- Perífrasis verbales (ej. *ir + a + infinitivo, estar + gerundio, deber + infinitivo, poder + infinitivo, tener que, hay que, estar a punto de, acabar de*)
- Modos y tiempos verbales

Modo indicativo

- Presente (ej. *escribo*)
- Pretérito imperfecto (ej. *escribía*)
- Pretérito perfecto (ej. *he escrito*)
- Pretérito indefinido (ej. *escribí*)
- Futuro imperfecto (ej. *escribiré*)
- Condicional simple (ej. *escribiría*)

Modo imperativo

- Presente (ej. *escribe*)

Modo subjuntivo

- Presente (ej. *escriba*)

Lexicon

The lexicon is the foundation of all languages and an open window on the cultures of the world. Learning the lexicon leads students to discover the richness of the Spanish language and the diversity of the Spanish-speaking world. Students must first build a basic lexical foundation that enables them to meet their communication needs. It is through frequent exposure to the same words that they will be able to adopt and use them in different interaction, comprehension or production situations. Generally, it is recommended that students develop their receptive vocabulary (that used in oral and written comprehension) as much as possible, since it is

the cornerstone of productive vocabulary (that which is used in interactions and oral and written productions).

Mastering the lexicon leads students to discover the richness of the Spanish language and the diversity of the Spanish-speaking world.

In order for students to communicate with the greatest possible number of Spanish speakers, native speakers or not, the teacher teaches them international Spanish, and in context rather than in the form of lists of isolated words. Teachers must endeavour to vary their teaching approaches (e.g. brainstorming sessions, activities pertaining to a semantic field) to help students recall their prior knowledge and study the form of words and their use in context. The teacher also helps them to use different resources such as a dictionary or their peers when seeking out the meaning of a word. This helps learners to build an increasingly solid foundation in Spanish, and to develop a certain linguistic autonomy.

Meaning of words and expressions

- The literal or figurative meaning (e.g. *beber agua* or *estar entre dos aguas*)
- Idiomatic expressions (e.g. *tener la sartén por el mango*, *calle ciega*)

Word formation

- Origin:
 - prefix (e.g. *antepasado*, *contrato*, *discontinuo*, *afuera*)
 - suffix (e.g. *panadería*, *cafecito*, *zapatero*)
- Structure (e.g. *pelirrojo*, *tragaluz*, *mediodía*)

Spelling

- Written form of words
- Accents
- Capitalization

Semantic relationship

- Words from the same family (e.g. *mensaje, mensajero; pan, panadero, panadería*)
- Lexical fields (e.g. vocabulary associated with food, travel, apparel)
- Polysemy (e.g. *tomar un refresco, tomar el autobús*)
- Homonyms and homophones (e.g. *esta, está; tu, tú*)
- Synonyms (e.g. *comenzar, empezar; comprender, entender*)
- Antonyms (e.g. *agradable, desagradable*)
- Hypernym¹¹ and hyponym¹² (e.g. *fruta – manzana; abrigo – ropa*)
- Cognates¹³ (e.g. train, *tren*; direction, *dirección*)
- Collocation¹⁴

Phonetics

Learning to communicate orally in Spanish presupposes the ability to recognize intonations and the different phonemes inherent to this language (e.g. *ñ, ll, rr, j*) and to reproduce them. Thus, the teacher will ensure that particular attention is paid to phonetic elements and, using auditory

discrimination activities and phonetic correction, will help students integrate the elements presented in this table and apply them in context.

Pronunciation, intonation and stress

- The alphabet, sound/spelling correspondence
- Consonant phonemes
- Vocalic phonemes
 - diphthongs (e.g. *veinte, cuando, pues*)
 - hiatus (e.g. *creo, leer, río*)
- Tonic accent (e.g. accentuated syllable) and grammatical accent
- Liaison, pause and elision
- Intonation in a declarative, interrogative and exclamatory sentence

11. Hypernym of a word: a term that has a hierarchical relationship to another term whose semantic range is more restricted.

12. Hyponym of a word: a word that is more specific than a given word.

13. Words from two different languages but with the same etymological source that have retained identical or similar spelling and can have a similar or dissimilar semantic root.

14. Direct but not absolute semantic relationship between two words appearing in the same sentence. E.g. *rubio* can only be used with a couple of words such as *pelo*, while *pelo* may be used with a wider variety of words. It is possible to say *pelo rubio*, but not *pantalones rubios*, just as it is possible to say *pantalones beige*, but not *pelo beige*.

Cultural References

Cultural references allow students to discover the Spanish language, reflect on the differences and similarities that exist between their culture and that of the Spanish-speaking world, and form new views of the world.

Language and culture are inseparable. In the Spanish course, cultural references should be considered not just as knowledge to be learned, but rather as a starting point from which students may discover the Spanish language, reflect on the differences and similarities that exist between their culture and that of the Spanish-speaking world, and form new views of the world. Cultural references allow students to make connections between themselves and others, between the present and the past, and between what exists here and elsewhere.

Through rich program content that corresponds to students' interests and needs, the teacher helps them to discover, understand and appreciate many aspects of

Spanish cultures at home and abroad. In order to do this, the teacher may use resources such as Web sites, Spanish newspapers or music, and call upon members of the different Spanish communities in Québec, guest speakers or young Spanish students at the school. The teacher may also take advantage of an intercultural week, a school trip, student exchanges, etc. to make the most of these resources.

The cultural references listed below are of a generic nature and serve as gateways to more specific references in different learning and evaluation situations. They fall into three categories: sociolinguistic, sociological and aesthetic. As the list of references¹⁵ is not exhaustive, the teacher is free to add others that he or she deems important.

Sociolinguistic aspect of culture

The sociolinguistic aspect of culture refers to the knowledge and conditions that are required to understand a Spanish speaker, whether a native speaker or not, and to communicate with the speaker correctly and effectively.

- Communication conventions at the linguistic and paralinguistic levels (e.g. punctuation, forms of greeting and courtesy, gestures, facial expressions, postures, proximity during conversations)
- Language registers and linguistic, social, cultural, and geographical differences
- Humour (e.g. word games, riddles, jokes)

15. This list is based on the article "Los contenidos culturales," by Carmen Guillén Díaz, in *Vademécum para la formación de profesores. Enseñar español como segunda lengua (L2)/lengua extranjera (LE)*, Madrid, SGEL, 2004.

Sociological aspect of culture

The sociological aspect of culture refers to the daily life and behaviour of native speakers and their social organization.

Social and daily practices

- Traditions (e.g. civic, popular and religious celebrations: public holidays, births, marriages)
- Activities and recreation (e.g. sports, games, reading, cinema)
- Work hours and practices, punctuality (e.g. differences according to country)
- Food (e.g. meal times, typical dishes of Spanish countries, differences according to country)
- Religion (e.g. Catholic religion, aboriginal beliefs in Hispanic America)

Living conditions

- Standard of living according to regional, social and cultural differences (e.g. working conditions, cost of living)
- Family environment (e.g. housing, material goods, structure of the family)
- Social environment (e.g. social services, means of transportation)
- Geographic features and effect on the lifestyle of inhabitants (e.g. different climates, biodiversity)

Interpersonal relationships

- Social structure and relationships among members of different communities (e.g. social classes, ethnic and religious minorities, regional cultures)
- Relationships between members of the opposite or same sex (e.g. views on friendship and heterosexual or homosexual couples, perception of men and women in society)
- Type and structure of the family (e.g. roles and authority figures)
- Relationship between the different generations (e.g. consideration, respect)
- Workplace relationships (e.g. hierarchy, sexual equality)
- Relationship with government, authorities, public administration and religious groups (e.g. issues, conflicts)

Social organization

- Politics (e.g. political system, democracy, dictatorship)
- Economy (e.g. development of renewable resources, socioeconomic conflicts, free trade agreements, the effects of globalization)

Sociohistorical context

- Historical events (e.g. Independence Day, territorial wars)
- Historical figures (e.g. Ernesto Che Guevara, General Franco)
- Archaeological sites (e.g. Chichén Itzá, Machu Picchu)
- Historical sites (e.g. museums, churches)

Aesthetic aspect of culture

The aesthetic aspect of culture refers to creations that transmit a vision of the world as seen from a place or an era and that allow us to learn about the richness of Spanish cultures.

- Arts (e.g. songs, music, dance, cinema, painting, architecture, theatre, literature)
- Media (e.g. newspapers, magazines, radio and television programs, cartoons, advertising)

Strategies for Learning and Using Language

Students can adopt learning strategies to learn the language and manage their learning, and strategies for using the language to help them communicate better orally and in writing.

In order to develop their competencies in Spanish and to gradually become more autonomous learners, students are encouraged to recognize and use two types of strategies: learning strategies that they use to learn the language and manage their learning, and strategies for using the language, which help them communicate better orally and in writing. Many of the strategies will be familiar to the students, as they already have experience learning a second language. New strategies, particularly those that deal with the use of Spanish, could be used to enrich their

repertory and help students communicate more effectively in Spanish, both orally and in writing.

The strategies for learning and using language have been grouped according to the program's three competencies: *Interacts in Spanish*, *Understands a variety of texts in Spanish* and *Produces a variety of texts in Spanish*. As this list of strategies is neither exhaustive nor exclusive to a particular competency, the teacher and students may add to it.

Competency: *Interacts in Spanish*

Learning strategies

- Reproduce sounds, intonations and utterances by repeating them out loud or by whispering them
- Incorporate new words and expressions within a context to remember them more easily
- Pay attention to the way of interacting in order to identify frequently occurring errors
- Ask the teacher about the subject content or a task
- Work with peers to carry out a task
- Reduce anxiety by using mental techniques that build self-confidence
- Be empathetic and try to understand other viewpoints during teamwork

Strategies for using language

- Interpret and use different nonverbal cues to communicate (e.g. mime, gestures)
- Make it known when you do not understand what was said (e.g. *No entiendo, ¿Cómo? ¿Disculpe?*)
- Ask the speaker to repeat, rephrase or explain when you do not understand (e.g. *¿Puede repetir, por favor? ¿Qué quiere decir?*)
- Observe the listener's reaction in order to find out if the message was understood
- Ask questions to verify the listener's comprehension (e.g. *¿Me entiende?, ¿Está claro?*)
- Rephrase or start over using a different tactic when communication reaches an impasse (e.g. *Quiero decir que...*)
- Use the generic term, or hypernym, rather than the specific term, or hyponym (e.g. *mueble* rather than *silla*)
- Paraphrase to compensate for limited vocabulary (e.g. *una fruta roja* in place of *manzana*)
- Ask for assistance in order to learn new terms or expressions (e.g. *¿Cómo se dice... en español?*)
- Ask whether a word or phrase is used correctly (e.g. *¿Se puede decir...?*)

Competency: Understands a variety of texts in Spanish

Learning strategies

- Make inferences in order to formulate language usage rules
- Associate new words or expressions in Spanish with others known in first or second language
- Use known elements to infer the meaning of new or unfamiliar elements
- Group together elements (vocabulary, structures) that have similar characteristics
- Draw charts, tables or other graphic representations in order to understand and organize information
- Listen selectively by taking into account listening, reading or viewing purpose
- Work with peers to obtain new information
- Ask peers or teacher questions in order to clarify concepts
- Reward oneself when goal is obtained

Strategies for using language

- Quickly skim texts to find the main ideas
- Search for keywords in order to understand the text
- Take into account intonation and visual cues
- Establish connections between texts and prior knowledge or personal experiences
- Reread or listen to the text several times
- Make predictions about what will be listened to, read or viewed
- Infer the likely meaning of unknown expressions or words based on contextual clues
- Adopt a positive attitude toward comprehension problems

Competency: Produces a variety of texts in Spanish

Learning strategies

- Incorporate new words and expressions within a context to remember them more easily
- Identify familiar and recurring structures from short narratives, songs or media documents
- Pay attention to how one produces texts in order to identify frequently repeated errors
- Ask peers for feedback on one's production
- Encourage oneself to reduce anxiety

Strategies for using language

- Use known syntactic models to create new sentences
- Take notes while reading or listening in order to write a personal text
- Use a variety of resources in order to correct texts (e.g. personal lexicon, dictionaries, grammar books)

Interaction, Comprehension or Production Process

In order to develop and exercise each of the program’s three subject-specific competencies, students use the same process that draws support primarily from the cross-curricular competency *Adopts effective work methods*. This process provides students with a framework to help them approach a task in a structured and organized manner. It includes three major phases: planning, carrying out the task and reflection. Viewed as a recursive process, it is neither rigid nor linear, and allows students to go back and forth between phases.

The teacher gradually helps the students to choose from among the actions possible in each phase those which are most appropriate to the task, and to carry them out with increasing autonomy. The teacher also helps students to develop metacognitive awareness, by asking them to question the accuracy of their choices and actions.

This process provides students with a framework to help them approach a task in a structured and organized manner.

Planning	
In this phase, students organize the task and the resources they will need to mobilize in order to reach their goals. Students can do the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure they understand the instructions – Activate their prior knowledge – Use different means to explore new ideas (e.g. brainstorming) – Determine the goal of the task – Describe or decode the purpose and other elements of the communication situation – Collect, select and organize the required information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Set out the actions required to complete the task according to the communication situation – Become familiar with the evaluation criteria – Choose a communication medium appropriate to the task – Allow for appropriate resources – Foresee the final product
Carrying Out the Task	
In this phase, students draw upon all their resources to successfully complete the task. Throughout this phase, they review their actions regularly to ensure they are relevant. To this end, they can do the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Access appropriate resources to carry out the task or overcome different difficulties – Identify how the text is organized and the essential elements of its content, in order to understand or produce a text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Construct or reconstruct the meaning of the text – Apply ideas and linguistic and cultural elements – Review the initial planning sequence and make changes as required – Go over the text and present or hand it in, in the case of productions

Reflection

Reflection allows students to evaluate their process and the final product they create based on criteria established at the outset. It can be in the form of a dialogue between the teacher and the students, or a text written alone or as a team. During this phase, students can do the following:

- Evaluate the relevance of resources used
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the means implemented to overcome any obstacles encountered
- Evaluate their process, attitudes, the finished product or learning acquired
- Compare their accomplishments with prior accomplishments
- Find ways to improve their process
- Set new goals

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Centro Virtual Cervantes Web site: <www.cvc.cervantes.es>

APPENDIX – EXAMPLE OF A PLAN FOR DEVELOPING A LEARNING AND EVALUATION SITUATION IN SPANISH

This example of a plan can be a source of inspiration for teachers who must design different learning and evaluation situations dealing with issues from the broad areas of learning, and drawing upon competencies from the Spanish as a Third Language program and the cross-curricular competencies as well as certain competencies from other subjects. The level of difficulty and complexity of the tasks presented to students may vary, depending on their needs and the level they have obtained in developing their language

competencies. The choices regarding cross-curricular competencies and elements of the program content are presented as suggestions. For this situation, teachers may choose to work with other ideas, create other tasks and use any evaluation tools they find appropriate.

¡Salvemos el planeta!		
Overview of the situation		
<p>All around the world, more and more people—including many young people—are concerned about different environmental issues at the global level. In this learning situation, the students are asked to get an overview of the main issues affecting the environment, whether in Québec or in Hispanic American countries, and to suggest solutions to the problems facing these countries. To do this, students first look for information that will allow them to compile a report for a specific country. They then discuss the matter with their peers and, working together, determine the most urgent issue or issues. In the light of their findings about several Hispanic American countries, students draw up a summary of the possible solutions to the issues raised and learn about the role each person can play with regard to the environment. They also discuss what individuals or society can do to initiate or support measures that will ensure the protection of the environment for present and future generations in all the countries studied during this situation. Finally, working alone or in teams, students produce a text (oral, written, visual or combined) in which they make a personal commitment they believe they can accomplish.</p>		
Educational level	Subject	Year of the cycle
Secondary Cycle Two	Spanish as a Third Language	Second
Duration		
Teachers determine the number of periods according to the number of tasks and evaluation tools they have created based on this framework.		

Broad area of learning	
Environmental Awareness and Consumer Rights and Responsibilities	
<p>Educational aim</p> <p>To encourage students to develop an active relationship with their environment while maintaining a critical attitude toward consumption and the exploitation of the environment</p>	<p>Focuses of development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Construction of a healthy environment from a sustainable development perspective – Responsible use of goods and services – Awareness of social, economic and ethical aspects of the consumer world
Subject-specific competencies	Cross-curricular competencies
<p>Interacts in Spanish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Uses Spanish in a variety of communication situations – Uses an interaction process – Applies his/her knowledge of the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries <p>Understands a variety of texts in Spanish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Diversifies his/her listening, reading or viewing experiences – Uses a comprehension process – Becomes more open to the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries <p>Produces a variety of texts in Spanish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Diversifies his/her production experiences – Uses a production process – Applies his/her knowledge of the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries 	<p>All of the cross-curricular competencies come into play in this learning and evaluation situation, but three competencies in particular are targeted:</p> <p>Uses information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Gathers information – Puts information to use <p>Exercises critical judgment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Forms an opinion – Expresses his/her opinion – Qualifies his/her opinion <p>Communicates appropriately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Uses the appropriate mode of communication

Program content

Many concepts can be called upon in this learning and evaluation situation. Several examples are given below.

Elements of the communication situation

- Inform, be informed: describe or explain a fact, report the results of a study
- Express: take a stand on behalf of a cause and explain one’s point of view

Lexicon

- Lexical fields associated with the environment

Learning strategies

- Work with peers to carry out a task
- Be empathetic and try to understand others’ points of view when working as part of a team

Evaluation

Depending on the pedagogical aim and the type of task, the teacher, in cooperation with the students, establishes various evaluation methods and tools to evaluate one or more subject-specific or cross-curricular competencies. Thus, through this learning and evaluation situation, the teacher is able to gather a great deal of information to assess the development of a student’s competencies.

Methods

- Self-evaluation
- Co-evaluation or peer evaluation
- Teacher evaluation of the student’s or team’s work

Tools¹⁶

- Analytical grids
 - Grids based on descriptive scales
 - Grids based on nondescriptive scales
 - Grids based on dichotomous scales
- Holistic grids

16. For further details, see *Evaluation of Learning at the Secondary Level: Framework*, Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport.

Description of tasks			
Preparation Phase	<p>Group discussion Through questions, audio-visual documents and readings, students are required to learn about different environmental problems that exist in Québec and in Hispanic American countries.</p>		
Performance Phase	<p>Task 1: Researching information and report <i>Working individually and in small groups</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Each of the groups chooses an Hispanic American country. Then, working individually, each member of the group researches different documents and Web sites for relevant information and enters it in a chart that includes categories predetermined by the teacher or students (e.g. burial of waste, water pollution). – Rejoining their groups, students review their research and draw up a report on the state of the environment for the country selected. They also share their thoughts on these new findings. 	<p>Task 2: Sharing of information and discussion <i>Working in small groups</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New groups are formed of students who have information on different countries. Students first share the information gathered, then target the most urgent problems that are common to the countries they have researched. 	<p>Task 3: Reflection on their findings and discussion <i>Plenary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A spokesperson for each group provides a brief summary of the results of the discussion to the rest of the class. – As a class, students discuss the environmental issues raised and, with the teacher’s guidance, try to find solutions that will help to save the planet. – The teacher uses this reflection to help students become aware of the importance of every person’s role as a citizen of a country, but also as a citizen of the world. <p>Task 4: Production <i>Working individually or in small groups</i></p> <p>Alone or in teams, students agree upon an action or actions that they will take in their daily life to contribute to saving the planet, and they present them in a short letter, poster, advertisement or other type of production.</p>
Integration Phase	<p>Working individually or in groups The students reflect¹⁷ on the situation as a whole. They think about what they have learned, their process, the quality of their interactions and productions and how well they have understood the texts involved. They also identify the problems they encountered in carrying out different tasks and the solutions they were able to find.</p>		

17. Throughout the learning and evaluation situation, the teacher provides opportunities for reflection.

