

Using Recipes in the LCTL Classroom

Sample Lesson Plan Overview

Level: Beginning through advanced

Aims: Learn food names, cooking verbs, target-culture-specific units of measure, become familiar with some target culture meals, practice imperatives (or other grammatical points), etc.

Class Time: Variable (30 min-several class periods)

Preparation Time: Variable (20 min-1 hr.)

Resources: Recipes in target language, activity related materials (handouts, poster, overhead, etc.)

Who doesn't like to eat? Who doesn't like to know what's in what they're eating? Knowing a few simple dishes from another culture can go be fun and exciting. Being able to go home and make it is even better. Learning through recipes makes all this possible. Recipes are a great authentic material because they tend to be written with a limited set of vocabulary and grammatical forms. They are also an integral part of the target culture and can easily become the springboard for different language and culture-related learning opportunities.

The following two lesson plans exemplify ways in which recipes can be used to achieve specific language teaching objectives.

- **“Do you have 60 milliliters of miso?”—A recipe ingredient exchange**
- **Poach, boil, or sauté?—How to make a meal**

“Do you have 60 milliliters of miso?”—A recipe ingredient exchange

Level: Beginning--intermediate

Aims: learn units of measure, practice food words, practice making requests, confirmations, and denials

Class time: 40 minutes

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Resources: sets of four recipes, ingredient cards, blank recipe cards, visual aids of food, blackboard

In this activity, students need to negotiate with their partners to determine which ingredients are needed to make a given dish. They then describe in detail the process whereby the different ingredients are combined to make the dish.

Procedure:

1. Before class, locate four simple recipes (e.g., from target language cookbooks or magazines). Using index cards, write the names of all ingredients in the recipes each on a separate card. You will need a set of 4 complete recipes and ingredient cards for each group of 4 students. (e.g., for a class of 20, you will need 5 sets of recipes and ingredients).
2. In class, review with students already familiar food words. You may do this through flashcards or games such as pictionary. You can also go around the classroom round robin style asking students to complete the sentence, “I like to eat _____” and list the students’ contributions on the blackboard.
3. As needed, introduce new food words and units of measure relevant to the chosen recipes.
4. Divide students into groups of four, giving each member of the group a different recipe. Then have the students evenly deal out the ingredient cards among the group members.
5. Within their groups, have students ask each other questions to find the ingredients needed on their card by asking, for example, “Do you have *60 milliliters of miso?*” Students trade cards back and forth until all students have the ingredients they need.
6. In their groups, have students write out the ingredients necessary for a dish of their own choosing. Using either a dictionary or pictures, have students describe how to put the ingredients together and cook it.

Caveats and Options:

1. Be careful to choose recipes according to level of the students or you may be teaching too many new food words.

2. You may wish to split the class up into buyers and sellers and have students “shop” for their ingredients
3. This activity can easily be made more complex for more advanced students by incorporating the grammar and vocabulary that describes the mixing and cooking of the ingredients.

Acknowledgments:

This lesson plan was inspired by Bonita Hagman.

Poach, boil, or sauté?—How to make a meal

Level: Intermediate

Aims: learn cooking verbs, practice food words, practice imperatives (or other salient grammatical feature)

Class time: 40 minutes

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Resources: sets of four recipes, worksheet, blank recipe cards, visual aids of food, blackboard

This lesson combines a grammatical/lexical focus (imperative forms of verbs used in cooking) with familiarizing students with the target language cuisine. Student creativity is also tapped in that students are asked to create their own recipes and share them with other members of the class.

Procedure:

1. Discuss with students whether they prefer to use recipes or not when they cook. Ask for volunteers to describe how to cook their favorite dish.
2. Review already familiar cooking verbs and present new ones, as needed.
3. Divide students into groups of four giving each member of the group a different recipe from the target language culture.
4. In their group, have students fill out a worksheet grid showing which recipes use which cooking verbs (See appendix).
5. On a blank recipe card, have students write their own recipes.
6. Collect recipes and redistribute randomly for students to continue filling out the worksheet.

Caveats and Options:

1. It would be helpful to ascertain how much your students know about cooking.
2. You can give cooking-inclined students one or two ingredients (i.e. chicken, potatoes, plantains) and have the group create different recipes using that one ingredient.
3. You may wish to use the worksheet to highlight a particular grammatical feature (e.g., imperatives) pertaining to the form of the verbs in recipes
4. Bringing one of the dishes among the recipes is always exciting for students.
5. Visual aids such as actual pots, pans, and stirrers may be helpful.
6. A total physical response (TPR) lesson is possible if some dough is pre-made and students are taught the verbs associated with making dumplings, pies, etc. Each student could have his/her own piece of dough to work with, or may work in groups.

Appendix: Worksheet

Recipe name	Boil	Sauté	Fry	Bake

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