

## Introduction

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The first part of this issue presents six articles on the topic of North American culture in the foreign language classroom and the use of audiovisual means in ELT, coordinated by Jesús García Laborda and Elena Alcalde, from the University of Alcalá and Alexandra Santamaría from the International University of La Rioja. This topic is complemented by a dozen papers that have been sent to *Porta Linguarum* from various universities and that deal with a considerable diversity of topics within the field of foreign language teaching.

The growing tendency of users willing to pay for Subscription-based Video-on-Demand services like Netflix, Amazon Prime, or HBO brings American culture, the biggest producer of content on these platforms, out to the world. Moreover, considering the fact that most viewers are located outside the United States, the concept of culture transmitted by American series, films, and documentaries has an impact all around the globe.

Teaching foreign languages in the 21st century through the communicative approach entails using resources that are closer to the students and with which they feel comfortable. Audiovisual media have been shown to positively affect students' learning process of a foreign language. However, previous literature does not tend to focus specifically on culture and does not consider how consumers of such audiovisual products receive and process the cultural data transmitted through these means.

The six papers that are included in the first part cover some of these aspects in order to analyze, from the point of view of students and teachers, how North American culture and the foreign language classroom merge. In the first article, Dr. Cañero and Dr. Marini consider an expanded approach to teaching American Studies by using popular culture texts to assist the comprehension and analysis of foreign sociocultural contexts. In the second article Dr. Alcalde Peñalver and Dr. Santamaría Urbieta analyze students' perceptions of the American financial system and its influence on the rest of the world with an activity designed to enhance critical thinking skills in an English for Specific Purposes class. In the third article, Dr. Valencia Robles and Dr. García Laborda examine the presence of American culture in textbooks used in Spain to explore to what extent it is used among educators in their teaching approach. In the fourth article, Dr. Tafazoli and Dr. Egan investigate the cultural references and cultural dimensions of visual content representation in two series of English language textbooks used in Iranian schools through a qualitative visual content analysis. The fifth article includes research conducted by Dr. Larrea Espinar and Dr. Raigón Rodríguez on the use of television, specifically through situation comedies, as an additional tool to reinforce and enhance cultural learning in the EFL classroom. Finally, Dr. Saiz Mingo analyses in her paper a corpus of teen testimonials on their preferences beyond mainstream content in online platforms.

The ten papers that complement the previous ones deal with a variety of topics in the field of foreign language teaching and learning. Edgar E. García-Ponce, Irasema Mora-Pablo and Juan Gabriel Segovia-Hernández present an investigation carried out at a public university in central Mexico on the possible influence of students' perceptions of the difficulty of tasks in

the complexity, precision and fluency (CPF) during their development. Subsequently, Irati Diert analyses the elements that students consider most important in the classroom to have positive experiences while learning English. Olga Merzlikina's paper revolves around the analysis of communication strategies in oral interaction in Spanish as a foreign language manuals and M.L. Carrió explores the results of training in pragmatics, identifying the metadiscursive elements used by content teachers who take a course to obtain a university diploma to teach in English in Spain. Then, Francisco J. Martínez, Antonio Granero and Manuel Gómez validate a questionnaire for the evaluation of Physical Education sessions through CLIL (CESEFA) that is a potentially useful tool for the guidance and self-assessment of bilingual Physical Education teachers who use CLIL in their classes. Next, Jesús Camacho proposes a model of lexicographical criticism aimed at the analysis and evaluation of the consultation tools that are commonly used in the teaching and learning process of L2. Afterwards, Anna Szczesniak and Rosa Muñoz examine the perceptions of teachers about the application of CLIL, focusing mainly on the deficiencies detected in existing studies and conclude that there is growing concern about the scarcity of teacher training programs, insufficient coordination, lack of attention to diversity, the inadequate design of the textbooks and, above all, the poor linguistic aptitude of the students and the size of the groups. All these factors frequently impede the correct development of the CLIL programmes. E Gürsoy and E Nur's paper aims to increase intercultural knowledge among 12-13 year old EFL learners by using the «Six Thinking Hats» model. Next, R Chacón and R Echitchi reconsider the role of computer tools to provide feedback on students' errors and improve their writing. They conclude that technology can be a very useful tool in the teaching and learning process in distance learning contexts. Beatriz Peña and Alba Martínez's paper deals with digital formats combined with appropriate teaching strategies and demonstrate that these stimulate the acquisition of skills associated with learning a foreign language in the case of immigrant children in Primary Education. In their study, Primary Education Degree students worked with augmented reality stories in order to discover their educational possibilities.

This volume includes six book reviews which deal with a variety of topics: individual differences in language learning, professional development, cross-cultural perspectives on technology, international perspectives on CLIL, the directed motivational currents theory, and measuring native-speaker vocabulary size.

The editors.