

Developing Communicative and Cultural Competences in Portuguese through an Online Collaborative Project

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Abstract

Lessons should provide opportunities to use language in relevant ways. Cultural awareness is essential, as studying a language implies learning its cultural values. ACTFL advocates that cultural understanding is vital to prepare students for the demands of today's globalized world. The U.S. Dept. of Education National Education Technology Plan (2010) claims that learning by technology "prepares them [students] to be more productive members of a globally competitive workforce" (p. xi). In order to promote a communicative experience with a cultural focus, the concepts of collaboration and autonomy were applied in a project where students used a Brazilian website and learned about the importance of a community tradition called *Amigo Secreto*. Students write personal descriptions and interact online. On the last day of class, students describe their secret friends and the class must guess who they are. The objectives are for students to work collaboratively, use authentic language and improve cultural knowledge.

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Literature Review

Language learning is only meaningful when presented and used in real life experiences. As speakers of a language, we understand that language should not be studied with manipulated sentences to facilitate understanding (Cook, 1989) but through authentic material that will expose students to the real language in use (Brandl, 2008). Yet, exposing students to real data is not sufficient, once students must experience communicative situations that

stimulate real interaction in the target language. As pointed out by McCarthy (1991), the controlled language used in the classroom, where hierarchy defines roles and interactions are predictable, will not give students the chance to actually acquire the communicative skills needed for casual conversations, where “everyone will have a part to play in controlling and monitoring the discourse” (p.23). Teachers must provide opportunities for meaningful interactive activities among equals, where students negotiate meaning when completing tasks that require exchange of information. By doing that, students will be immersed in the new language they are learning. Norris, Brown, Hudson & Yoshioka (1998) advocate that learning through social interactions “allows students to work toward a clear goal, share information and opinions, negotiate meaning, get the interlocutor’s help in comprehending input, and receive feedback on their language production” (p.31).

SLA research has, by and large, provided evidence for the importance of interaction when learning a second language. As pointed out by Gass (1997), input and interaction are the basis of language development, as learners scaffold and negotiate meaning with their partners (e.g. clarification request, correction or explicit instruction), while focusing on the message, meaning, and communication. Mackey’s (1999) study on the relationship between interaction and acquisition concluded that participants who engaged in interaction demonstrated better results in second language (L2) question formation. Researchers who take an interactionist view of second language learning advocate that interaction involving meaning negotiation “set(s) the scene for potential learning” (Gass, Mackey and Pica, 1998, p.304). Long (2005) sees tasks as central for the organization and delivery of language instruction, for they improve language attainment by focusing on using the target language to accomplish a specific goal. It is important, however, that task-based language teaching (TBLT) involve tasks based on real-world needs, as pointed out by Long and Norris (2000): “the real-world things people do in everyday life” (p.599). In his study on language learning and uptake, Loewen (2004) found that learners engaged in meaning-focused activities demonstrated high uptake levels (i.e. students’ response to the provision of information about a linguistic form),

which indicates that meaning-focused language activities do push students to produce more accurate linguistic forms, contributing, therefore, to L2 learning.

We understand that communicative activities with specific goals are vital, especially when teaching a less commonly taught language, where students have limited opportunities of practice and the use of the language is often restricted to the classroom. Hence, instructors must encounter ways of providing students with greater opportunities to use the target language in relevant ways, encouraging speaking activities with communicative purposes.

Aside from interaction, another important factor for instructors to consider are the behavioral characteristics of students from the current generation. Raised in a connected world, these students can be characterized by their dependence on the media, ability to multitask and the need for individuality (Rosen, 2010). For these reasons, traditional teaching that focus on language form might not be as effective as having an inductive and autonomous perspective of learning. According to Oblinger and Oblinger (2005), digital age students consider institutions as “so yesterday.” To correspond to this new student profile, activities must require active participation, so students can take the lead while performing collaborative activities. Tapscott (1998) sees the habit of seeking and retrieving information online as an explanation for the preference of a more independent learning style.

Another issue is the paradigm shift that must occur in education to meet the needs of the contemporary world. As stated in the United States Department of Education National Education Technology Plan (NETP) from 2010, learning must engage and empower students, developing the competences they will need to survive in such a competitive environment: “21st-century competencies and such expertise as critical thinking, complex problem solving, collaboration, and multimedia communication should be woven into all content areas” (p. xi). Secondly, cultural awareness has become an essential factor in language teaching, as studying a language implies learning its cultural values. ACTFL

advocates that the promotion of cultural understanding is vital to promote global competence and prepare our students for the demands of today's globalized world. Therefore, language teaching goes beyond developing one's communicative competence. It entails transforming our students into global citizens who care about the issues of the world, such as respect for diversity and cultural differences.

The NETP (2010) introduces a model of learning powered by technology to motivate and inspire today's student profile. More importantly, teaching that is associated with technology helps students become more productive members in today's workforce. However, teachers struggle with finding ways of using technology in order to develop critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration. The NETP (2010) states: "The challenge for our education system is to leverage the learning sciences and modern technology to create engaging, relevant, and personalized learning experiences for all learners that mirror students' daily lives and the reality of their futures" (p. x).

The concept of self-directed learning (Knowles, 1977) proposes an environment where students direct and reflect on their own learning in order to communicate what they consider relevant. Activities are personalized, with a strong respect for individuality. Additionally, situated learning (Lave, 1991) advocates that language is a social process, pushing forward the idea that learners participate in communities of practitioners. The concept of situated learning helps us conclude that the learning occurring in the performance of collaborative activities is more significant to learners of this generation.

In response, self-directed projects can be introduced into language classes to help teachers develop the abilities our students need in a language class, such as interaction and active communication. Moreover, such projects address the competences mentioned in the NETP, especially autonomy and collaboration. When performing a cultural self-directed project, students freely

interact in the target language. Such tasks allow students to develop their communicative and cultural competences at the same time.

The purpose of this paper is to provide instructors with ideas and encourage them to use self-directed collaborative projects online. To do so, this paper will provide an overview of how technology has been applied to language teaching, present the positive aspects of online collaborative activities and describe a project carried out in an undergraduate Elementary Portuguese as a Foreign Language class. Our objective is to determine whether online collaborative projects can improve students' language production, communicative competence, and cultural knowledge.

2. Educational technology in foreign language teaching

Looking at the history of foreign language teaching and the implementation of technology, it is evident that the use of technology as a teaching tool has been present in the lives of language teachers for a long time (e.g. the use of appliances like the television, the VCR, DVD player, audio equipment, computers, among others that might not be in use any longer).

In foreign language teaching, where the language learned was not the official language of the country where students studied it, the use of technological resources were of primary importance because the language taught in the classroom could be far distant from the real language in use. Students were mostly exposed to manipulated sentences from the textbook; therefore, exercises in the classroom may not resemble real speech. Gilmore's (2004) analysis of pre-2000 books has shown that dialogues in language textbooks differed considerably "from their authentic equivalents across a range of discourse features" (p.363). In the light of this, foreign language teachers were strongly encouraged to make use of additional materials such as movies, songs, and television shows to provide students with the opportunity of establishing closer contact with the language used by native speakers.

The use of additional material is vital for teachers of critical languages, once students tend to have limited or no other form of exposure to that language. Hence, LCTL instructors have always struggled with regards to finding teaching materials. For Jordan and Walton (1987), it was a problem of quantity and quality. “For many of the languages there are few materials to choose from, and those that are available tend to be of poor quality.” (p. 122)

During the 1990s, stand-alone software, also known as computer-assisted language learning (CALL) programs, became very popular in language teaching. CALL programs focused on listening and grammar practice that would not require the presence or assistance of an instructor. On the other hand, these programs were limited in terms of interactivity and students could only practice content or form. Despite limitations, CALL programs represented a huge step forward in learning autonomy (Warschauer, 2000). *Triple Play Plus!* is an example of CALL software available for Spanish, French, German, English, Hebrew, Japanese, and Italian learners. It contained activities for reading practice, aural comprehension, and speaking practice. Although speaking practice was part of skills, it focused pronunciation of segmentals as isolated sounds in words using Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR). Essentially, the software used drill-and-practice vocabulary exercises and games related to verb tenses, prepositions, and other subjects.

With the Digital Age, new paradigms were created. Web 2.0 and social media have brought interaction to internet capabilities. This has caused a great shift in educational priorities. The role of teachers today is to form citizens able to live in today’s society by developing students’ critical thinking and teaching them to become curious observers, creators, and users of information. The NETP (2010) calls attention to how technology has become part of the routine of professionals from various fields, considering multimedia communication to be another paramount 21st-century competence.

As mentioned earlier, language teachers have an additional challenge: teaching students to communicate effectively using a foreign language. To achieve this goal, students need to understand

the cultural context of the language of study and know how this language behaves in a real environment with native and nonnative speakers. Intercultural competence and teamwork are fundamental in the Information Age. Collaborative work is one of the most important skills that this generation is going to need in life - it is already the norm in the work place. Indeed, collaborative working is not cheating - it is the future (Knight & Steed, 2012, p. 30).

Finally, educational technology meets the needs of the new paradigm presented in the beginning of this paper, as it helps develop crucial skills such as logical deduction and freedom of creation, providing the educator the opportunity to help students develop work skills:

We are at a very exciting time in education, for (at long last) new technologies are transforming learning. Increasingly, learning is going to be collaborative, mobile and its outcomes will take many forms. For students, learning will be characterised by greater personalisation, creativity and engagement . . . The role of the teacher will continue to evolve away from the lecturer-at-the-front towards the mentor alongside. Teachers now have at their disposal an even greater range of resources, not only to support them in their presentation of information, but also to facilitate learning. (Knight & Steed, 2012, p. 33)

In support of facilitated language learning, there are several educational software programs that complement learning in the classroom while boosting collaboration and personalization. Social media is a great example of personalized social interaction. According to Ortega (2009), many educators use social media to assist in the literacy process in the second language: “the use of social networks can foster second language and literacy learning that is remarkably rich in social terms” (p. 248).

2.1 How Online Collaborative Activities Assist Language Learning

When using online collaborative activities, teachers are able to:

- Build a sense of community among students because the activities have strong social appeal, requiring collaboration and teamwork;
- Promote the use of technology and teach terms related to the Internet;
- Expose students to authentic language since the activities can be conducted on actual websites used by speakers of the target language (examples will be provided in the outline of the activity);
- Reflect on cultural aspects, as teachers can select authentic websites, developing students' intercultural competence.

In addition, students will be exposed to all the tangible aspects of the language (syntax, phonology, lexis, sociolinguistics and cultural aspects) by participating in these activities.

However, making use of online collaborative projects requires a lot of dedication from the teacher, as these projects are self-directed. Therefore, such projects demand constant monitoring and feedback. Many teachers struggle to find ideas for projects that would also develop students' cultural awareness of the target language, especially at the elementary level.

This paper will describe a collaborative project carried out in an undergraduate Elementary Portuguese as a Foreign Language class, where students learned the importance of *Amigo Secreto* in Brazil by using an authentic Brazilian website.

2.2 The importance of *Amigo Secreto* in Brazil

In Brazil, *Amigo Secreto* (secret friend) is a very popular community tradition in which members of a community are randomly assigned a person to whom they give a gift. Although the

game is similar to *Secret Santa* in the sense that people are assigned anonymously, the ritual has considerable differences with regards to how much people interact during the activity. Brazilians are accustomed to participating in this activity at least three times per year: at their jobs and with their family during Christmas, and at school at the end of each term. Usually, people participate in several games simultaneously in every community they are part of (e.g. classmates, workmates, friends, and among family members). Nowadays, people use websites that help organize the game. In the past, people would have to draw names numerous times because at least one participant would get his/her own name. There were also people who lost the slip of paper with their secret friend's name or just could not remember who their assigned secret friend was. The use of websites has made the activity easier. Not only do websites help by assigning secret friends automatically, but they also allow communication among participants: they can create their wish list online, write about their preferences, and communicate with their secret friend online as an incognito friend. *Amigo Secreto* websites make great language teaching tools for their relevance to native speakers of Portuguese.

2.3 How is the *Amigo Secreto* activity useful?

Amigo Secreto offers several advantages for language instructors. First, it promotes natural collaboration among students, once they become secret friends of one another. Students post their profile and tell the community about their preferences using the target language. Students exchange information by sending incognito messages to their secret friends in order to learn more about their likes and possibilities for presents.

Second, it contains real language as it is a real website used by speakers of the target language. In other words, students are provided with real language in use at all times. The website also provides a list of items from an online store similar to *Amazon.com*. Products are ranked according to the number of clicks they receive from users. Therefore, students have an opportunity to see what Brazilians like to purchase, and can compare this to their own reality.

Third, students will learn and review vocabulary related to objects, colors, brands, local currency, and vocabulary related to informatics (e.g., click here, register, do not reply to this e-mail). In other words, students learn as they navigate the website and play the game.

Fourth, it promotes vocabulary investigation since students apply the vocabulary stated above according to their own reality. Students as participants manipulate the system in an active way while investigating vocabulary in order to write sentences that relate to their lives. They also investigate the vocabulary used by their classmates in order to fully understand their preferences.

Fifth, it is also a cultural activity. Students reflect on the importance of this game for Brazilian communities and develop an understanding of how social interaction is valued in Brazilian culture. By navigating the website, students learn about Brazilians' preferences for gifts, the cost of some specific items, how advertisement is done and how language is used to promote products on the website. The game, therefore, promotes an intercultural reflection. As an extension, teachers can promote a debate on the differences encountered and ask students to list everything they found different and unusual in order to assess their cultural impressions.

Finally, instructors can easily adapt this activity to their classroom setting. Promoting the use of real life language is a challenge, and this activity allows foreign language instructors to overcome the difficulty of teaching both language and cultural aspects to beginners.

2.4 Outline of the activity

Amigo Secreto is a cultural, blended learning activity, i.e., part of it is conducted in an online environment. Therefore, the teacher should highlight its cultural purpose and monitor students closely in the online environment by following the step-by-step process provided below.

- Step 1: Provide cultural awareness regarding the importance of *Amigo Secreto* as a community tradition. Emphasize that it does not only occur during Christmas time, but throughout the year by different groups of people such as classmates, colleagues, family members, and others. Since it is not only done at Christmas, its name in Portuguese is “secret friend”. In order to raise cultural awareness, the instructor might show pictures of different communities participating in this game, including celebrities.
- Step 2: The teacher explains how the game works and why Brazilian people do it online, which is easier, more organized, and fun. By doing it online, the website randomly assigns their secret friends on a specific date to be decided by the group. Until the designated date, participants provide a short description on the page and create a wish list. Besides that, the website enables anonymous communication among participants, that is, they can freely communicate incognito, without jeopardizing the game.
- Step 3: The teacher presents the website (See Appendix A). Then, the teacher sends online invitations to all students and guides them throughout the process of registration (See Appendix B) and how to choose present options on the website (See Appendix C). It is not necessary to do so in class; however, the instructor must monitor students closely by sending reminders and responding to questions they send online.
- Step 4: Students complete their registration on the website, log in, choose presents from a very famous Brazilian website similar to *Amazon.com* called *Submarino.com.br*, and write a brief description of themselves stating things they like and possibilities of gifts that might not appear on the website. Other students can read and comment as well. All information shared must be written in the target language. (See Appendix D)
- Step 5: The website assigns secret friends automatically on a specific date selected by the instructor. Students will

receive an e-mail from the website in the target language stating who their secret friend is (See Appendix E). They will also receive their secret friends' wish lists.

- Step 6: On a date selected by the group, students will meet in class to exchange gifts. They must describe their secret friend and the class will try to guess who that student is. Finally, students will exchange gifts.

There are also other website options for the same purpose in different languages, such as *www.elfster.com* for English, *www.sorteoamigosecreto.com* for Spanish and *www.wichtelwunder.de* for German. Note that this activity might also be conducted using any website that allows instructors to create an online group with the whole class, such as *Facebook.com*, *Yahoo.com* and *Google Plus*. On these websites, the teacher can create a closed group, where students can communicate among themselves. Students will be able to post preferences, send questions, and even post pictures of products they want for a gift. It is important to mention that not all institutions will allow the use of public sites as some universities have rules concerning students' personal information. In that case, instructors can use Web 2.0 tools, such as Blackboard or Canvas. Instructors can start a discussion group on those platforms and students can exchange messages among themselves. Although it would not provide students with the same level of immersion on a real website, it still provides students with an opportunity to exchange information and communicate in the target language in an online environment. Since students will not be able to access a list of suggestions for gifts, the instructor can provide a list of the most purchased products or refer students to an online store in the target language. The goal is to have students search and see which products are popular in that specific country.

3.

Methodology

The data analysis was qualitative. Prior to administration of the project, frequent language mistakes were compiled by verifying the repeated errors encountered on students' compositions (e.g. verb conjugation in the present tense, gender and number agreement in

nouns and adjectives). The vocabulary used for personal and physical description was also verified.

Students' performances during the project were observed in a two-step process. The online moment of the activity was composed of written production from each student eliciting a personal description and preferences for presents. Students could comment or ask questions anonymously, but were not obliged to do so. All questions and comments were analyzed. The second was a face-to-face oral production moment, where students exchanged gifts and introduced their secret friends to the classroom. The class was recorded and the content was transcribed. Production from both moments was compared to the error compilation made previously in order to verify whether each moment of the activity had an effect on language production.

3.1 Participants

The participants in this project were 19 undergraduate students enrolled in Elementary Portuguese. 16 students were American and three students were from different countries: One student from Kenya and the two others from Spanish speaking countries. From the whole group, one student had taken a few private lessons of Portuguese before enrolling in the class.

3.2 Results

In terms of vocabulary, it was noticed that students retrieved vocabulary from lessons and also searched for words and expressions that were meaningful to them.

- (1) Eu gosto de comer. Eu quero ganhar um cartão de presente para um restaurante.
[I like eating. I want to get a gift card from a restaurant.]
- (2) Eu quero um cachecol de duas voltas com flores.
[I want a floral infinity scarf.]

During the face-to-face moment, students also provided the class with physical descriptions, where all students dealt with

unpredicted words for clothing and colors. In terms of grammar, examples also show correct gender and number for nouns and adjectives.

- (3) Ela é muito bonita, muita simpática e sempre está feliz. Ela tem botas vermelhas e tem cabelo castanho. Quem é? [She is very pretty, very nice and is always happy. She has red boots and brown hair. Who is she?]
- (4) Meu amigo secreto é muito simpático e gosta muito de chocolate. Tem 20, é alto e tem cabelo curto. [My secret friend is very nice and likes chocolate a lot. He is 20, he is tall and has short hair.]
- (5) Minha amiga secreta é muita, muito otimista, muito criativa, muito inteligente. Ela tem cabelo preto. Ela, hum, é de meia estatura, ela é muito bonita. Quem é ela? [My secret friend is very optimistic, very creative, very intelligent. She has black hair. She is, um, of medium height, she is very pretty. Who is she?]

On both written and spoken production, most students used correct subject-verb agreement for all verbs. Also, students used the correct syntactic structure for the verb “gostar” (to like), which is different from English.

- (6) Eu gosto de starbucks, Panera e Barnes & Nobel. [I like starbucks, Panera and Barnes & Nobel.]
- (7) Eu gosto de tomar café de Starbucks. [I like drinking coffee from Starbucks.]

During the written production moment on the online environment, two students used the wrong syntactic structure for the verb “querer”. Both also used the feminine form of number one, which was also incorrect.

- (8) Meu nome é Tim e eu quero de ganhar uma cartão de Blue State. [My name is Tim and I want to get a card from Blue State.]
- (9) Eu quero de ganhar uma cartão de Starbucks. [I want to get a card from Starbucks.]

While some students were very concise, some others wrote their description in more detail or attempted to use new verb forms, such as the conditional tense.

- (10) Eu quero de ganhar uma cartão de Starbucks.
[I want to get a card from Starbucks.]

3.3 Discussion

The findings of this paper suggest that not only did students revise what they learned about personal and physical description, but they also dealt with unexpected vocabulary while describing what their friends are wearing, as we can see in (1), (2), and (3).

During the activity students learned in an active way, acquiring a surprising capacity to investigate and become more independent. This is because they needed to search for vocabulary that is meaningful to them, as we could see in (1), (6) and (7). Example (2) shows that students also learned new vocabulary from their peers through their gift requests.

Students' production improved in grammatical terms. As a result of negotiation, students who struggled started writing them correctly. For instance, the verb "gostar" (to like) is followed by a preposition, and most students used the verb correctly in their description, as we noticed in examples (6) and (7). Using the correct structure could be a consequence of reading other students' posts, noticing how they used the verb, and adapting their own response.

Examples (8) and (9) indicate that students can also rely on their friends attempts and make similar mistakes. Interaction among students in self-directed projects can also have a negative impact on language production. It is important to address minor mistakes in a separate moment, once the activity focus is on meaning.

Some students' examples contained more information about themselves (i.e. nationality, profession, and other information they had studied during the semester), and grammatical attempts that had not yet being introduced, such as the conditional verb tense in (10).

We could conclude that some students were highly motivated by the opportunity of practicing the language using new vocabulary and grammatical forms.

The positive effect could also be verified on the quality of learners' immediate production while exchanging gifts and describing their secret friends. As shown in (3), (4), and (5), students' utterances contained the correct use of verb forms, as well retrieved and new vocabulary.

The activity also demonstrated great interpersonal impact. Students read all the postings in order to guess the secret friends being described in class. As a result, they learned each other's preferences and what they had in common. Their participation on the *Facebook* closed group improved in social terms, as students remained communicating with one another in special occasions (i.e. birthdays, Christmas) using the target language, even after the term had finished. Students felt more engaged in class and interested in using Portuguese online.

Lastly, students gain exposure to cultural aspects while participating in the activity. Some students asked questions or posted comments related to what they researched and yet could not quite understand (e.g.: books, covers of CDs and DVDs, food or objects that belong to that country). Others were impressed by how costly some American products were and how book title translations had lost meaning. They became curious about some aspects of the Brazilian culture by relating what they had seen to their own reality. We can see that this project allows students to develop both their discursive and intercultural competences in an active way.

Given the limited number of participants in this study, it is not possible to make generalizations; however, the results have shown that their improvement in terms of vocabulary and sentence structure was a consequence of meaningful contact in the online environment.

Several participants referred to the role of online participation and how it contributed to increasing tolerance and patience. The classroom environment can require interaction, but the online environment is not as formal and intimidating, so they had more time to reflect on the language and felt more at ease when writing and asking questions.

Although the findings of this paper are not generalizable, they do highlight cultural, social, and linguistic benefits that should be investigated on a larger scale in future research.

4. Conclusion

Findings of this project are aligned with Mackey's (1999) study on task-based interaction and second language development of ESL learners, which concluded that there is a link between interaction and grammatical development. *Amigo Secreto* is a task-based activity that promotes authentic interaction, resulting in improvement of vocabulary and sentence structure. As stated by Long (2005), activities with real-world goals contribute to language attainment, as students use language in order to complete the task given. The results from this paper also further reinforce Loewen's (2004) conclusion that meaning-focused activities have students produce more accurate language.

Our conclusions are strongly associated to the concepts of situated learning (Lave, 1991) and self-directed learning (Knowles, 1977), as we noticed that students were socially involved and directed themselves when communicating online. Collaborative activities supported by technology such as *Amigo Secreto* boost students' interaction in an online environment, taking language practice outside of the classroom. Language students learn how to investigate vocabulary and use it by observing how it is placed within authentic situations on the website. Students become more sensitive to group work, learning about the importance of collaboration in order to reach a goal. Additionally, collaborative activities help build a sense of community, where students interact more closely and learn from their

peers. They also learn each other's names, preferences, and competencies.

The use of technology is extremely relevant, as knowing how to use such tools is vital in our society. Also, being exposed to vocabulary related to informatics is both beneficial and relevant, as those words have become core global vocabulary due to the expansion of technology in the workforce and the effects of social media in people's lives. It is recommended that students change their language setting on their devices, increasing their daily contact with the target language.

Furthermore, collaborative activities in an online environment can help teachers achieve the stated goals in the NETP of engaging and empowering students through technology: "We need to provide online and blended learning experiences that are more participatory and personalized and that embody best practices for engaging all students" (NETP, 2010, p. xix).

Promoting language activities that trigger students' autonomy when interacting with their peers is challenging for the teacher. Students usually ask for help correcting language use, pronunciation, and translations, which results in passive learning. Students might learn from such a strategy, but often, students tend to forget the explanation the teacher has provided and make the same mistake or ask the same question again. When students are part of that process (e.g., search for a word or examples to produce something they need, and later confirm their assumption(s) by asking the teacher or checking other sources), the information becomes meaningful and relevant. Therefore, there is a greater chance of internalizing the new word or phrase. Having interaction through online collaborative activities places the instructor in the monitor role, so students tend to manipulate the target language more freely and actively in order to communicate with their peers. Activities in this environment help promote hands-on experience and active reflection on that country's customs, expanding their cultural awareness. In conclusion, these activities are strongly related to the competencies students must develop in order to become global citizens who can take the lead in

projects and work collaboratively, respecting diversity and cultural differences.

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Appendix

Appendix A: *Amigo Secreto*'s main page.

AMIGO SECRETO

E-mail: Senha: Entrar

Manter-me logado Esqueceu sua senha?

Recomendar 67 mil

Cadastre-se - É grátis

Nome:

Email:

Confirmar Email:

Senha:

Sexo:

Data de nascimento:

Concordo com o [termo de adesão](#)

Cadastrar

Não conseguiu se cadastrar? Tente novamente [clicando aqui](#)

Entenda como funciona Vitrine de Presentes

Crie seu grupo e convide o pessoal
O site cuida da brincadeira
Todos se divertem enviando mensagens

Appendix B: Registration page.

Cadastro
Informe apenas mais alguns dados para começar a brincar

Nome:

Email:

Confirmar Email:

Senha:

Sexo:

Data de nascimento:

CEP (apenas numeros):

Estado:

Cidade:

Endereço:

Número:

Appendix C: Section where students can add gifts to their wish lists.

The screenshot shows a user profile for Vanessa Cunha. The interface includes a search bar, a 'Seções' dropdown menu currently set to 'Livros', and a 'Top 50' section. Three books are featured with their prices and a 'Quero ganhar' (I want to win) button:

- Book 1:** O Inferno de Gabriel, R\$ 39,90*
- Book 2:** Livro - Como Dizer Tudo / Como Escrever Tudo em Inglês: Fale e Escreva a Coisa Certa em Inglês, R\$ 29,90*
- Book 3:** Livro - A Batalha do Apocalipse: Da Queda dos Anjos ao Crapúsculo do Titulo, R\$ 21,90*

Appendix D: Students write descriptions and preferences on the target language. Other students can leave anonymous comments or questions.

The screenshot displays a thread of four student comments:

- Tim Lorek:** Meu nome é Tim e eu quero de ganhar uma cartão de Blue State ou Barnes & Noble. Obrigado! (02/12/2013 12:20h)
- Madeline Skrocki:** Oi classe! Meu nome é Madeline! Eu gosto de starbucks, panera, e Barnes & Nobel. Eu quero de ganhar uma cartão de starbucks, panera, ou Barnes & Nobel! Obrigado! (01/12/2013 17:14h)
- Tom oneill:** Oi classe! Meu nome é Tom e eu sou estudante. Eu gosto de comer. Eu quero ganhar um cartão de presente para um restaurante. Obrigado! (01/12/2013 05:16h)
- Jihad W:** Oi classe! Meu nome é Jihad! Eu gosto de tomar café de Starbuckss. Eu gostaria de ganhar uma cartão de Starbucks! Obrigado! (30/11/2013 17:06h)

Appendix E: Students receive an e-mail informing who their secret friend is and link to his/her wish list on the website.



