Developing Spanish oral Skills Through Argumentative Activities Focused on the Arhuaco Culture *

Desarrollo de destrezas orales en español a través de actividades argumentativas enfocadas en la cultura arhuaco

* Discussion Article

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Abstract

This article describes the implementation of argumentative activities focused on the Arhuaco Culture, and its effect on senior highschooler's oral skills. We carried out a qualitative study and implemented one action research cycle: the action phase consisted of a pedagogical intervention of 3 applications (4 class periods each one). During the observation phase, we collected data, and for the reflection phase, we analyzed such data. Triangulation and data reduction allowed us to identify patterns and propose two categories of analysis as initial findings. We concluded that students knew few argumentative methods, but by dealing with topics in an interactive way or topics that were interesting to students, they told many arguments to defend their ideas. The intercultural lessons focused on the Arhuaco culture improved students' argumentative skills since they could be contextualized to back up some of their ideas. The intervention also allowed the students to see Colombia as a multicultural country.

Keywords: pedagogical intervention, action research, senior high schoolers, oral argumentative skills, Arhuaco Culture.

Resumen

Este artículo describe la implementación de actividades argumentativas enfocadas en la Cultura Arhuaco, y su efecto en las habilidades orales de estudiantes de educación media. Llevamos a cabo un estudio cualitativo e implementamos un ciclo de investigación-acción: la fase de acción consistió en una intervención pedagógica de 3 aplicaciones (4 períodos de clase cada una). Durante la fase de observación, recolectamos datos, y para la fase de reflexión, analizamos dichos datos. La triangulación y reducción de datos nos permitió identificar patrones y proponer dos categorías de análisis como hallazgos iniciales. Concluimos que los estudiantes conocían pocos métodos argumentativos, pero al tratar temas de forma interactiva o temas que eran de interés para ellos, exponían muchos argumentos para defender sus ideas. Las lecciones interculturales enfocadas en la cultura Arhuaco mejoraron las habilidades argumentativas de los estudiantes ya que podían contextualizarse para respaldar algunas de sus ideas. La intervención también permitió a los estudiantes ver a Colombia como un país multicultural.

Palabras clave: intervención pedagógica, investigación-acción, estudiantes de educación media, destreza argumentativa oral, Cultura Arhuaco.

Introduction

In this article, we describe the implementation of argumentative activities in the Spanish classes of a group of senior high schoolers. We explain the problem and how it arose. Additionally, we present the theoretical constructs in light of different authors. The following sections cover the research design, the pedagogical intervention and finally the findings and conclusions. From an intercultural stance to education, we set out to support oral argumentative skills with argumentative activities based on the Arhuaco Culture as a way to encourage students' argumentation. According to the Ministry of Education (2006), as teachers, we need to ensure that students can use their first language within a communicative context. Hence, our purpose was to support the students' oral, and argumentation and the Arhuaco culture, located in la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, was the community used to inspire the students.

At first, our intention was to implement activities based on the Arhuaco culture to familiarize the students with issues related to this community, and to support the students' abilities to infer and discuss these issues and raise awareness of Arhuaco culture as an indigenous community that has important values at its roots. According to Mincultura, our Older brothers aid in preserving the world, take care of the cosmic cycle so that it develops properly (2010), meaning that as we are not allowed to intervene in this culture, we can learn from it. However, we can share some factors in our culture to keep them in our minds as a part of the indigenous people who have preserved our roots of language heritage. Therefore, we intended to report the outcomes of the senior highschooler's argumentative oral skills and how or if they acquired new insights about the Arhuaco culture.

Statement of the Problem

The problem we decided to investigate was the oral skills in Spanish, particularly the argumentation skills, of senior high schoolers. We carried out a needs analysis through a survey, and by revising literature on argumentation. We collected answers from two Spanish teachers of senior high schoolers, one from a rural public school

in a small town in Cundinamarca and the other from a public school in Bogotá. According to their answers, these students often demonstrated weaknesses in Spanish speaking skills, especially in argumentation. Due to their low level of oral ability in Spanish, particularly when doing public speech, and their lack of appropriate vocabulary, students were unable to develop activities that demanded the skill of argumentation without the constant support of their teacher.

Moreover, the Spanish syllabus may not have involved enough activities that promote oral skills, which could have been one of the reasons why students displayed poor argumentative skills. As a result, students seemed reluctant to perform tasks and tended to avoid activities related to public speech, according to the surveyed teachers. In summary, the development of their learning was affected by the lack of constant practice in the classroom, which hindered the improvement of this skill.

In addition to the survey, we revised some literature about argumentation in Colombia. On the one hand, Calderón (2009) states, "the role of argumentation in the curriculum privileged the development of abilities but it was not explicit the lack of fostering a specific ability related to argumentation as a unique aspect that the students should develop (p. 63) (Our translation). As a result, the students have weak oral skills due to the absence of specific abilities that the curriculum did not take into account when applying argumentation skills at schools. On the other hand, the rationale for our pedagogical intervention included various benefits for the students. First, The Arhuaco people are part of Colombian culture; however, they might not be recognized as the indigenous people that have preserved our Colombian roots. Therefore, we wanted to generate awareness of the Arhuaco culture and the role they have played in Colombia, to reach this objective through activities that enhance understanding of this indigenous culture, and to fulfill the requirements of the Ministry of Education, which states that today the ethno

education allows collective reflection and construction and so it brings in new expectations (1998).

Besides, in Colombia, the indigenous communities are often portrayed in many textbooks by different publishing houses in an archaic, obsolete, and even pejorative way. In this regard, Ardila (2010) states, "It can be added that while indigenous peoples, in general, value their languages, that assessment is not always reflected in the users" (p.34). That is why we tried to show a different conception of Arhuaco culture. Therefore, we could show the students issues concerning this indigenous community, to know a little bit about them and build a better understanding of the context and background of "the other."

Second, the Arhuaco culture is stable, which means they have not lost their roots and they have kept a strong belief in their world views such as Kakü Serankua (one of the fathers), songs, and other features of their culture. In this respect, Trujillo et al. (2018) mention, "The Arhuaco community is a village located in Sierra Nevada de Santa Martha and we found some traditional activities that have been perpetuated throughout the years" (p.49) (our translation). Hence, this culture is suitable to inspire the students. Therefore, when addressing issues from this culture, we could encourage students to use different argumentative skills and to apply them when defending their views and persuading others. Third, allowing active participation in argumentative oral activities helped students to develop linguistic competence, that is the language and its features by developing speaking skills with the practice. Finally, we were concerned about the multicultural country we live in and the lack of recognition of this feature. Therefore, we wanted to foster respect for this culture while improving the argumentative abilities of the students.

Research Questions and Objectives

The main research question that guided our study was "What is the effect of implementing argumentative activities focused on the Arhuaco culture on the oral

argumentative Skills of a group of senior high schoolers?" In addition, the specific question included, "How do students react towards the Arhuaco Culture?"

Regarding the main research objective, we decided to describe the Spanish oral argumentative Skills in a group of senior high schoolers during the implementation of argumentative activities. With respect to the specific research objective, this included: to describe students' attitudes towards the Arhuaco culture.

Theoretical Framework

Senior high schoolers are students in their final years of school. For most of these students, the next phase of their journey will be full of interesting and exciting opportunities. Generally, they will discover new passions and develop new skills and knowledge. But this transition can sometimes be challenging in terms of the competences they actually have and the ones they are supposed to have developed. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented some challenges for their school processes, particularly in the oral skills they need to perform in the next phase of their lives, be it as a college student or as a worker. Following, we present the main constructs of the theoretical framework including oral argumentative skills and interculturality.

Oral Argumentative Skills

Some decades ago, the curriculum of Spanish in Colombia did not include argumentation; however, the cognitive-linguistic skills were key. At first, the curriculum of Spanish looked for fostering the proper use of the language; as Calderon (2009) mentions, "in 1960 the Spanish curriculum in Colombia contained linguistics factors, such as phonetics, phonology, morphosyntax, and semantics, which were only focused on the correct use of the language" (p. 61) (our translation). As a result, it showed a gap in the argumentative competence. However, in 1984 the semantic-communicative approach was established through a decree to foster the communicative proficiency in the Ministry of Education (Decree 1002, 1984). Thus,

having communication as a learning approach, the students started learning not only how to interpret meanings but also how to disseminate their ideas, theories, and hypotheses.

In today's reality, if learners are not challenged to make decisions, argue, and debate, they will never improve the skills to participate appropriately in the communicative social needs. Nowadays, argumentation is central in education in Colombia as it is essential for fostering the students' higher order skills and boosting their ability to communicate their thoughts. In regard to this topic, Nuñez and Tellez (2012, p.17) assert that "developing students' argumentative competence will enable them to become active, reflective and critical agents in the development of their societies". Therefore, argumentation is essential to educate students not only as citizens but also as human beings that are able to explore different backgrounds.

Further, argumentation at school needs to be taught and included in the curriculum to have the students practicing all their knowledge. Hence, when having the students involved in rhetorical activities, they will be able to discuss with certainty and make assumptions, create hypotheses and theories with confidence. For that reason, it is important to implement rhetorical activities to build a pedagogical environment where students develop their values and learn how to interact with other cultures and argue with respect and confidence.

Finally, argumentation is essential in education because it favors the students when responding and creating new meanings; thus, it has been taught throughout schools and helped senior high schoolers to better communicate their ideas, thoughts, and theories. As Calderon (2009) states, "the curricular structure of this period favored ´communicative skill´ as a determining category of learning" (p. 63) (our translation). As mentioned, it is essential to build a curriculum that promotes the argumentative aspect. Therefore, since the curriculum was established in Spanish and Literature classes for students between 5th and 11th grades; they have been acquainted with the argumentative approach, which has contributed to their development as independent thinkers.

Interculturality

Interculturality is an approach that allows students to seize opportunities in diversity programs, offers the possibility to interact with diverse cultures, and acknowledges educational strategies to teach native languages. In our pedagogical intervention, the second characteristic applies. Moreover, intercultural learning establishes a more creative and healthy learning environment where students learn to accept and respect different cultures. The study by Arias et al (2017), proposes ideas on how to implement and establish steps to have the students learn, read, and write effectively and funnily while learning intercultural knowledge. Therefore, the students must be involved with materials that contribute and support their social development and allow for increasing their perspectives about the world we are living in. In addition, intercultural teaching is effective in establishing inclusive classrooms; that is to say, that the students become aware that they are working with students and other teachers from different cultural backgrounds. And in our pedagogical intervention, with issues related to an important indigenous community in our country. As Grosjean and Miller (1994) express, everybody is multicultural as we belong to different cultural networks even though we may or may not be in contact with each other.

Research Design

We carried out a qualitative study, which requires collecting and analyzing non-numerical data like text, video, or audio. Thus, this data is used to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. Indeed, this type of research was useful to us to gather in-depth insights into the problem we wanted to investigate. Consequently, the research design we opted for was action research. As Burns (2009) mentions, "Action research is the combination and interaction of two modes of activity: Action, and research. The Action is located within the ongoing social processes of societal contexts, whether classrooms, schools, or whole organizations. It typically involves developments and interventions into those processes to bring about improvement and change" (p, 290). Thereupon, the action research design allowed us to organize

information to understand social behavior, and to collect proper information to identify the process to resolve the problem studied. Moreover, Mettetal (2002) states, "Classroom Action Research is a method of finding out what works best in your classroom so that you can improve student learning" (p.1). Therefore, the action research design was suitable for our pedagogical interventions as it not only provided us with a wide range of instruments to collect the information but also because it allowed us to be close to the participants. Action research was practical for us as preservice teachers because as Phillips and Carr (2015) argue, "The process of learning about and doing action research enables preservice teachers to grow a strong and trustworthy professional voice to engage students, parents, and colleagues in critical conversation for change" (p.12). We finished one action research cycle. First, the action phase of the cycle involved a pedagogical intervention of 3 applications (4 hours each one) because our pedagogical intervention started very close to the end of the 2021 school year when new restrictions for COVID 19 were in place. Second, during the observation phase, we collected data; and for the reflection phase, we analyzed it. Finally, we revised our plan again so that we could start a new cycle; however, we were not given the permission to go back to the school and continue with the second cycle.

Research Setting and Participants

The setting was a public school located in downtown Bogota. The participants were 21 15 to 17 year- old senior high schoolers, 10 female and 11 male students, who came from varied socio-economic strata and lived in different areas of the city. The classroom was spacious; it had a wallboard, a small tv, and other necessary tools for their learning environment. The group's level of proficiency in Spanish was diverse. When we first met them, we observed that most of them were not fully involved in their lesson and some showed shyness and lack of participation in the activities proposed by the teacher we were observing, so we figured that this problem could affect their learning. When we proposed the argumentative activities, some students responded positively while others had reservations as these types of tasks

were difficult due to the low argumentative skills of some of them. These attitudes were determining factors to envision and plan our pedagogical intervention.

Ethical considerations

We followed the ethical guidelines of the School of Education at Universidad El Bosque, which include privacy, anonymity, and desirability of the research (Blaxter, et al. 2010, p.161), which go in accordance with the ethical considerations of action research. In this perspective, Coghlan et al (2021) contend that Ethics in research involves actions from the researcher such as not causing any harm, maintaining confidentiality, not disfiguring data, having consent and integrity and acknowledging the participant's right to withdraw (as cited in Williamson, 2002). Therefore, all the information gathered had the corresponding authorization from the institution, the Spanish teacher and the parents. Besides, we informed the students in advance about the different kinds of activities they would be participating in.

Instruments for data collection

In connection with data collection, we applied two surveys, wrote field notes and filled out a rubric. In fact, Xu and Storr (2012) state, "[they] are used as a means to objectify and measure a variable or phenomenon" (p.3). Firstly, we used two surveys to find out students' background knowledge about argumentation and The Arhuaco Culture. Secondly, we completed field notes. In this connection, Phillippi and Lauderdale (2017) state, "Field notes…aid in constructing thick, rich descriptions…'' (p.02). Thirdly, we recorded videos to have detailed information about the students and to observe how students benefited from the argumentative activities, students' reception, participation, and group interaction. Indeed, we used them to complement our field notes. Also, we used rubrics, which according to Billups (2021), specify criteria in a table that is used to evaluate, qualify, or categorize. We filled out the same rubric in all 3 applications to evaluate whether the students had an improvement or not, identify which competence was not being developed well, and restructure our lessons.

Pedagogical Intervention

Our pedagogical objective was to apply argumentative activities focused on the Arhuaco Culture that allow senior high schoolers to develop oral argumentative skills. Now, to plan our pedagogical intervention, we considered the learning needs of the students; to this regard, we identified that they had little to no knowledge of this indigenous culture. Another important issue we considered was the level of argumentation that we observed in the students. Based on this, we started planning and implementing our pedagogical intervention.

Typically, because students tend to avoid talking in public, the use of certain activities might aid the students in both overcoming their fear when speaking in public and learning how to back up their ideas. In this respect, Urrutia and Vega (2010) state, "we saw that they had difficulties with their speaking production because they looked apathetic and inhibited in activities which involved oral skills. Many of them felt afraid of being criticized and humiliated in front of their partners" (p.12). Thus, we decided to integrate argumentation and oral skills within an Intercultural approach as the knowledge of another culture is empowering, and results in increased self-knowledge and cultural identity. In Colombia, Mejía (2006) states that to attain mutual enrichment, we must allow for a dynamic process of communication and interaction between cultures.

Additionally, we connected the pedagogical intervention to the biopsychosocial and cultural model of Universidad El Bosque, which is concerned with interacting with cultures and recognizing how multiculturalism is a meaningful characteristic of the Colombian citizens. Therefore, our pedagogical intervention has embraced this model to widen the understanding when referring to cultures, knowledge, and our innate capacity to interact with each other with ease. Indeed, Cortazzi (1990) mentions, "Cultures serve as a framework for the perception of others and guides the interpretation of classroom interaction and, more broadly, the construction of meaning in the classroom" (as cited in Tudor 2001, p.20). Consequently, the

perception the students have about the cultures interfere in their interpretations and their opinions and how they use their abilities to socialize.

In the same line of thought, when students actively participate in class activities, even if they do not want to participate at first, this still becomes a significant learning experience because their participation increases their interests and optimizes their awareness. In this context, as Reigeluth and Karnopp (2013) mention, "where the students are deeply engaged in performing a task over and over and over again by choice, mastery is a powerful motivator" (p.29). Thus, we designed engaging activities to allow for active participation: a debate, a case and a role-play.

We did the three applications between october and november, 2021. The table below shows the chronogram of our pedagogical intervention.

Table 1. General chronogram of the pedagogical intervention

	First Application	**Second Application**	**Third Application**
Name	The Arhuacos tribe	Defend the rights of the Arhuacos	Debate as a communicative situation of an argumentative nature
Topic	The Arhuaco Culture	Rights of the Arhuacos	Territory of the Arhuacos
Objective	The objective of this class is to know the characteristics of oral argumentation as a communicative situation.	The objective of this class is to know the characteristics of deductive and inductive arguments.	The objective of this class is to know the characteristics of the debate as a communicative situation.
Time	4 hours	4 hours	4 hours
Type of activity	Students get into two teams. Each team defends their main controversial issue. The teams have two positions	Students have to include some rights that they consider should be part of the Arhuaco culture and argue the reasons why they consider these	The teacher will show a case, giving a problematic situation. "The Arhuacos have been sued because they consider that they are occupying a space that no

	from different points of view, different reasons are given in favor or against taking care of the Arhuaco culture.	rights to be essential for the survival of the Arhuacos.	longer belongs to them; and want to deprive them of their sacred places; and the case was taken to court." Students will have to play the roles of the judge and lawyer, and both must use different types of arguments. The judge must use an argument by authority and the lawyer must defend the case through deductive and inductive arguments.

To sum up, we faced limitations to implement the pedagogical intervention and therefore, to gather data due to the restrictions during the covid-19 emergency. When we finished the third application, the school closed again and the children had to be quarantined at their homes, which affected the continuation of the applications and so our interaction with the students. Thus, it was difficult to begin a new action research cycle, and we acknowledge that to increase students' argumentation, we needed a longer pedagogical intervention.

Data Analysis and Findings

To analyze our data, we considered aspects related to the grounded theory, as well as the processes of disassembling and reassembling data (Freeman 1998). Furthermore, we used coding as a technique to reduce the information and classify it into categories (Rossman and Rallis, 2012, as cited in Creswell, 2014). After, we involved triangulation to compare the different sources and perspectives of the data in all the instruments. Essentially, triangulation can be seen as a useful strategy to get more complex findings (Noble and Heale, 2019). Accordingly, the adoption of triangulation in our research allowed us to compare data, to analyze the different and complex findings and to give reliance to our process.

Table 2. Abbreviations of data Instruments

Instrument	Abbreviation
Students	*S1, S2, S3, ….*
Field Notes	*FN1, FN2, FN3*
Videos	*V1, V2, V3*
Survey	*Sv 1, Sv2*
Rubric	*R1, R2, R3*

Continuing, during the process of analyzing the data, we noticed that argumentation requires prior knowledge, to feel at ease in the classroom and to be familiar with the instructors to be able to speak confidently. In other words, during the sessions the students felt uncomfortable because they had neither the knowledge nor the proper space to participate. In fact, when we first started the pedagogical intervention, it was difficult to gather the group of students as some of them were participating in other school activities with other teachers. This showed us lack of interest from both the teachers and the institution in having intercultural activities and so it demonstrated the lack of awareness about the enrichment that those activities bring to the students.

With respect to this, The Ministry of Education established the importance of fostering interculturality and argumentation at schools. "We think that the classroom is a space to convey ideas to argue where communication, speeches and ethic valuations are interchangeable" (MEN,1998, our translation). However, being within the classroom we found that the lack of fostering the communicative skills as well as the gap between interculturality and previous knowledge of certain cultures was noticeable. But after implementing our activities, they showed interest in learning about this culture, and they used that knowledge to convey their ideas and persuade

others. Hence each session had the intention of challenging them, and it turned out they became interested in the Arhuaco culture and created a new environment where their ideas flowed freely.

Consequently, new attitudes towards the activities and the Arhuaco culture emerged as the students started asking questions and participating with more frequency, which was a new feature they did not have before. Likewise, they generated new insights to back up their ideas, to persuade the audience, and to trigger reactions from others, thus fueling the debates and generating an atmosphere where argumentation was a priority. In summary, the information collected allowed us to identify some outcomes, reach conclusions, and suggest further interventions about interculturality and argumentative activities. The data collected resulted in the categories that we discuss below.

Table 3. Questions and categories

Research question	Category
What is the effect of implementing argumentative activities focused on the Arhuaco culture on the oral argumentative Skills of a group of senior high schoolers?	*Prior knowledge in argumentation*
How do students react towards the Arhuaco Culture?	*Knowing space and the audience*

Prior knowledge in argumentation

By analyzing the information, we realized that in order for students to feel confident when talking about a topic, it is very important for them to know about it so that they can develop a good argument. Generally, the level of socio-cultural knowledge
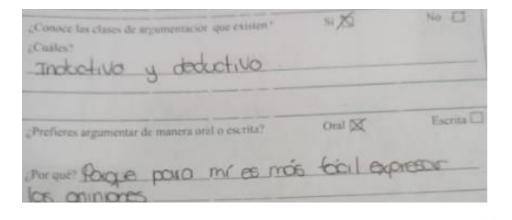
allows the students to have better skills and abilities to communicate accurately, properly, and confidently, and to vary their speech depending on the communicative situation. Hence, to identify and learn about the previous knowledge of the students of the Arhuaco culture and the kind of arguments they had used in classes, we surveyed them. The following excerpts show some of the students' answers.

Image 1. Survey 1

Sv1, S3

Image 2. Survey 2

Sv1, S4

Image 3. Survey 2

Sv2, S1

To sum up, the students showed some knowledge about argumentation but very little knowledge about the Arhuaco Culture. Then, during the applications, we approached them gradually into this subject. Consequently, the students showed that they did not have neither the cultural awareness nor the previous knowledge to start participating and using arguments. Also, we evidenced that words such as interculturality, multiculturalism and indigenous cultures in general were completely unknown by the students, and the kind of arguments to defend their ideas were also unfamiliar for the students.

The following excerpts from our field notes gives us an overview of the students' behavior during the applications and their gradual engagement as they become more familiar with the subject. We could also see they began to take a position regarding the issues that were discussed. Besides, they revealed their perception of this culture in their interventions.

In the first activity the students did not participate much since they did not know much about the subject but as they gained confidence, and we explained the subject better they began to participate.
FN1, Oct, 21st, 2021

In the activity where we were able to observe more the participation and argumentation was in the debate, where they worked in a group to get all the ideas and then they argued and defended the point of view that each one had, as in all the groups we saw more the participation of some students, but in general all participated, it was noted that they liked the subject of indigenous people very much and defended it with very good [sic].
FN1, Oct, 21st, 2021

In our applications, the notion of cultural diversity was implicit, and we also taught the students some argumentative strategies such as arguments by authority, by deduction and induction. Likewise, we presented the students with real, familiar cases to help them understand how we use arguments in our lives. This explicit knowledge became part of their background knowledge and was key to support their arguments during the activity of debating. Regarding this, Freeley and Steinberg, (2013) state, [in a debate] "participants are able to learn from each other' experiences and develop as individuals and members of the community" (p,42). As mentioned, it is important to create previous knowledge by using real cases, and the students will optimize the learning better. The next excerpt illustrates that students worked collaboratively, supporting each other, and started to include arguments confidently.

We were able to observe more the participation and argumentation in the debate, where they worked in a group to get all the ideas and then they argued and defended the point of view that each one had, as in all the groups we saw more the participation of some students. [sic]

V3, November 4th, 2021

Furthermore, in our applications, the concept of sensitivity about Arhuaco culture was immersed. To this respect, Austin et al (2013) mentions, "debate develops multicultural sensitivities (...) in the open debate context that celebrates free expression, students learn to communicate with sensitivity in a multicultural environment that may not be available in other scenarios" (p,42).

In sum, by giving the students the suitable environment to learn from real cases, they obtained the whole picture of this culture; as a result, they felt comfortable using their new knowledge to participate in the activities. Also, by comparing the rubrics, we noticed that the use of arguments to convey their ideas increased noticeably during their interventions, and the poor background they had about arguments by authority as well as inductive and deductive, showed a considerable improvement. The rubric was used to check the collective performance of each group when arguing. The category in the rubric indicating the use of argumentation in the following excerpt shows that collectively, students were able to use arguments adequately by the third application.

Table 4. Rubric.

Categoria	5	4	3	2	1
Uso de Argumentos	Cada punto principal estuvo bien sustentado con varias clases de argumentos.	Cada punto principal estuvo adecuadamente sustentado con el uso de argumentos relevantes.	Cada punto principal estuvo adecuadamente sustentado, pero el uso de algunos argumentos fue escaso.	Ningún punto principal fue apoyado con argumentos.	Los argumentos que se presentan no son acordes al tema

Translation: "Each main point was adequately supported with the use of relevant arguments." R3, November 4th , 2021

Knowing space and the audience

We noticed that to increase argumentation students not only need to have prior knowledge but also to feel at ease in the classroom and to be familiar and build rapport with the instructors to be able to speak confidently. Communicative

competence is an integrative concept that includes both the skills and abilities of the speaker as well as the awareness of his/her environment to perform actions. Literature on interculturality has enlightened us that good argumentation also has to do with the confidence of the speaker and his/her knowledge of his/her audience. Therefore, in order to know the students' perceptions, we had to figure out their thoughts and preconceptions and how they perceive their environment and the cultural aspect. As Lestyan (2019) suggests, "With the endeavor to understand the aesthetic experience of the audience, it becomes essential to discuss in short a selection of present cultural aspects that influence our modern view and behavior" (p,35). Hence the importance of presenting to the students the influence that the culture has had on our thoughts, reactions and behaviors as well as identifying the closeness the students have with the wide range of cultures we have in Colombia, in this case the Arhuaco Culture.

Knowing the space and the audience was essential to carry out the project and obtain information to determine results and possible outcomes as well as taking actions to engage the students into the Arhuaco culture. Then it was essential to know how the school has adopted interculturality, because the educational practices the school has will create a new environment for the students. As Stolp (1994) states, "Likewise, school artifacts such as the routines, ceremonies, rituals, traditions, myths or subtle differences in school language can provide clues for how to approach cultural change" (para.12). As a result, those practices will help the students to extend their perceptions and knowledge about cultures. However, the discoveries found about the practices of the school to approach the students into culturality was practically null.

Image 4. Survey 2

Sv2, S2

As a result, the students were unable to participate at first, because they ignored cultures in general, which helped us to identify the lack of instruction when referring to interculturality as well as the lack of training to approach the students into the subject. Hence, the students' both space and knowledge of the audience were limited to the school values, beliefs, principles and ideologies. Then, it was necessary to engage the students through outstanding questions to highlight the importance of cultures and create a comfortable space for them to participate with the purposes of arousing new meanings and perceptions about Columbian cultures.

Conclusions, Further Research and Pedagogical Implications

Our pedagogical objectives aimed to implement argumentative activities focused on the Arhuaco Culture to develop oral argumentative skills and our research objectives aimed to describe the Spanish oral argumentative Skills in a group of senior high schoolers during the implementation said activities and to describe students' attitudes towards the Arhuaco culture. In accordance with these objectives, we can assert that before our pedagogical intervention, some students knew few argumentative methods, but by teaching them and dealing with cultural topics, they could produce arguments to back up their ideas. In other words, the inclusion of the intercultural approach using activities focused on the Arhuaco

culture improved students' argumentative skills since they could be contextualized to back up some ideas. Moreover, the intercultural approach allowed students to engage with a variety of materials about the Arhuaco Culture like slides, readings, videos, etc., to understand Colombia as a multicultural country. Besides, we believe that the application of the intercultural approach in the learning processes can increase the motivation of the students.

We advocate for conducting relevant research to inquire further into learning methods and activities that effectively and efficiently address students' difficulties in learning and to involve other cultures. A large part of the problem that we observed was the lack of interest in teaching students about other cultures. As a matter of fact, at the beginning of this project, we noticed that very few classes tackle other cultures. Even though it is part of the curriculum, there is almost no emphasis on our indigenous cultures. Therefore, we believe that it is important to carry out more studies where indigenous cultures are taught in schools.

Based on the above, we believe that it is necessary to endorse the concept of interculturality from a critical point of view, with the aim of building new forms of interaction and overcoming the point of view of culture as knowledge in the curriculum; in other words, to view culture as mere content is some school subjects. This would imply rethinking language teaching and language classes as spaces for cultural diversity, cultural understanding, and cultural openness.

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