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Streets in the Sky: The Balconies of Lima and the Road to Intercultural Competence

Sabine Smith and Miriam Bley

The KSU country-study program ("Year of Peru") forms the backdrop to this descriptive case study. German and Spanish faculty explored the research question: "How does intercultural inquiry anchored in discipline-based methodology help advance intercultural competence in undergraduate learners?" According to national standards, students attain learning outcomes, for example, by examining cultural "products" (e.g. balconies), in connection with cultural practices and perspectives (ACTFL, 2006). In studying "products" of different countries (e.g. Peruvian and German balconies) and by engaging in level-appropriate intercultural inquiry, learners develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions—key components in advancing intercultural competence.

Introduction

We had been following the university's "Year of..." celebrations for years. The annual country study program with lectures, performances, film screenings, and culinary events held the allure of virtual travel and vicarious experiences—all to be enjoyed from the armchairs and student desks of the institution's lecture halls. As professors of German Studies (Sabine Smith) and Spanish (Miriam Bley) in the Department of Foreign Languages, we lacked an obvious disciplinary link with most of the countries studied in the annual series. However, a culture-general survey course in which undergraduate learners explore the world's major languages and cultures allowed us to form some tenuous connections, and the students enjoyed the annual country study program as a source of co-curricular enrichment and experiential learning (see sample assignments in Appendix).

When the 2012 Year of Peru (YoP) program was announced, we were determined to deepen our commitment and applied to both participate in the YoP Faculty Learning Community and to develop YoP learning modules for our classes. Having visited Latin America as tourists, we were fascinated by Peruvian culture and history, and chomping at the bit to learn more. We decided to utilize our disciplinary tools, forging connections that may possibly serve colleagues in other disciplines and be of benefit to our undergraduate learners.

In what follows, we present a descriptive case study that does not lay claim to broadly generalizable findings. It introduces, however, general principles and replicable strategies, offering a template that may be of use to any academic reader interested in bridging the proverbial disciplinary silos while advancing students' intercultural competence. We draw on core pedagogical principles of our discipline, mediated in the United States as "National Standards for Foreign Language Learning" (2006), and we

rely on the growing body of scholarship advocating the development of intercultural competence as an academic and civic goal. We argue that in studying Peruvian culture through distinctive material *products* that entail people's cultural *practices* and, on a deeper level, allow insights into cultural values or *perspectives*, a learner does not only expand culture-specific knowledge and understanding of Peru, but develops skills and attitudes for cross-cultural comparisons and intercultural competence. We offer, by way of description and analysis, the qualitative data in this limited case study as a springboard for further discussion and critical review. The discussion of theoretical underpinnings, methodology and pedagogical transfer, as well as salient outcomes of this project, intends to elucidate the extent to which the annual country study program benefits educators and students committed to learning about world cultures.

We see this collaborative project as exploring a new path bridging seemingly unrelated content areas through discipline-based inquiry to produce solid academic work. We harken back to the title of this paper in hopes that the path we describe will also form a "street in the sky" for fellow academicians.

Streets in the Sky: The Balconies of Lima

Since its earliest expressions nearly 2,000 ago in ancient Greece (the Caryatid Porch of Erechtheion in Athens dating to 421-407 BCE), the balcony (or its variations, such as the loggia, the porch, or gallery) has accommodated diverse purposes and evolved in design and style. However ornate or practical, balconies form both a metonymy and metaphor for the cultures to which they belong. Evidently, balconies have varied in style not only throughout history, but also regionally in urban and rural settings, and as space, economic concerns, and cultural mandates have guided their production and utilization. Some balconies meet residential needs, others fulfill ceremonial purposes in public spaces. Always anchored in culture, the use of balconies is not only based on custom and tradition, fads and style, but also on laws (either explicit or implicit) that regulate the use of space. In comparing what the culture's conventions tell us about underlying values, we learn not only about the culture itself but become also aware of cultural differences.

Friars Antonio de la Calancha and Juan Meléndez, both contemporaries in Lima during the late 16th century, have been credited with the metaphor for Lima's balconies as "streets in the sky" (Reyna, 2009, p. 2; Fernández, 2005, pp. 905, 911): "They are so many and too large that they seem to be streets on the air," (Reyna, 2009, p. 2) said Calancha reportedly of the city that once was known not only as the "City of Kings" but also "the city of the balconies" (Fernández, 2005, p. 920). To be sure, the balconies of Lima form world-famous architectural gems that have distinguished Lima's historical center.

The original colonial structures, part of Pizarro's draught plan for the City of Kings as an imperial site for the Spanish empire of the 1540s are mostly gone, but not only because of devastating earthquakes in 1655, 1687, 1746, and 1940. Yolanda Fernández Muñoz (2005) recounts the balconies' geographic diffusion from the Arab world to the Spanish empire and ultimately the New World in a history that spans over four centuries. Arab influences ultimately gave way to modernist trends, and most

buildings in Lima today owe to efforts of turn-of-the century Republican elites who sought to create a replica of Paris in neo-colonial style (Higgins, 2005, p. 28). In the 1930s, many old buildings were replaced by urban structures without distinctive features. In the mid-20th century, the city's decay stifled the preservation of historic buildings, but since the late 1990s, Lima has witnessed newfound pride and investment in the historic center with sustained historic preservation initiatives (Higgins, 2005, p. 30).

While Fernández and Higgins provide much architectural detail on Lima's balconies, Charles Walker discusses the balcony as a social space and in connection with cultural practice. Walker links Lima's balconies with Foucauldian critiques of the discourse of power (2003, p. 71). Foucault and (by extension) Walker view the balconies as expressions of regulatory power structures in the face of a changing urban social order (Walker, 2003, p. 55). Balconies reflect thus the urbanites' cultural practices—based on perceived requirements to uphold morality (Walker, 2003, p. 71), visible distinctions between the lower and upper classes, and a representational architecture becoming of the viceregal capital (Walker, 2003, p. 77).

Similarly, Anne Lambright (2007) examines the role of Lima in Peruvian literature, and she introduces writers who reflect on the ways in which “geography serves to reflect and enforce social norms” (2007, p. 54). Drawing on contemporary women's narratives, she makes a compelling case for recognizing that Lima's geographical spaces, as gendered sites, present themselves as locales of potential liberation from and resistance to social norms. In the texts Lambright discusses, women tend to experience geographical sites differently than men. While Lambright does not reference the Limeños' experience of balconies, she mentions several sites that connect the social realms mentioned above, including those that mark transitions between public and private spaces and experiences (e.g., a seat at a window, a workspace, a motel room). Lambright reflects on the pervasive theme of women's isolation promoted by the production and utilization of physical space (2007, p. 54).

Lambright's analysis might prompt us to examine the production and utilization of Lima's balconies from a gendered perspective, too. For example, Limeño historian José Galvez Barrenechea (1885-1957) commented on the cultural practice and value of the balconies as a place for amorous encounters and sexual favors, stating “...the balcony was the site for relaxation, lookout for love affairs, wellspring of gossip and expression of favors...”⁵³ (Reyna, 2009, p. 2, authors' translation). Both Peruvian writer Ricardo Palma and British author William Stevenson have been credited as 19th-century authors who recount historical events in which the balconies of Lima became the site of illicit romantic adventures (Ficciones, 2006, pp. 1-2). Stevenson's description of the lady on the balcony in “Ficciones en el balcón,” prompts the essayist to speculate about her thoughts and feelings: “Is there the possibility that the observed individual was aware of the situation and enjoyed it in some manner?”⁵⁴ (Ficciones,

⁵³ “...era el balcón lugar de esparcimiento, atalaya de amores, venero de averiguaciones y exposición de gracias...”

⁵⁴ “¿Cabe la posibilidad que la persona observada fuese conciente [sic] de su situación y la disfrutase de alguna forma?”

2006, p. 2, authors' translation). Evidently, the woman's perspective had not been explored.

The same essay describes further the role of Lima's balconies in linking the public with the private, the outside with the interior, the place from which one can observe without being seen, and, inversely, a space that allows the balconites to exhibit what they want and to grant the public a glimpse of intimate and private treasures. As a site of exposition and seduction, the author argues, it bridges reality and fantasy, physical and virtual spaces, and even marks a realm of double morality (Ficciones, 2006, p. 2).

Not unlike Lambright in her essay, "Ficciones" explores the historic role of Lima's balconies in connection with today's society. In their function as spaces that separate and bridge experiential realms that were not meant to be fused or merged in cultural practice, Lima's balconies remind us of a social order dominated by puritan and transported religious and social, yet decontextualized impositions (Ficciones, 2006, p. 2). The author posits that the balconies' function has possibly been usurped by social media in which the transgression from intimate view to voyeuristic gaze is played out in TV reality shows, reenactments of crimes, etc. The author concludes that current cultural practices connected with the historical use of balconies provide testimony that contemporary Limeña culture is still adhering to practices that represent an indelible part of Peru's traditional society (Ficciones, 2006, p. 2).

While the author's conclusions could be drawn for other cultures in which reality TV is a popular site for vicarious living, the author's observations beg a compelling question and provide us with the focus for this paper: to what extent may the metaphoric use of Lima's balconies serve as a prism through which we can examine broader cultural issues? Might the example of Lima's balconies serve as a starting point and teaching tool not only within the context of learning about Peru's history and culture, but also about other cultures? And will such an examination allow learners to make cross-cultural comparisons that advance their intercultural competence? Given the critical scholarship and pedagogical practice in our discipline of foreign language education, we have found that the progression from examining tangible *products* of a culture (i.e., Lima's balconies) to analyzing cultural *practices* and underlying *perspectives* (i.e., the utilization of the space) provides a useful basis and trajectory for cultural comparisons that connect culture-specific and culture-general inquiry in ways that effectively advance learners on the road toward intercultural competence.

Theoretical Background: Balconies and the Road to Intercultural Competence

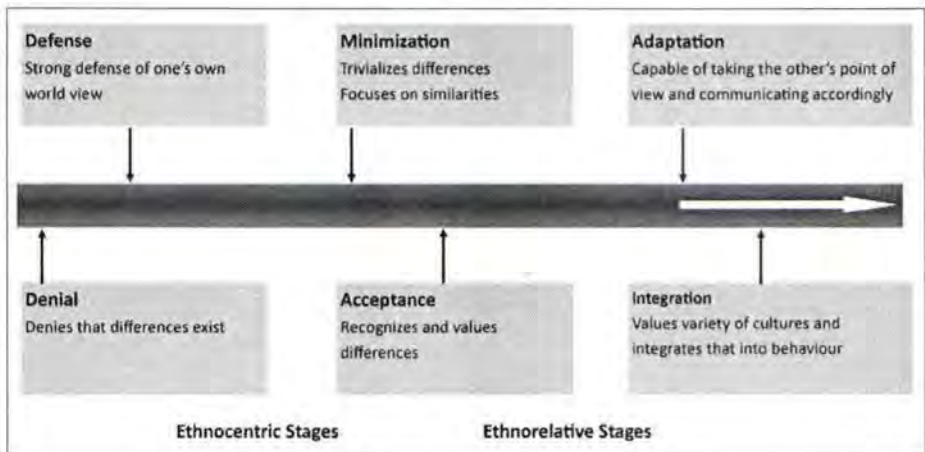
As mentioned above, balconies bridge distinct realms of people's experiences. Arguably, balconies mark thus a "third place," which denotes, in its usage in cultural and foreign language studies, the intersection between familiar and foreign cultures. According to sociolinguist Claire Kramsch it is the space "that grows in the interstices between the cultures the learner grew up with and the new cultures he or she is being introduced to" (1993, p. 236). In the "third place," individuals of diverse origins and dispositions meet and view their own and others' roles in new light and possibly renegotiate them. It is a learner's realm of budding and evolving perspectives. The "third

place” experience is characterized by individuals who participate variously as “outsiders” and “insiders” in majority or minority roles and thus increase their knowledge and understanding of multiple viewpoints. They develop not only culture-specific knowledge/understanding, but also intercultural awareness and competence, i.e., the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to function in *any* cultural context. Ultimately, the “third place” experience also fosters a learner’s civic growth toward intercultural citizenship (Byram, 2008).

The concept of intercultural competence has been diversely defined since the 1980s, and Darla Deardorff provided recently an effective summary of competing and complementing models (2009). Important differences between developmental and relational models can be exemplified via the schema of Milton Bennett (1993) and Michael Byram (1997), respectively.

Milton Bennett’s *developmental* model of intercultural sensitivity postulates that a learner moves along a continuum, expanding, refining, and deepening his/her understanding, skills, and attitudes.

Figure 1. Continuum of Intercultural Sensitivity

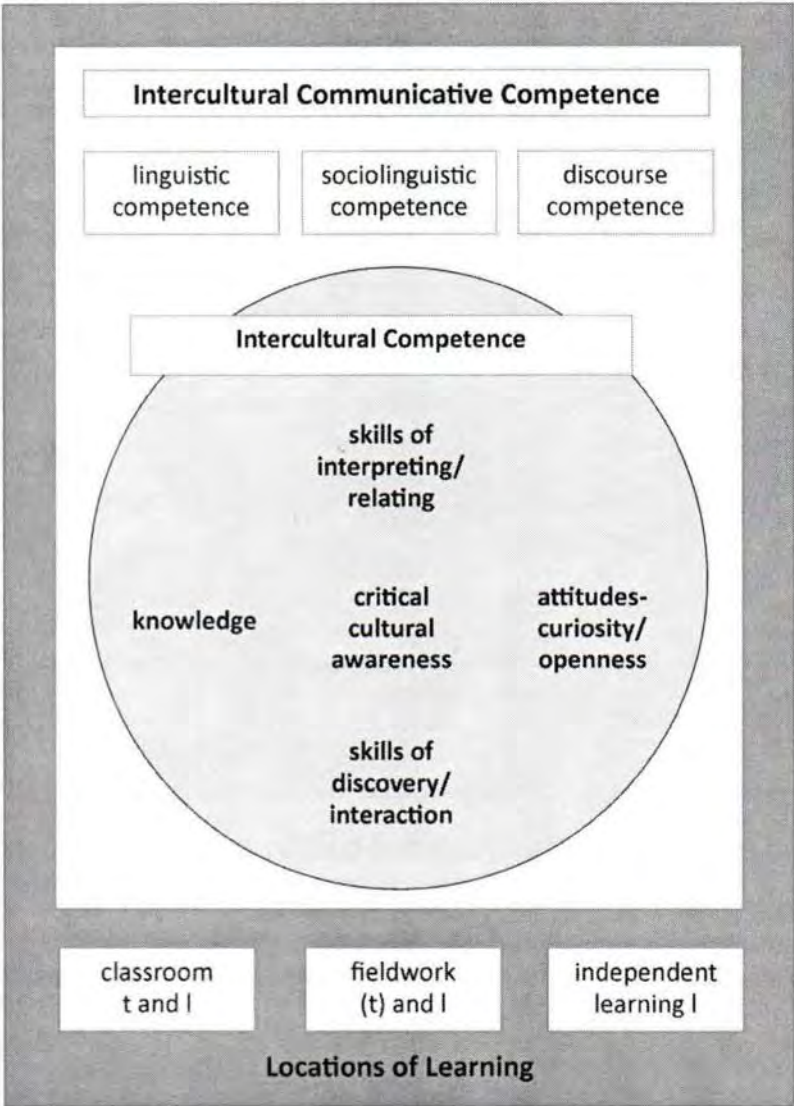


Source: Bennett, 1993, as cited in Greenholtz, 2009.

By contrast, Michael Byram’s model has been accepted as a compelling *relational* model that illustrates the distinctive competencies of an individual in connection with his/her outside world.

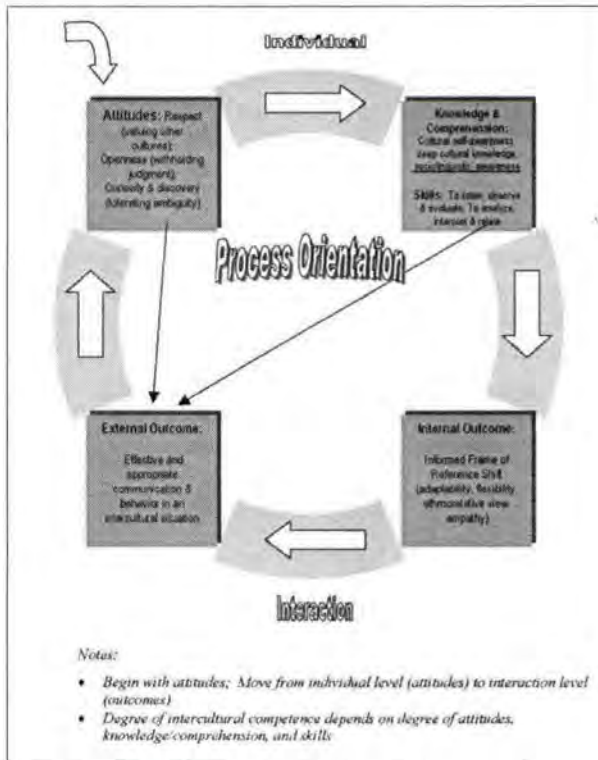
More recently, Deardorff has offered a synergistic model of intercultural competence in which she merges core features of Bennett’s and Byram’s models in a non-linear developmental model that also honors the relational aspects of competence attainment. Deardorf foregrounds the importance of a learner’s attitude.

Figure 2: Byram's Model



Source: Byram, 2009, p. 323.

Figure 3: Deardorff's Synergistic Model



Source: Deardorff, 2009, p. 480.

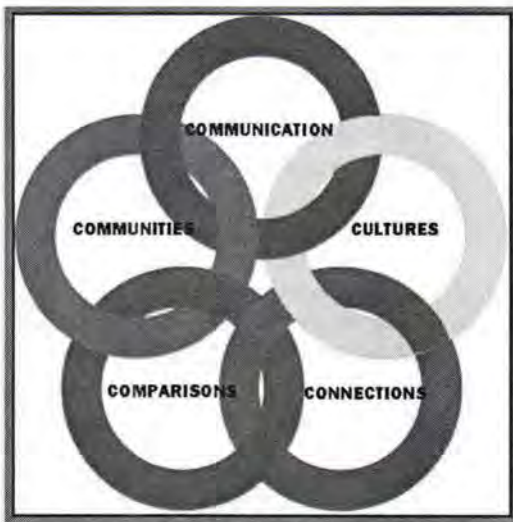
While all models have merit in advancing the conversations about intercultural competence, Deardorff's schema effectively bridges the two earlier models and provides, in effect, somewhat of a "third space" in its own right.

In this article, we seek also to create a third-space learning experience for our readers who are unfamiliar with the discipline of foreign language studies. We invite them to join us as we collectively explore the extent to which we may gain further insight into knowledge-making and skills development on the road to intercultural competence.

Balconies and the ACTFL National Standards

As Philips and Abbot summarized, the national standards for foreign language learning have provided much guidance since their inception in the mid-1990s (Philips & Abbot, 2011, p. 2). The so-called ACTFL standards, now in their third edition, have identified core principles in student learning. A learner is expected to demonstrate expertise related to communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. The concept is visualized as interlocking circles that overlap and interconnect.

Figure 4: ACTFL Standards



Source: National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (2006, p.1).

For the purpose of this paper, the ACTFL standards for Cultures and Comparisons are most significant; they read:

CULTURES:

Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

- 2.1. Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.
- 2.2. Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

ACTFL standard 4.2 for Comparisons identifies the idea that students will advance their ability to navigate similarities and differences between and among cultures:

COMPARISONS:

Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

Standard 4.1: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.

Standard 4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Following these standards, learners gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures by studying the relationship between products, practices, and perspectives.

In our project, the Limeño balcony (among many other possible cultural products) forms the initial, material "product" that allows us to develop knowledge and understanding of Peruvian culture (i.e., the study of balconies as part of Lima's social history). Insights into what cultural "practices" are connected with the balconies of Lima sheds light on what cultural "values" undergird the more readily discernible products and practices. The sequenced exploration of the three Ps (products, practices, and perspectives) challenges a learner to move beyond the proverbial tip of the iceberg in studying culture (Hall, 1976). By examining and understanding the three Ps, a learner investigates the rich and complex underlying (and sometimes not readily discernible) structures.

All syllabi in the Department of Foreign Languages at our home institution specify student learning outcomes that replicate the ACTFL standards. While our mission involves fostering target-culture specific understanding (i.e., knowledge of products, practices, and perspectives from cultures of the Spanish-speaking world for students of Spanish), our curriculum goal is to develop also students' abilities to make connections and comparisons across cultures (e.g., knowledge as a result of comparing Peruvian products to similar products in other cultures in the Spanish-speaking world, in the student's home culture, in the United States, etc.). Simultaneously, our goal is to foster a disposition and ability in students to perform such comparisons in informed and non-judgmental ways.

Below, we introduce additional examples that, like Lima's balconies, can help learners and educators develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to bridge cultural differences in accessible, non-threatening, and appropriate ways.

Pedagogical Transfer and Application

If the pedagogical goal is that all learners are engaged in the classroom, educators must respect that learners form a diverse and diversely prepared and motivated group. The reality that not all learners may have developed to the same level of intercultural competence nor share comparable attitudes toward learning about one's own and other cultures challenges the learner in the classroom as well as the learning facilitator. It seems crucial to provide opportunities for learning that have the potential of engaging all students and that meet them where they are rather than overshoot a learner's aptitude so significantly that premature foreclosure on the learner's part prevents the engagement with the material and/or the ideas. In line with Deardorff's conceptual model, we argue that a student's attitude toward the learning experience is of central interest when designing an assignment.

Bennett's comprehensive list of strategies for support and challenge of a learner at every stage of the continuum is very helpful in this respect (1993). In essence, he con-

ceptualizes that in order to foster development, learners must be both supported and challenged, but in strategic and level-appropriate ways. For example, if a learner at the "minimization" stage tends to downplay the differences in products, practices, and perspectives between his/her own and a foreign culture, we may wish to challenge them to heighten their awareness of their own culture, and to whet their appetite for exploring cultural differences, whereas a learner in the "defensive" stage will be challenged by tasks that ask him/her to identify commonalities between cultures (Bennett, 1993, pp.4-6).

In advancing learners along the road to intercultural competence, it is hence important that an educator facilitates stage-appropriate learning tasks and neither under-challenges nor over-stresses the learners' tolerance for ambiguity and ambivalence. Further, it stands to reason that students have frequent and diverse opportunities for engagement, that these opportunities are skillfully designed and sequenced in such a way that identified learning outcomes combine with effective assessment. The following descriptive summaries of discovery-based assignments are thematically clustered around specific cultural products. They are listed in sequence, ranging from readily accessible information inquiries to more complex and challenging tasks.

1. *Food and Drink*

Novice learners tend to readily engage with an exploration of food and beverages from a foreign culture. Peruvian potatoes (and, more recently, asparagus) have been among the most important and well-known food items, and they surely lend themselves to be studied from a range of disciplinary perspectives (bio-diversity and economic development may provide obvious focal points). On the beverage side, *Pisco* and *Inca Cola* invite inquiry into Peru's social history. Furthermore, a study of *cebiche* and *chicha* will introduce students to learning about the ways in which these items are prepared and when or why they are consumed (*cebiche* is seafood marinated and thus "cooked" in citrus juice, and *chicha* is both an alcoholic and un-fermented type of beverage, variously made from corn, other starches, or berries—and possibly closest to what we know as beer).

In taking these explorations further, learners can be introduced to the products, practices, and perspectives of additional cultures. If comparisons with other Spanish-speaking peoples' uses of these types of food and drink are interesting, a comparison with another foreign counterpart may be even more intriguing: North Germanic culture features a meal called *Matjesfilet* which consists of raw young herring marinated in salt water and thus essentially cooked. *Chicha* begs the comparison with German beer and invites an examination of the complex history of German beer since its first records of before 1000 BCE. Images, recipes, and customs connected to the fares are easily accessible online and lend themselves to learner-driven, discovery-based web quest exercises either in class or as assignments out of class. The specific learning outcomes in these assignments are to examine not only the products, but to begin to understand which cultural practices and perspectives undergird their production and utilization.

2. Textiles

Peruvian textiles offer a glimpse into the country's cultural history and its ethnic as well as economic diversity. Many learners may be familiar with the Peruvian *poncho* and the use of the wool from *Alpaca* camelids, but they may find interest in exploring Peru's textile production further. The study of regional textile production, for example in the Cusco region, will introduce learners to local customs and traditions, such as the Quechua weavings (Threads of Peru, 2011). While the history of Andean fabrics spans 5,000 years (University of Cambridge Museum, 2006), today's weaving cooperatives take advantage of international interest in seeking to preserve ancient processes of spinning, dyeing, looming, and designing textiles.

Depending on the learner group, cross-cultural comparisons may engage learners with customs and traditions in the United States, current issues in the textile industry, etc. To our students in German Studies, we offered, for example, an introduction to textiles prevalent in Peru and compared them to those typical for the Alpine region: *Loden* are woven fabrics dating back to medieval times in Europe (and they are still popular today). Due to an involved process of kneading the material in alkaline or acid liquids, the surface becomes felt-like and is thus very durable. *Loden* fabrics are still used in traditional and outdoor-recreational garments as high-end, locally produced clothing (Martin, 1993).

As in the examples provided above, the student learning outcomes are centered on the exploration of and critical reflection about cultural products, practices, and perspectives. With easily retrievable online resources on the subject, the tasks can be tailored to meet the learners' more specific interests, aptitudes, skills, and knowledge.

3. Films

Films, as cultural products, tend to engage today's learners readily. Peruvian film, or films about Peru, offer opportunities for study and analysis of cultural practices and perspectives at diverse levels of complexity. Claudia Llosa's highly acclaimed feature film *La Teta Asustada* (2009) provides insights into Peru's difficult past as it tells the story of a young woman affected by the trauma of terrorism. Nominated for and awarded with numerous prizes in both the United States and elsewhere, the film merits our attention. In sharing with students visual images of the film's advertisements from Peru, the United States, and Germany, we invited learners to speculate about decisions that marketing personnel had made as they designed and translated the film's title.

Figure 5. La teta asustada

Source: imdb.com, wunderweib.de

In the assignment entitled “Grand Schemes: German-Peruvian Megalomania in Werner Herzog’s films,” the goal is to examine a German filmmaker’s feature films about Peru: *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* (1972) and *Fitzcarraldo* (1982) have become “classics” in post-war German cinematography. The project asks students to unpack the multiple layers of megalomania represented in the films’ narratives and through the director’s ambitious film productions. Filmed entirely on location in Peru, the features can be discussed as creative interpretations of Peru’s colonial history since the Spanish presence is personified in the madness, greed, and obsession of the film titles’ lead characters. The characters of *Aguirre* and *Fitzcarraldo* are both historical figures portrayed by German actor Klaus Kinski. Kinski and director Werner Herzog made several films together and their collaboration itself became infamous due to both men’s compulsive and volatile dispositions. Herzog’s films focus on the grand (and usually futile schemes) of a madman and are themselves rather monumental productions of an unconventional director-actor quest. Hence, it has been argued, that the narratives are allegories of Herzog’s and even Germany’s troubled past and cultural character (Fritze, 1985; Waller, 1981). While Herzog’s films are less accessible to novice learners or a general audience than Llosa’s recent feature, the examples provided illustrate the multiple ways in which cinematic texts form cultural products reflective of cultural practices and perspectives.

4. Terrorist Movements

Another assignment for more advanced learners may involve research into Peru’s recent history connected to the terrorist movement of the “Shining Path.” By understanding the specific ideological, socio-economic, and historical circumstances, students begin to distinguish Peru’s history of terrorist violence from other nations’ terrorist movements, or from present-day terrorist threats. Students review recent scholarship (e.g., Richardson, 2006; Wilkinson, 2001), seeking answers to questions about international connections and culture-specific or culture-general value systems that contribute

to the success or dissolution of such movements. Students may develop a term paper that explores cross-cultural comparisons. A possible topic might be "How Terrorists Differ: A Comparative Analysis of Peru's Shining Path and Germany's Baader-Meinhof Gang." Intended to introduce a reader to the two distinct terrorist movements and their respective histories, the paper could identify and discuss ideological roots and political claims, main figureheads, and organizational dissolution, while pointing up notable parallels and similarities between the movements.

Expanding on the discussion of films mentioned above, an instructor may ask students to compare and contrast Llosa's film *La Teta Asustada* (2009) and Eichinger's recent docu-drama *The Baader-Meinhof Complex* (2008). The critical review of these two films might take into account the films' success and popularity and underlying narrative strategies of romanticizing cultural movements via a rhetoric of sentimentality.

The descriptive summary of thematically clustered assignments provided here is intended to offer the reader ideas and teaching strategies that may merit further exploration and adaptation within their own pedagogical contexts. Perhaps the progression from understanding cultural products, to understanding underlying practices and perspectives may prove useful for fields outside the department of foreign languages?

Findings

Since spring 2007, we have utilized a number of the assignments listed above and in the appendix, and we have progressively deepened our commitment to intercultural competence as an academic and civic goal in the classes we teach. The ACTFL standards have focused our pedagogical practice and the research agenda for this project. Ultimately, our engagement as faculty participants in the annual country study program on Peru justified the time and resources necessary for us to complete this work. In fact, the Year of Peru faculty learning community replicated for us key aspects of what Kramsch described as "third place" experiences as we learned about other faculty's disciplinary contexts. Personally and professionally, we have benefitted immensely from the opportunities provided. Not only have we been challenged intellectually as we explored new directions as scholars and educators, we have been rewarded copiously by the intellectual exchange and collaboration with colleagues from diverse disciplines.⁵⁵

Significantly, we have been rewarded by our students' enthusiasm when we introduced assignments related to the YoP. Invariably, the vast majority of undergraduate students we serve in Spanish, German Studies, and in the survey course "World

⁵⁵ Special thanks must go to our colleagues in Spanish, as they helped facilitate the assignments and provided invaluable input into this project. Ernesto Silva tirelessly master-minded all Year of Peru programming—we could not have done the projects without his leadership and initiative! Neysa Figueroa, Rosana Ayala, and Annette Haenle-Daniels supported so generously the community engagement assignments the students completed—they adjusted their schedules to meet the projects' needs. We would be remiss if we did not mention Dan Paracka's visionary leadership and meticulous follow-through in the process of launching and overseeing yet another year-long country study program—thank you for your herculean efforts!

Languages and Cultures” has welcomed and appreciated the learning opportunities. In a second-semester class of German, students responded enthusiastically to the ice-breaker exercise (see Appendix A), reinforced by an interactive power point lecture. Learners stated that they had not been asked to make such thematic comparisons before: “I had no idea that these seemingly very different countries might have so much in common!”—was a representative comment among the learners. One student expressed his surprise about the rich culture of Peru: “You wouldn’t think that a country like Peru has actually more history than Germany, would you?” These students’ sentiments have been echoed by peers in other classes and semesters. A forth-semester German Studies course assignment prompted the students to design academic posters on the subject of German-Peruvian connections (see Appendix D.1). Several students shared their appreciation for the assignment as it culminated in a physical product and an oral presentation delivered to an audience of German and non-German exhibition visitors. The posters focused on Peruvian cuisine, architecture, and the soccer player Claudio Pizarro. The survey course “World Languages and Cultures” included several of the assignments listed (see Appendix B, C, D.2). As most of them were optional and extra-credit tasks, students self-selected to complete assignments of interest to them and frequently collaborated with peers in the classroom. In informal feedback, students said that they liked having choices in how their final grade came together. “As a Spanish student,” said one service-learning participant, “I was happy to use my Spanish in a class taught in English, and to actually help the museum staff in Lima.” We credit the element of choice with the increased buy-in on the students’ part—which, in turn, resulted in superior work and pride in the products they submitted. The “choice” element is also useful in meeting students at a level of intercultural awareness and preparedness from which they may move to deeper levels of appreciation and understanding.

Conclusion

In this descriptive case study, the balconies of Lima have served as an entry way into a more comprehensive examination of cultural products, practices, and perspectives—both in the effort of understanding Peruvian culture and of furthering intercultural learning and pedagogy. Moreover, the metaphor of Lima’s balconies as “streets in the sky” served as a bridge, connecting our discussion of discipline-based principles with interdisciplinary inquiry.

As the summaries of thematically focused assignments suggest, the development of students’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes can be fostered via diversely complex learning opportunities. By studying cultural products, practices, and perspectives, learners develop more than a deeper appreciation and understanding of foreign cultures. Learners develop skills that can guide them in examining any cultural “product,” and lead them to engage in thoughtful, cross-cultural comparisons. With progressive knowledge and skill development, students develop arguably beneficial dispositions toward explorations of cultural phenomena.

It is our hope that the discipline-based template described in this paper may be deemed transferable to other academic disciplines and contexts. Might the assignments lend themselves for adaptation in courses with a focus on history, gender, or film stud-

ies? If so, the annual country study program will have generated itself valuable institutional bridge building. While interdisciplinary work is not solely dependent on institutionalized programs like Kennesaw State University's Year of Peru, the annual country study initiative has supported an invaluable framework and provided essential resources for our inquiry.

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Appendix A: In-class Icebreaker

What do you know about... Peru?

Group Brainstorm:

Topics:	In Peru	In the U.S.	In Germany
Food and beverages			
Politics and history			
Nature and geography			
People			
Culture and popular culture			

Appendix B: Blog Assignments

These are take-home, open-book, individual, pair, or group assignments. Students list all contributing peers and reference all sources used. If they decide to do team work, they submit one blog per team.

1. Reading response blogs:
- A. Assignment: As part of the course assignments, you are required to read in preparation for class discussion. In response to any readings assigned, please post a written review commentary of approx. 500-600 words prior to class on the day indicated in the syllabus. Your response should include the following:
 - 1) Identify the reading assignment, i.e., provide full bibliographical information in MLA or comparable style format.
 - 2) Summarize key ideas.
 - 3) Comment on emergent themes/motifs/arguments. Does the work fulfill its purpose/support its argument?
 - 4) Include a few salient quotes: What quotes stand out? How do they reflect the text's ideas, the author's style, or your opinion of the reading?
 - 5) How did you, personally, react overall to the reading? How does it compare to your own experience or to another person's experience/expertise?
 - 6) Why did you write on this reading assignment rather than any other?
- B) Assessment rubric "Reading response blogs"

Criteria for reading response	Fully observed (100%)	Mostly observed (50%)	Not observed (0)	Commentary
1) Bibliographical information				
2) Key ideas				
3) Comment on emergent themes/motifs/arguments and fulfillment of purpose/support of argument				
4) Inclusion of salient quotes				
5) Personal response and contextual				

comparison				
6) Reason for writing on this reading assignment				
7) Posted in a timely manner				
Total points subtracted:				
Total points:				

2. Reviews of Year of Peru Events:

A) Assignment:

As part of the course assignments, you are required to attend at least two “Year of...” events of your choice. In response, you post a written review of approx. 500-600 words (ca. two pages) for two events.

These event reviews are to include:

- 1) Name/type of event attended; performing group or individual; date, time, location.
- 2) Factual description/ summary of the main features of the event (what the film or event was about). This section should be detailed—about 125-150 words—to convince me that you attended the event.
- 3) Special features/actors/scenes/passages/poems/images/lines that stood out or that you strongly liked or disliked. Why? What did you learn? Be specific--about 125-150 words.
- 4) Your overall reaction? Quality of experience? Initial interest-level? Post-event interest level? Would you go to another, similar event? Why or why not? Be specific--about 125-150 words.
- 5) What might a fellow student from your own or another culture observe with respect to what you experienced? Be specific--about 125-150 words.

B) Assessment rubric: Reviews of “Year of...” Events”:

Criteria for event review	Fully observed (100%)	Mostly observed (50%)	Not observed (0)	Commentary
1) Event information				
2) Event description/summary—approx. 125-150 words				
3) Special features/actors/scenes/passages/poems/images/lines—approx. 125-150 words				
4) Overall reaction—approx. 125-150 words				
5) Speculation on fellow students’ opinion—approx. 125-150 words				
Posted in a timely manner				
Total points subtracted:				
Total points:				

Appendix C: Midterm and/or Final Exam Prompts

In the midterm and/or final exam, students complete a segment that assesses student learning with respect to the “Year of....” The following assignment was designed for the final (take home) exam.

“KSU’s Year of Peru (2011-2012) (70 P.)

KSU has a tradition of choosing each year to be *The Year of....* Courses and events are coordinated to allow us to examine a specific country from a variety of angles (see: <http://www.kennesaw.edu/globalinstitute/yearofprogram.html>). YOU have been selected as the student representative(s) on the Steering Committee that reviews and assesses the program for the 2011-2012 Year of Peru events. After having attended two events yourself, and upon revisiting the general information provided on the website above, you write a constructive critique for the members of the Steering Committee to help guide their efforts during spring 2012 and in planning the next *Year of...* for 2012-2013.

Please do not summarize here your blog comments submitted on the events you attended, but instead, comment on the overall value of the program’s events for a variety of audiences (e.g., students, faculty, staff, and members of the off-campus community; differently aged and abled individuals; etc.) (20 P.). Please pay particular attention to the specific practices, products, and perspectives that were (and will be) featured in this multi-disciplinary program. What emphases do you see? (25 P.) What, if anything, is “missing” in the program—if it is reflecting KSU’s deliberate intent of representing Peru in a comprehensive and multi-faceted way? Be sure to name specifics, and make constructive suggestions for improvement that can include program marketing and organizational issues beyond content matters (25 P.).

Appendix D: Individual or Collaborative Assignments and Research Projects

1. Poster Exhibition in German Studies course

A. Assignment: Poster project/Poster-Exhibition: German Culture and the KSU Year of Peru

In this class, you complete a poster project as your writing assignment or “composition.” During KSU German Culture week, we exhibit a pictorial and analytical narrative of important events, movements, and/or cultural, political, social, or economic phenomena that have shaped Germany during the past two decades. In your project, you describe and comment on one aspect of German speaking culture as it relates to KSU’s annual “Year of...” celebration—to inform a general audience of interested but not very informed exhibition visitors on a significant link between Germany and Peru.

Choose a topic that meets the requirements and reflects your personal, professional, or academic interests. You may work either on your own or with classmates. The more focused your topic, the more easily you will be able to manage it—especially in a group. You need to provide evidence that you researched this topic via reliable sources (note: Wikipedia is a good start, but not a scholarly reference). You are to participate in one of the groups listed below—it is your job to connect via the course website (or otherwise) with your team mates to ensure completion of the project.

Topics:

1. Soccer
2. Potatoes
3. Beer
4. Asparagus
5. ...

Names:

Guidelines for grammar/style/vocabulary:

- Begin by brainstorming in German on main ideas—and questions to which you seek answers. If you need to, consult a dictionary.
- Then make simple sentences in German that add to the key ideas. Arrange to get a sequence and tie them together. Choose familiar, precise, and accurate constructions.
- Check for capitalization, spelling, subject-verb agreement, correct tenses and conjugations, cases and declensions.
- Let it rest for a day—then re-read and revise.
- Submit a good narrative text in German (200-250 words) in the poster template.
- Find compelling visuals to juxtapose, illustrate the text. Write captions for all visuals (images, maps, graphs, etc.).
- Provide references for all source material not your own (including visuals)—in a standard bibliography format entitled “Quellenverzeichnis” (see poster template on GVV).

B. Assessment rubrics:

1) Poster Exhibition Assessment:

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Ganz gemacht</u> <u>(100%)</u>	<u>Halb gemacht</u> <u>(50%)</u>	<u>Nicht gemacht</u> <u>(0%)</u>
Format: layout of poster and style format for references (10 P.)			
German text: content (quality of discussion, evidence of substantive research, creativity, etc.) (40 P.)			
German text: accuracy (evidence of proofreading, spell check, revisions made) (20 P.)			
Visuals: quality, relevance, etc. of images, maps, graphs, etc. (10 P.)			
English text: content, accuracy, etc. (10 P.)			
All sources are referenced (10 P.)			
TOTAL:			

2) Poster Exhibition Assessment: Peer Review

Which poster is the best?

Criteria:	Poster #1	Poster #2	Poster #3
Poster is attractive (in format, colors, text layout) (1-10 P.)			
Topic is interesting and relevant (1-10 P.)			
Information is clear (title, text, image captions) (1-10 P.)			

2. Community Engagement Projects (CEP):

This is an individual, pair, or group project. It includes a research project and an oral presentation. Students working in teams submit one copy only.

A. Assignment

I. CEP Product/artifact/documentation (100 P.)

Please choose only one of the following options:

CEP Option 1: YoP modules for SPAN 1002

Given the Year of Peru (YoP)'s explicit focus on KSU Gen Ed courses, you develop a concise, learner-appropriate PowerPoint (or moviemaker, animoto, etc.) module for optional inclusion in SPAN 1002 sections (during Fall 2011 and Spring 2012). You'll use Spanish and English to introduce the YoP program in an interesting way to students and instructors in the SPAN 1002 classes, and you'll provide a focused mini-lesson (max. 10 minutes). The assessable product is a mediated mini-lesson and needs to include the following three elements:

1) an introduction of specifically Peruvian products, practices, and perspectives as relevant to the YoP program and SPAN 1002 course content (and a reason for your choices);

2) an introduction of limited words and phrases, which are relevant to and appropriate for both the Peruvian products, practices, perspectives you showcase AND the SPAN 1002 course content;

3) an accompanying handout to buttress the stand-alone product/artifact of your media presentation. The handout will either be the narrator's script (in conjunction with the slides), or it will be a worksheet that students complete in conjunction with the presentation.

Please keep in mind that the end product needs to be extremely user friendly (so that instructors of SPAN 1002 can easily facilitate the mini-lesson on their own).

CEP Option 2: After-school-program teach-ins

You design and facilitate an age-appropriate lesson on Peru for a local after-school program. The one-hour lesson will focus on introducing specific products, practices, and perspectives, engaging children in grades 3-5 via educational and interactive activities. The assessable product is

1) a written lesson plan that identifies an interesting, relevant, and age-appropriate topic; what the children will know/be able to do at the end of the hour; a detailed description of at least three activities through which the children explore the topic; a list of support staff and materials needed and cost involved

2) the actual facilitation of the lesson during after-school program.

CEP Option 3: Translation project

The Huaca Pucllana museum is an archeological site in Lima, Peru—see <http://pucllana.perucultural.org.pe/>. The website and almost all the panels and signage in the museum are in Spanish although the site claims an increasingly international patronage. Students, who are speakers/learners of Spanish, will collaborate with museum staff to translate captions, brochures, or signage into English (or any other language). The assessable student product will be translated webpages, panels, signs, or brochures.

II. CEP Oral presentation (50 P.):

All students present on their chosen CEP assignment in an engaging and interactive format of max. 10 minutes. The presentation needs to include the following elements:

- 1) reason why you chose this option and the focus within
- 2) what you did
- 3) what you learned (both about Peru (and other cultures?) and about the process of completing the assignment)
- 4) what you wish your audience will take away for their use

CEP Assessment:

- 1) CEP Assessment rubric "Product/artifact/documentation" (100 P.)

Criteria for event review: <u>CEP Option 1: YoP modules for SPAN 1002:</u>	Fully observed (100%)	Mostly observed (50%)	Not observed (0%)	Commentary
1) an introduction of specifically Peruvian products, practices, and perspectives				
2) an introduction of limited words and phrases				
3) an accompanying handout				
4) an oral presentation				
Posted in a timely manner				
Total points subtracted:				
Total points:				

Criteria for event review: <u>CEP Option 2: After-school-program teach-ins:</u>	Fully observed (100%)	Mostly observed (50%)	Not observed (0%)	Comments
1) a written lesson plan				
2) the actual facilitation of the lesson				
3) an oral presentation				
Posted in a timely manner				
Total points subtracted:				
Total points:				

Criteria for event review: <u>CEP Option 3: Translation project:</u>	Fully observed (100%)	Mostly observed (50%)	Not observed (0)	Comments
1) panels, etc. in Spanish and English				
2) an oral presentation				
Posted in a timely manner				
Total points subtracted:				
Total points:				

2) CEP Assessment rubric "Oral presentation" (50 P.)

Criteria for event review: <u>Oral presentation:</u>	Fully observed (100%)	Mostly observed (50%)	Not observed (0)	Comments
1) reason why you chose this option and the focus within what you did				
2) what you learned (both about Peru and about the process of completing the assignment)				
3) what you wish your audience will take away for their use				
Posted in a timely manner				
Total points subtracted:				
Total points:				

3. Cultural Research Project:

A. Assignment: Choose one of the following prompts to develop a term paper based on your research:

a) "How Terrorists Differ: A Comparative Analysis of Peru's *Shining Path* and Germany's *Baader-Meinhof* Gang." You will introduce a general audience to the distinct terrorist movements and their respective histories, ideological roots and political claims, main figureheads, and organizational dissolution, while pointing up notable parallels and similarities. A main component will be the critical review of two recent films and their representation of the respective terrorist movements via cinematography. Judging by the success and popularity enjoyed by the

2008 docu-drama *The Baader-Meinhof Complex* (Germany, 2008), this project may appeal to students with an interest in film studies.

b) In the project "Grand Schemes: German-Peruvian Megalomania in Werner Herzog's films," the goal is to examine German filmmaker Werner Herzog and his films *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* (Germany, 1972) and *Fitzcarraldo* (Germany, 1982), which have become classics in post-war cinematography. The project seeks to unpack the multiple layers of megalomania represented in the films' narratives and through Herzog's ambitious film productions. The films can be discussed as interpretations of Peruvian history since the Spanish presence in Peru is personified in the madness, greed, and obsession of the film titles' lead characters. Aguirre and Fitzcarraldo are historical figures portrayed by German actor Klaus Kinski. Kinski and Herzog made several films together and their collaboration itself became infamous due to both men's compulsive and volatile dispositions. Herzog's films focus on the grand (and usually futile schemes) of a madman, but are themselves rather monumental products of an uncompromising director-actor team. Filmed entirely on location in Peru, excerpts from both films will illustrate the multiple layers in which German-Peruvian megalomania manifests itself.

Selected References for Assignment on *Shining Path* and *Baader-Meinhof Gang*:

- Richardson, L. (2006). *What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Enemy, Containing the Threat*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Wilkinson, P. (2001). *Terrorism versus Democracy: The Liberal State Response*. London, England: Frank Cass Publishers.

Selected References for Assignment on Herzog's Films:

- Fritze, R. (1985, December). Werner Herzog's Adaptation of History in *Aguirre, The Wrath of God*. *Film and History*, 15(4), 74-86.
- Herzog, W. (2004). *Eroberung des Nutzlosen, Tagebuch*. Frankfurt, Germany: Fischer-Verlag.
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