

**Documentary Research on Fostering Intercultural Communicative Competence
Through Literary Texts**

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Abstract

Intercultural communicative competence is the ability to interact meaningfully and effectively in a foreign language with people from other cultures. This competence can be enriched by means of different types of sources and strategies. This research aims to examine multiple documents that provide information about the impact of the implementation of literary texts on the development of the intercultural communicative competence inside EFL formal education contexts during the last ten years in Latin America. This study follows a qualitative approach and the documentary research design. Data were collected by means of an exhaustive search of different types of academic documents in varied databases and repositories of universities. As a result, a strict relationship will be established between the use of literature with the improvement of cultural awareness, along with the description of multiple strategies employed when implementing literary texts to foster intercultural communicative competence and their outcomes.

Keywords: English as a foreign language, cultural awareness, intercultural communicative competence, literary texts.

Resumen

La competencia comunicativa intercultural es la capacidad de interactuar de manera significativa y efectiva en un idioma extranjero con personas de otras culturas, esta competencia se puede enriquecer mediante diferentes tipos de recursos y estrategias. Esta investigación tiene como objetivo examinar múltiples documentos que brindan información sobre el impacto de la implementación de textos literarios en el desarrollo de la

competencia comunicativa intercultural dentro de los contextos de educación formal en inglés como lengua extranjera durante los últimos diez años en América Latina. Este estudio sigue un enfoque cualitativo y el diseño de investigación documental. Los datos fueron recolectados mediante una búsqueda exhaustiva de diferentes tipos de documentos académicos en diversas bases de datos y repositorios de universidades. Como resultado, se establecerá una relación estricta entre el uso de la literatura con la mejora de la conciencia cultural, junto con la descripción de múltiples estrategias utilizadas en la implementación de textos literarios para fomentar la competencia comunicativa intercultural y sus resultados.

Palabras clave: Inglés como lengua extranjera, conciencia cultural, competencia comunicativa intercultural, textos literarios.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Intercultural Communicative Competence is the ability which allows one to interact in a foreign language (FL) effectively and properly with people from other cultures. This document focuses on the results of documentary research whose purpose is to identify the implementation of literary texts as a strategy to help teachers develop their intercultural communicative competence (ICC). Therefore, this research will review and analyze different studies that have implemented this strategy in formal education contexts from Latin America, during the last ten years. This document will be divided into several chapters. The first chapter is the introduction, in which we can find the statement of the problem and the rationale of the proposal. Second, the theoretical and legal framework will be developed. In the third chapter, we will find the methodology which describes the research approach and design to be followed, the objectives that we are going to set our mind to, and the data analysis process which will be carried out. The next chapter will be an analysis of the collected documents. Finally, in chapter five, the reader will find the conclusions reached, and the considerations to be taken into account.

Statement of the Problem

The research problem is a statement about an area of concern or a condition to be improved that defines the aims and objectives of the investigation (Upagade & Shende, 2010); its main role is to provide a starting point for meaningful understanding and

development of research. The problem could be found in scholarly literature, in theory, or in practice. This section describes the problem that guides this study, how it was identified, and other studies that have found a similar problematic situation will be presented.

The problematic situation that was identified is the low development of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in EFL educative contexts in Latin America, which has impacted negatively the learners' proficiency, and mainly their communicative skills (Cushner and Mahon, 2009; Zhou, 2011; Lazar, 2003).

First of all, EFL teachers tend not to have deep background knowledge about the different cultures around the world; Cushner and Mahon (2009) mention that most of the teacher education programs lack such interdisciplinary structure, which could combine the formal grammar structure and the intercultural approach of the language; they also state that teachers are often ill-prepared to adequately address intercultural concepts. This could impede the sharing of cultural information, which in turn could prevent students from expressing themselves correctly in multicultural contexts. Also, it is important to highlight that the process of teaching Foreign Languages is likely to be more focused on the linguistic characteristics such as grammar rules, vocabulary, etc., than on the intercultural competence that promotes the recognition and acceptance of cultural aspects different from their own. This can be illustrated in Zhou (2011), as he affirms most of his classes as an EFL student and after as an EFL teacher were grammar rule-based and basic information of different cultures was just mentioned. In addition, according to Lazar (2003), teachers do not attach as much relevance and time to intercultural competence as to the teaching of reading, listening, speaking, writing, and grammar since it is not in the school curriculum. Moreover, Omaggio (2001, cited by Jaramillo, 2015) points out that teachers do not know

exactly what to teach in terms of culture, what topics they should avoid, and which ones they pay more attention to. All in all, teachers are not prepared to foster their students' intercultural competence, first, due to their lack of knowledge about the foreign culture, second, due to the structural tradition to teach a FL, third, thanks to the syllabus structure of a FL class, and forth, because of their uncertainty of what to teach.

The lack of intercultural communicative competence of EFL teachers produces a negative experience for EFL learners when trying to develop this competence. Learners do not have the opportunity to use language in a real context since most teachers organize their classes based on materials such as textbooks. In accordance with Berardo (2006), textbooks usually contain artificial language because they concentrate on grammar topics, so often they include "false text indicators" and perfectly formed sentences. In the same way, Stryker and Leaver (1997) state that the artificial language often contained in textbooks does not provide examples of how people communicate in the FL. The materials utilized by EFL teachers usually do not present a real context, therefore, they do not give EFL learners enough information to accurately participate in a multicultural conversation.

In that sense, textbooks tend not to be an accurate source for presenting culture. First, the cultural content of textbooks usually involves aspects of surface culture such as food, holidays, art, and folklore; these topics are presented from a tourist-inspired perspective which does not allow one to look deeply into the culture, as Godwin-Jones (2013) determines. This researcher also establishes that since textbooks are grammar-based content, they do not show a real native-speaker conversation which is often full of misunderstandings, repetitions, and ungrammatical sentences. Moreover, Sercu (2010) affirms that culture is taught through fragments to learners, and they have to read some

texts and are expected to change their mindset to be more tolerant with other cultures as well. This means that, in textbooks, culture is presented in fragments that do not represent the complete target language; this negatively impacts the development of the learners' ICC, which is imperative for learners to become active language users able to communicate effectively with people from an intercultural context. In brief, culture and language presented in textbooks are incomplete and unreal respectively, thus, textbooks may not be accurate for teaching culture.

Therefore, the not so adequate development of ICC has affected the EFL teaching and learning experience. One of the main consequences can be evidenced in the difficulties EFL learners face when using this language in real scenarios. In different Latin American countries this situation has been recognized so different plans of action have been designed to integrate themselves into the global world and make their population more competitive. By way of example, in Colombia, according to the Congreso de la República (1994), "Humanidades, Lengua Castellana y Lenguas Extranjeras" have been included as some of the mandatory areas of basic and media education; besides, the Ministerio de Educación (2016) created the program "Colombia Bilingüe" to strengthen the teaching and learning of foreign languages and to allow citizens to access to better opportunities. Also, in Chile, the project "La Estrategia Nacional de Inglés" has been developed from 2014 - 2030 with the aim of strengthening English from the educational field to the labor field (Gobierno de Chile, 2014). Additionally, Cronquist and Fiszbein (2017) also state that in Mexico, Argentina, and Ecuador, the language learning standards include a cultural component in addition to the usual components of listening comprehension, reading comprehension, speaking comprehension, and writing: intercultural reflection in Argentina, cultural

communication and awareness in Ecuador, and language-related behaviors in Mexico. On the whole, recently the learning of EFL has become fundamental, Latin American countries have implemented strategies to develop English skills to be part of the global world and to bring students access to better opportunities.

In that line of thought, one of the main purposes of some Latin American countries is to promote their people's skills to communicate in a globalized and multicultural world, however, the real circumstances show that the strategies have not shown the expected results since a lack of effective communication in EFL, which is in great part fostered by means of the development of the ICC, is evidenced. First, based on the report of EF English Proficiency (Education First, 2020), a study conducted with 2,2 million participants in 100 countries and regions, only Argentina is at the high level of the ranking, the other countries are in medium, low, or very low levels. For instance, Colombia is in the 77th position at the very low level, while Cuba is in the 38th position at medium level, Chile is in the 45th place at the medium level, Ecuador is in the 82nd position at the low level, and Mexico is in the 88th position at the very low level. In addition, the research done by Zepeda and Bolaños in which "managers and human resources assistants from 300 companies identified the ability to speak a foreign language as the second most difficult skill to find among staff, only after technology management" (2010, cited by Cronquist & Fiszbein, 2017, p.12), demonstrates the lack of EFL in a labor environment. The aforementioned examples reveal that despite the efforts of Latin American countries for improving their population's EFL competence, they still do not meet the expectations of today's globalized and competent world, a fact which is directly connected to the lack of emphasis on the ICC that must be fostered in the EFL classrooms since it is critical to communicate effectively and appropriately in an FL.

The intercultural communicative competence has been developed on several continents. This is the case for America, Oceania, and Asia. In this study, although we are going to review mostly Latin American documents, it is important to learn how intercultural communicative competence is carried out in a space where the target language is official, considering notable differences such as the existence of a real context in which one can interact, the difference between having English as a Second Language and English as a Foreign language and, mainly, the difference that we can find in the creation of material such as literary texts.

There have been some studies developed at the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional related to the lack of preservice teachers' development of intercultural communicative competence. The first study was developed by Gómez (2011). He identified that despite the recommendations of the Common European Framework of Reference to Languages (CEFR), the focus of language learning is still the formal structure of the language, it emphasizes the study of grammatical and lexical competence which is not enough to establish an intercultural communicative competence.

Moreover, a study carried out by Olaya and Gómez (2013) was based on the fact that preservice teachers are mainly focused on elements of surface culture and lack a full understanding of intercultural competence; the researchers also see culture as a separate aspect of their future teaching career, the participants of this study were preservice teachers from three universities.

A third example was written by Arias et al. (2015) who noticed that there was a great need to foster intercultural competence since the classes they observed were mainly focused on the study of language forms, and there was limited time to study the target deep

culture. These examples show how different studies from Universidad Pedagógica Nacional have identified this problematic situation.

Moreover, there have been several national and international studies about the lack of development of intercultural communicative competence. One example is the study developed by Xiao and Petraki (2007). This study was applied to Chinese students who were studying at an Australian University; it explores the frequency of interaction between Chinese students and students from other countries. The researchers found out that intercultural communicative skills should be a crucial component of English language teaching (ELT) in China, particularly with the rapid globalization of English and its usage in international business communication. In that sense, the study shows the relevance of a constant interaction with different cultures when fostering ICC that Latin American EFL students might not have. Also, the study highlights the necessity of stimulating ICC for different purposes.

Another study related to the problematic situation was carried out by McCalman (2014). This researcher evidenced that most teachers did not receive training in college to work with students whose first language and culture are different from their own; she perceived the need to be better prepared to meet the learning needs of the incoming student population from other countries.

A third study was developed by Cheewasukthaworn and Suwanarak (2017), who identified the growing interaction between people from other countries and the necessity of promoting ICC. The study focused mainly on the perceptions that EFL teachers have in terms of understanding, integration, and contribution of ICC. Data were collected through interviews and questionnaires to sixteen Thai EFL teachers at a private university in

Thailand. The results show that even though integration could be possible by sharing different contents with learners, they found this integration was not enough to foster ICC. This study shows that teachers do not have a successful strategy to promote ICC.

The following study, carried out by Cuartas (2020), reports on an exploratory collective case study on three in-service English language teachers in Medellin, Colombia. The researcher points out that nowadays teachers have recognized the importance of culture in EFL classrooms since it has a very strict relation with language, however, they are not really prepared for this task as teachers have scarce opportunities for interchanges to get experiential knowledge in the target culture; also, the workshops that are provided by international agencies do not allow them to explore other techniques or strategies to cover culture aspects in EFL classrooms. In brief, the study shows that in-service teachers do not have the experience and materials to promote ICC.

Furthermore, the study conducted by Zhou (2011) focuses on the lack of ICC in students at a university in Beijing, China. This paper suggests that many students are unclear about the differences between Chinese and western culture and lack knowledge about the common western customs and values; students attributed their lack of knowledge about differences between western and Chinese culture to teachers' grammar-focused teaching methods. This problem was identified thanks to the demands of internationalization that require not only grammar study but also intercultural communicative skills. To conclude, teachers' lack of ICC integration in EFL classrooms directly affects students' intercultural awareness and knowledge.

According to the problematic situation that was observed, a question to lead this research study was posed: What does literature inform us about the impact of the

implementation of literary texts on the intercultural communicative competence developed in EFL formal education contexts during the last ten years in Latin America? The general objective is to examine what literature tells us about the impact of the implementation of literary texts on the development of the intercultural communicative competence developed in EFL formal education contexts during the last ten years in Latin America, while the specific objectives are to relate the application of literature to the development of cultural awareness, to describe how literature can be implemented as a tool to foster ICC, and to report different outcomes when fostering ICC by means of literature.

To sum up, the problem that was identified is the insufficient development of EFL learners' intercultural communicative competence. There are some reasons why teachers lack the ICC; first, they tend not to have enough knowledge to promote this competence in their classrooms, so classes emphasize the linguistic features but not on meaningful communicative situations, such as the ones the intercultural communicative competence promotes; besides, teachers are not aware of what aspects and activities must be shared in EFL classes based on the ICC. This problem was identified due to the multiple studies that show a limited development of ICC in students. Likewise, this problem was recognized from the growing interest in some Latin American countries to promote the students' learning of EFL in order to strengthen English in the educational and labor fields.

Nevertheless, the results are not the expected since Latin American countries are still at the bottom of the ranking of EFL; finally, different studies in the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, as well as international studies, have shown that intercultural communicative competence is an important field to explore due to the lack of teachers' preparation, which in turn affects the learners' effective communication. In the next section, the proposal of

this research, and its importance and benefits in national and international contexts will be exposed.

Rationale

Nowadays, ICC has become a key competence that EFL learners must develop due to the fact that they need to constantly coexist with diverse cultures. Different authors have carried out studies in which they have implemented literature as a strategy to foster ICC in EFL classrooms highlighting that literature can be a source of culture and a resource to promote communication. This research aims to analyze those recent contributions related to EFL learners' ICC development based on this strategy. The following is the presentation of the research proposal, its benefits, and other studies that have suggested similar proposals.

The purpose of this study is to analyze how literature has been implemented as a strategy to foster the learners' ICC. This analysis will be carried out by searching for different documents and research reports to have clear detailed information related to the results from studies that have been carried out during the last ten years in Latin America. The focus will be the experience of different researchers in the application of literary texts as a cultural source and as a strategy to foster the learners' ICC.

This research may have a positive impact on the community of Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. First of all, this document is going to represent a source of information about the ICC in Latin America, and it is going to highlight the role of this competence inside the EFL classroom settings since this is prone to be a field that requires more investigation. Second, this study will provide information on how the implementation of literature is one of the strategies that can help develop the ICC; it will be convenient since different perspectives and methodologies implemented by different researchers will

be explored and analyzed. In that sense, this document will serve as a reference for preservice teachers of the UPN to be ready for carrying out their future teaching work.

This research will also bring several benefits to the national educational context. On the first hand, this study will help the Colombian educational community become more aware of the need to foster the ICC in the EFL classrooms to communicate appropriately and effectively by means of a FL in today's globalized world. Also, this document will provide information about the use of literary texts as a strategy to promote ICC that can be adapted to the curriculum in Colombia and that could be a basis to venture into new strategies to develop ICC. All in all, this research will contribute to the application of strategies to develop ICC in EFL classes in Colombia.

On the other hand, this document will be convenient for the international educational context. In the first place, considering that multiculturalism is a fact, this document will provide EFL teachers detailed knowledge about the features of multicultural EFL classrooms and how fostering ICC tends to help lessen the impact of this situation to help both teachers to carry out their intercultural mission and students to perform adequately in that situation, and create a more comfortable space to interact with other cultures. Besides, this study might show the need for recognition and respect for new cultures through meaningful and effective communication. In closing, this document will benefit international multicultural EFL educators and their teaching environments.

Different authors have advanced in proposals related to fostering intercultural communicative competence through literary texts. The study carried out by Rezaei and Naghibian (2018), developed with 13 Iranian English learners at the intermediate to upper-intermediate level presented how in order to promote ICC, the researchers created a

fourteen-classes syllabus in which they integrated cultural topics using short stories; the results of the study showed that literary texts are useful materials for raising intercultural awareness as students became more aware of their own culture and became more critical when encounter themselves to different cultures. Also, results indicated that materials developers should pay more attention to the cultural components in the textbooks they devise. Another study conducted by Bhandari and Bhusal (2020), implemented literary texts such as poems, stories, essays, dramas, novels as means to develop ICC based on interviews with their participants who were teachers from the Kathmandu district who have been teaching English at the secondary level in private institutions for more than ten years; the results show that EFL textbooks, non-authentic material, undervalue the socio-cultural context, so more attention should be paid to develop the ICC.

Likewise, different studies carried out in Universidad Pedagógica Nacional and on a national level have shown the necessity to analyze and develop the ICC. One study was carried out by Carpenter (2020), she administered 23 multiple questions questionnaires to students, professors, and alumni of a Colombian foreign language bachelor program to examine their ICC awareness, and she highlights that the basis of any language is culture, so in order to improve the EFL teaching the ICC should be one of the main objectives in the curriculum. Another research done by Guerrero et al. (2016) points out that thanks to globalization teachers have had to improve their teaching EFL methodologies, and have had to implement ICC to train competitive people in FL cultural aspects; that is why she elaborates a strategy in which, through literature circles (discussion groups) and storytelling tools, 75 tenth-grade students, between the ages of 14 and 17 years old, who attended three different public schools in Bogotá, Colombia, were able to identify differences in cultures,

and how those differences helped them to build their identities. In addition, a study carried out by Gómez (2013) highlights the importance of enhancing ICC in an advanced EFL classroom of the language program at a public university in Bogotá, Colombia in 2011. This research incorporated authentic multicultural literary texts in the EFL classroom as a means to develop ICC, the results show that integrating literature in EFL constitutes a pedagogical contribution to constructing critical intercultural awareness. In sum, the studies aforementioned portrayed the need to examine and promote ICC.

To conclude, the previous section was the presentation of the research proposal, the benefits it has for national and international formal education contexts, and the description of different studies that have focused on the same topic. In the next chapter, insights into the main constructs of this research are going to be shown and analyzed.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is composed of the main constructs, a description of legal documents that support this research, and a compound of different studies that have developed a similar proposal to the one carried out in this study. The main theoretical constructs that lead this study are cultural awareness, intercultural communicative competence, and literary texts to develop ICC in the EFL classroom.

Cultural Awareness in the EFL Classroom

Many authors have given different meanings to culture. Kramsh (1998) considers culture as belonging to a community of discourse that shares a common social space, history, and imagination. Moreover, Liddicoat et al. (2003) define culture as a complex system of concepts, values, beliefs, conventions, attitudes, practices, rituals, and lifestyles of people who constitute a cultural community as well as the tools and the institutions they create. Weaver (1986, cited by Zhou, 2011) has represented culture as an iceberg, where only a small portion is visible, while the rest is underwater and non-observable. This metaphor divides culture into *surface culture* that is about aspects that are easy to identify, such as food, flags, festivals, holidays, among others.; and *deep culture* that is a non-observable part of culture which includes elements like communications styles and rules, concepts of self-time, beauty, justice; notions of courtesy, manners, etc. (Hanley,1999).

According to the definitions aforementioned, culture is a system of characteristic aspects of a community that have been divided into two categories: surface and deep culture, which includes concepts, attitudes, values, and others.

On the other hand, cultural awareness (CA) has become a crucial ability to integrate into EFL classrooms. Tomlinson (cited by Aajami & Nasser, 2019) defines CA as developing a sense of equality of cultures, which involves understanding one's own and other people's cultures and having a positive interest in how they are similar or different. Such awareness can increase tolerance and facilitate intercultural communication. According to Saniei (2012), developing cultural awareness is essential while learning an EFL since learning a foreign language requires acquiring a second culture. Jin-Feng (2007) delineated four levels of cultural awareness, at the first level, the parochial stage (my way I am the only way), in which people are conscious of their own ways of doing things, and they believe that their method is the only way to accomplish things. They are oblivious to the impact of cultural differences at this point. In the Ethnocentric Stage (I know their way, but my way is better), at this level people are aware of alternate options, but they still believe their method is the best. Cultural differences are viewed as a source of issues at this point, and people tend to disregard or minimize their relevance. At the third level, the Synergistic stage (My way and their way), people are conscious of their own and others' strategies of achieving things, and they choose the most appropriate method for the occasion. People understand that cultural differences can cause both difficulties and benefits at this point, and they are willing to use a cultural variety to develop new answers and alternatives. Finally, the participatory stage (Our way) brings members from various cultural backgrounds together to create a shared meaning culture. Individuals converse with

one another repeatedly, inventing new meanings and rules to match the demands of a given scenario. In this sense, CA in EFL classrooms is a four-stage process that could help us become tolerant and empathetic by understanding and accepting other people's cultures when learning a foreign language.

Culture and language are strictly connected. By studying a language, learners gain knowledge and understanding of the culture of the target language (Choudhury, 2013). In addition, culture is one of the main factors to take into account in the EFL learning process since it models the way we think, and therefore the way we acquire the foreign language. For example, Hinkel and Long (2013) approach the notion of culture as it consists of social norms, beliefs, worldviews, and assumptions that affect the way we learn, teach, and acquire a foreign language. Mitchell and Myles (2004) mention that language and culture are not separate, but are acquired together, with each supporting the development of the other. All in all, language and culture have an inextricable and interdependent relationship.

In conclusion, culture has taken an important place in EFL classrooms. It involves the beliefs, ideas, and behaviors of a group. These aspects affect how we interact with others by means of an FL. It is crucial to include deep and surface aspects of culture in EFL classrooms to become more aware of their own and other people's cultures to enhance tolerance and acceptance in such spaces.

Intercultural Communicative Competence in EFL

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and its components have been defined by different authors. Byram (1997) defines ICC as the ability which allows one to interact in a foreign language effectively and properly with people from other cultures; he

highlights that ICC consists of five components such as attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness/political education. Wiseman (2001, cited by Ahnagari & Zamanian, 2014) affirms that ICC includes knowledge, skills, and motivation to interact effectively and appropriately with persons from different cultures. Also, Chen and Starosta (1996, cited by Chen & Starosta, 1998) state that ICC is the ability to perform and negotiate behaviors and cultural identities efficiently and appropriately in a culturally diverse context. On the whole, ICC is an ability composed of skills, knowledge, and motivation that enhances effective and meaningful communication in intercultural environments.

Interculturality is a crucial component of daily reality in EFL classrooms.

Interculturality is understood as the equal relationship that exists between groups of people with diverse cultures (Dietz, 2018). Nowadays, thanks to the growing level of internationalization and the resulting transnationalism, EFL learners have been involved in a culturally diverse context and this process has an impact on teaching and learning (Hatoss, 2006). Interculturality in EFL classrooms is relevant as it promotes a tolerant attitude, openness, acceptance, understanding of the concept of an alien, recognition, and respect of cultural differences by making positive relations of equality between people (Cuartas, 2020). To sum up, interculturality is an actual key component in EFL classrooms.

Finally, ICC is the ability to interact appropriately, effectively and respectfully when communicating with people from other cultures. This competence has different components: attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness/political education. Thanks to the increasing interculturality in EFL classrooms it is crucial to develop ICC.

Literary Texts to Acquire ICC in EFL

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, according to Sage (1987), literature is material to engage students' minds and feelings in meaningful and effective communication in English. Literary texts are an accurate source of culture. Literature is written based on experiences, characteristics from different contexts, and previous research made by the author that could provide real information about culture. Mansilla et al; (2015) believe that presenting literature from a foreign culture to students is an enriching way of promoting awareness of different values, beliefs, customs, and traditions. McRae (1991, cited by Mansilla et al. 2015) affirms that literature is an "expression of experience", that should be seen as a cultural artifact that stimulates interactive, critical, and personal readings. Also, Carter and Long (1991) state that teaching literature allows learners to be in touch with and thus understand other cultures. Overall, literature could be implemented as an instrument for presenting culture.

In that sense, literary texts can be employed also as an instrument to foster ICC. Carter and Long (1991) and Amer (2003) highlight that literature can be a powerful agent to develop learners' intercultural awareness and to nurture empathy for diversity since they understand cultures and ideologies different from their own. Literature can also help students to become critically intercultural individuals, in essence, Carter and McRae (1996), McKay (2001, cited by Gómez, 2013) and Amer (2003), agree that exposing students to literature in the EFL classroom has a great impact on the learning process of students in two main aspects. First, through literary texts students may enhance their linguistic competence because literature makes use of authentic language. Second, literature is an instrument through which students could acquire literary knowledge and interpretative

skills by negotiating multiple meanings. All in all, these researchers show that literature has been recognized as a meaningful resource to promote ICC.

Different authors have implemented and described several methodologies to utilize literary texts in the EFL classroom. In a study carried out by Nanda and Susanto (2020) they recognized literature as an instrument to promote writing, reading, listening, and speaking. They introduced Robert Browning's poem "My Last Duchess" and applied some activities to improve each communicative skill. For example, for listening and speaking, they asked their students to read out loud, for writing they asked them to paraphrase, using their own words, the theme of the poem taking into account the context in which the story is developed, and for reading they asked them to find the plot, main characters, surface meaning and underlying meaning, and others into the poem. The authors argue that the discussion of universal issues in the poem broadens the students' knowledge regarding culture. The study showed that literary texts not only improve language development but also enrich cultural representations while studying English. Moreover, in a study carried out by Khan and Alasmari (2018), some approaches are described to teach culture through literature. First, Maley's critical literary approach (1989, cited by Khan & Alasmari, 2018), which is the study of literature as an instrument of culture, focuses on the background, plot, literary concepts, motivation, characterization, psychology, and value. The next approach is Carter and Long's cultural model (1991) which emphasizes providing knowledge of the historical background, authors, cultural trends, and certain periods presented in the literary text. A third approach is Van's critical literacy which motivates students to learn aspects of how texts are associated with issues of class, culture, identity, gender, ethnicity, religion, and political power (Van, 2009). The other approach described was Divsar and Tahriri's

integrated approach that considers literature as content for culture; it focuses on providing cultural knowledge in the texts (Divsar & Tahiri, 2009). To conclude, different methodologies can be applied to implement literary texts to teach cultural aspects in the EFL classroom.

Legal Framework

The Common European Framework (CEFR) provides a common basis for the development of language programs, curricular orientations, examinations, and textbooks, across Europe and nowadays across the world. It also describes what students must learn to do to communicate and act effectively in a foreign language. One of these skills refers to the communicative language competence which, according to CEFR, consists of the correct and effective use of the language to communicate knowledge; it depends on the cultural aspects of the community or communities in which the learner has been socialized and where his or her learning has occurred. In that sense, the CEFR establishes the importance of communicative language competence when acquiring a foreign language (Council of Europe, 2001).

Moreover, The British Council Mexico (2018) describes the needs when creating new English public policies in Latin America. It sets up a strict relationship between culture and language since a foreign language is a tool to communicate with others, with its culture and social context. That is why it becomes crucial to expanding teachers' experience and knowledge of the FL and of cultural aspects. To improve teaching, there are some recommendations that include adapting the teaching contents to the authenticities of each country in the region in order to highlight their culture through the foreign language. Also, English classes should be a space to acknowledge, respect, and value other people, their

cultures, and their way of thinking through linguistic analysis based on the principles of equality of cultures and favoring integration. To sum up, in Latin America, teachers should direct English classes to provide a space for interaction, acceptance, and respect of others' cultures through the foreign language.

On the other hand, the Ministerio de Educación in Colombia (2004) created the Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo (PNB) in which it is established that a foreign language is a vehicle of communication and interaction, in that sense, the methodologies implemented in EFL classrooms must be oriented to the development of the communicative competence. In addition, this program looks for the recognition of the own Colombian culture to build global citizenship through foreign languages. To conclude, this program seeks to implement new strategies to recognize one's own culture and develop communicative competence in order to share culture internationally.

The Ministry of Education (2016) establishes the Basic Standards of Proficiency in Foreign Languages: English, and the reasons why we should study this language. It mentions that today's world is characterized by intercultural communication thanks to the rapid globalization. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of studying English to have a common language that allows national and international society to access this new globalized world. It also mentions that learning a foreign language enhances learners' personal development which diminishes ethnocentrism and allows individuals to appreciate and respect the value of their own world, as well as developing respect for other cultures. Likewise, learning from a foreign language encourages respect and valuation of plurality and differences, both in the immediate environment and in the globalized one. Moreover, this document highlights the connection between language and culture since by developing

a better communicative competence, an awareness of culture is also acquired. Another reason to study English is that it encourages the student to open his mind, to accept and understand new cultures and to promote the exchange between different societies. To conclude, the Ministerio de Educación establishes the relevance of studying English and its relationship with culture.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Research Approach and Research Design

This document followed qualitative research which implied a procedure and inductive analysis of data based on a problem situation to draw general conclusions. The worldview that supported this research was constructivist. The research design was documentary research. The following will be a description of the qualitative research, the worldview, and the research design that made up this study.

The qualitative approach is used for exploring the meaning of different social or human problems ascribed by groups or individuals. It is characterized by including data typically collected in the participant's environment, a data analysis built inductively from the specific to the general aspects, and the researchers' interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final document has a flexible structure (Creswell, 2014). Taking into account the aforementioned, this document followed the qualitative approach; the data collection involved studies carried out in Latin America, and the features of this context such as the low development of ICC that has affected the EFL teaching and learning experience, or the difficulty shown by Latin Americans when using EFL in work contexts, or the low level reached in international reports that showed that different Latin American countries still do not meet the expectations of today's globalized and competent world, a fact which is directly connected to the lack of emphasis on the ICC will be considered. The data analysis was inductive. Also, each study was carefully examined by the researcher to interpret its meaning and identify its importance in the educational field.

On the other hand, Creswell (2014) describes the worldview as the set of ideas or beliefs that guide the action of the researcher. In this case, the worldview that supported this study was constructivist which is a set of beliefs that individuals follow to seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. The goal of the researcher was to rely on and understand the complexity, as much as possible, of the situation being studied. The researchers' aim is to recognize and interpret that others also have a meaning of the world; based on that they develop a theory or pattern of meaning (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the researcher's goal was to analyze the experiences and identify the most relevant results that different researchers obtained from their studies to draw some conclusions about the impact of literature related to ICC in EFL classrooms, and thus report a general compilation of knowledge based on their perspectives.

Furthermore, research design is understood as the strategy of inquiry that gives direction for procedures in research (Creswell, 2014). Thus, this study followed a documentary research design, which Bailey (1994) describes as the analysis of documents that contain information about the topic we want to study. This document aimed to collect and analyze different studies that have been carried out about the impact of literature as a strategy to foster ICC during the last ten years in Latin America in order to have clear detailed information related to the results from those studies. In conclusion, this study belonged to qualitative research paradigm, the worldview implemented was constructivist, and the research design was documentary research. The following section presents the research question and objectives of this project.

Research Question and Objectives

This qualitative documentary research was guided by a specific research question to be responded:

What does literature inform us about the impact of the implementations of literary texts on the intercultural communicative competence developed in EFL formal education contexts in Latin America during the last ten years?

This research aimed to accomplish four objectives:

General Research Objective. To examine what literature tells us about the impact of the implementation of literary texts on the development of the intercultural communicative competence developed in EFL formal education contexts in Latin America during the last ten years.

Specific Research Objectives. 1. To relate the application of literature to the development of cultural awareness 2. To describe how literature can be implemented as a tool to foster ICC. 3. To report different outcomes when fostering ICC by means of literature.

Instruments

In this documentary research a series of documents, tables, and others were designed in order to display, review, and analyze the information gathered; and then be able to present the conclusions.

Phases

The qualitative research process has four phases: Preparatory, fieldwork, analytic, and informative. Each phase represents a step to follow when researching; this process follows

a coherent sequence in which the researcher must make different decisions. In this section, a description of each phase and how they will be developed in this documentary research will be presented.

The first phase was preparatory. In this stage, the researcher, based on his knowledge and experiences, establishes the theoretical-conceptual framework from which he/she plans the activities to be carried out in the subsequent phases (Estrada et al., 2009). In this case, the researcher analyzed a problematic situation, and based on that, she posed a research question and research objectives. After that, the researcher established a theoretical framework that included the description of three main constructs to guide the research, a legal framework, legal documents that supported the research, a recollection, and a presentation of documents that have relevance to this particular issue. Then, the researcher decided to follow the qualitative approach and a documentary research design and clarified how she analyzed the data collected. All in all, the first stage was the search for previous insights on the chosen problem and the preparation, planning, and design of the actions carried out to complete the investigation.

The second stage was fieldwork. This stage is the moment in which the researcher has access to the field and starts collecting enough important data to analyze it (Estrada et al., 2009). In this documentary research, the researcher looked for useful, contextualized, very well-selected documents to be able to explore the phenomenon on which this research is focused. After that, the researcher followed a process of systematizing the data collected to analyze them under different parameters to determine if they were really useful and had an impact on the research. To sum up, the second stage was about relevant data collection based on the fieldwork.

The next stage was the analytic phase. This moment of the research process implies the evaluation and analysis of the data collected. In this case, the researcher established the tasks to properly analyze the data. After that, she established results based on the analysis and reduction of data to finally get to the last phase, which was the presentation and diffusion of the results.

To conclude, the four phases followed in this documentary research were preparatory, which consisted of the design of a plan that guides future actions in the research, the second phase that was the collection of well-selected data, a third phase which was the presentation of results based on previous analysis and finally, the diffusion of the manuscript under institutional standards. The next section will be the presentation of the methodology implemented to analyze data.

Methodology of Data Analysis

The investigation phases in this qualitative research were, as mentioned before, preparatory, fieldwork, analytic and informative. Each stage has been developed in a certain period of time. However, during the investigation, some phases were combined (Appendix 3). In this matter, in the following section, the description of the researcher's experience developing the phases will be exposed.

Initially, after posing the research question and research objectives, the researcher established the theoretical framework and the legal framework, that contains the main constructs of the research, each section required a collection of theory and documents to support the research (Appendix 4).

At the same time, the fieldwork stage started since the researcher looked for a range of useful, contextualized documents that had relevance to this particular issue (Appendix 1) that is about the impact of the implementation of literary texts on enhancing intercultural communicative competence developed in contexts of formal EFL education in Latin America during the last ten years. In that sense, there were different criteria to select the documents, first, they had to be developed in Latin America in a EFL context, during the last ten years. Second, the intercultural competence had to be developed with the use of literary texts, and third, the documents had to meet at least one of the three specific objectives set out in this research: to relate the application of literature to the development of cultural awareness, to describe how literature can be implemented as a tool to foster ICC, and to report different outcomes when fostering ICC by means of literature. The documents were collected from different sources such as the repositories and databases of Latin American universities, academic web browsers and magazines such as Google Scholar, HighBeam Research, Redalyc, Academia.edu, RefSeek, Scielo, ERIC, among others (Appendix 5).

There were multiple documents that were very important for the development of Intercultural communicative competence with the implementation of literature, however, they were discarded for not meeting two established criteria, first, they did not meet the geographical criteria since there are mostly documents made outside of Latin America, and they did not meet the time criteria since they were too old.

Finally, being restrictive and giving rise to the criteria, twenty-four documents were selected. Each document was presented, gathered, reread and summarized describing

important data such as the researcher, the date, the context, the population, the research question and/or the objectives, the type of research (approach or design), the description of the strategy or study proposal, the instruments with which the data were collected and finally the findings of the investigation (Appendix 1). The studies were carried out in different parts of Latin America, in recent years as shown in Appendix 5.

Next, the analytical and fieldwork phases were intertwined since during that moment the researcher established the initial parameters with which the analysis would begin. To carry out the data analysis, the methodology that was used is the one of grounded theory. According to Lawrence and Tar (2013), this general methodology is characterized by discovering a theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed. It follows a sequence of steps that are data collection, coding, categorizing, and construction of a theory. Its goal is to search for a closely tied theory to the evidence so that the resulting theory is likely to be consistent with the empirical data. In that sense, the grounded theory methodology was useful since after collecting different types of data, they were coded and subsequently categorized, and then analyzed to draw upon conclusions.

In this regard, after presenting the data collected, the researcher followed a process of systematizing the data to analyze them following the second grounded theory phase which is coding (Appendix 1.1 and Appendix 2). The coding process consisted of highlighting with different colors the elements that referred to the objectives, and similar aspects between the documents such as similar results or similar strategies used, after that, the information was systematized in a matrix adding quotes from the studies that support each code. The codes found are Code 1, "Cultural enrichment" identified with yellow, code

2, “Development of values (empathy, respect...)” identified with purple, code 3 “Cultural awareness” in red, code 4 “Literature as a source of culture” placed in blue color, code 5 “Role of the teacher” placed in green color, and code number 6 identified with orange color, it is called “Approaches” (Table 1).

Expected Results

First of all, after examining different types of data such as studies, books, documents, and theory, the researcher hoped to find the strong impact of literary texts on intercultural communicative competence development in EFL classes in Latin America. Second, this research aimed to identify a strict relationship between the usage of literature with the improvement of cultural awareness. Third, it was expected to find multiple strategies on how literary texts can be implemented as a resource to foster ICC. And finally, the researcher awaited to obtain different outcomes when fostering ICC employing literature. To sum up, the aforementioned were possible results this research project could reach.

CHAPTER 4

Findings

The discovered information demonstrating the relationship between categories and subcategories will be displayed in the next section. The results were divided into groups while keeping in mind the goals of the study.

Table 2

Categories and Subcategories

Categories	Subcategories
The Application of Literature Impacts the Development of Cultural Awareness.	
Approaches Employed when Implementing Literary Texts to Foster Intercultural Communicative Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The natural input Interaction and negotiation of meaning Development of critical thinking
Results of implementing literary texts to encourage ICC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Enrichment Development of values Literature as a Source of Culture Role of the Teacher

The Application of Literature Impacts the Development of Cultural Awareness.

The present category is related to the first specific objective that is “To relate the application of literature to the development of cultural awareness”. This section will be a presentation of the implications that teaching the language by means of literature could have in terms of the consciousness we possess towards own’s and other’s culture.

According to Tomlinson (cited by Aajami & Nasser, 2019), developing cultural awareness (CA) entails understanding one's own culture as well as that of others and showing an enthusiastic curiosity in the ways in which they are alike and different. Such knowledge can promote tolerance and aid intercultural communication. Jin- Feng (2007) established four levels of cultural awareness, the parochial stage, ethnocentric stage, synergistic stage, and participatory stage. Jin-Feng (2007) asserts that using this process, we can improve our cultural awareness, which can foster intercultural communication while also increasing acceptance and sympathy by helping us to understand and appreciate others' cultures.

After the comparison and analysis of the collected studies, it is determined that through the implementation of literary texts it is possible to develop cultural awareness. Students go through some of the stages expressed by Jin-Feng (2007). In the first level, that the author calls " My way is the only way ", the students are ignorant of the cultural differences and the benefits that these may bring. This may be due to the little previous real approach that there is with cultures because teachers' current focus seems to be on teaching the superficial cultural features. For instance, Gómez (2015b) points out that the research issue involves teachers' actual concentration on teaching merely superficial culture features

and students' only role as passive recipients of those topics. Similarly, Olaya & Gómez (2013) note that the issue was that preservice teachers primarily concentrated on aspects of surface culture and lacked a thorough knowledge of intercultural competence.

The second stage described is what by Jin-Feng (2007) calls “I know their way, but my way is better”, in this stage people prioritize their knowledge and discard the option offered by the new culture. However, in none of the studies students seem to have an ethnocentric attitude towards the cultural approach. Rather they are reflective and open to learn about cultures. As demonstrated by Chancay-Cedeño et al. (2019), their pupils stated their satisfaction with the outcomes. They appear to have grasped the value of reading beyond the text to critically examine how a distinct cultural background was represented in the story. Additionally, students claim that it was the first time they were able to draw morals from the characters in a piece of English literature. They are encouraged to read more classic literature in order to discover new cultural facets. One of the students, for instance, remarked that he was inspired to read more classic literature in order to expand his vocabulary, and to contrast it with his culture. In addition, in the study carried out by Gómez (2015c) results showed that participants valued having learned new information about the world and human behavior as it is reflected in the events and characters, a finding that is closely related to the growth of intercultural competence.

The third stage called “my way and their way” in this level, students were able to recognize the differences between their personal and other people’s cultures. As shown by Triana (2019), learners might become aware of behavioral patterns that differ from their own through various multimodal materials. Also, Padrón & Pendás (2020) assert using

literary texts in the classroom greatly enriches students' cultural awareness since they enable them to identify aspects of their own culture, the cultures of those who speak the target language, and universal cultural traits. As the fragments illustrate, students acquired knowledge about other cultures, nevertheless, Jin-Feng (2017) also mentions that, at this point, people are also willing to use cultural variety to develop new answers and alternatives. Even though students do relate the literary texts with their own context, they could find solutions or another perspective to see their reality more openly. For instance, Company & Sivero (2019) found that pupils were able to connect the context of one of the readings with life in Argentina. Moreover, Triana (2019) claimed that students were able to engage with and compare their own culture by observing and querying the culture portrayed in the stories. The importance of assuming their own view demonstrated that children are familiar with their social norms, values, perspectives, and culture in general.

Following the process, the fourth and final step, “our way”, brings people from many cultural backgrounds together to create a shared meaning culture. This phase was developed by means of discussions between students about the cultural aspects found in the authentic materials, a strategy that seemed to promote the active and critical participation of students as they interchange meaning between them. Thus, Gómez (2011) mentions that through discussion-based lessons nearly every student contributed significantly by offering their perceptions of the text, kids were able to negotiate meaning. Additionally, Gómez (2014) showed that when given the opportunity to analyze and discuss a piece of literature in a foreign language, pupils were more likely to offer their own critical opinions. Lastly, Garzón & Castañeda (2015) demonstrated that students improved their self-confidence

while sharing their thoughts on the reading and displayed greater curiosity when hearing other people's perspectives. Considering the aforementioned, students can discuss their interpretations of literary texts among themselves, which is extremely beneficial since it opens their minds to fresh viewpoints and teaches them how individuals act and think differently depending on their cultural origin.

On the other hand, it is worth noting that, according to Jin-Feng's theory (2007), the students already recognized and valued their culture; yet, by comparing cultures, the students were able to understand and embrace their own identities and cultures, as indicated by Guerrero et al. (2016) as he mentions that learners who interacted with people from different social or cultural groups were better able to identify, define, and accept their own identities. In addition, Bernal (2020) noted that pupils in EFL classes can better comprehend their history and appreciate their cultural backgrounds thanks to the usage of authentic resources. This is significant because learners value their identity by observing cultural differences or parallels in various contexts, which allows them to convey the language and culture from a perspective that can help them form and strengthen relationships in foreign settings.

Furthermore, literature is crucial for promoting cultural awareness. Presenting literature from a foreign culture to students is an enriching means of increasing awareness of diverse values, beliefs, practices, and traditions (Mansilla et al., 2015). In other words, stories provide readers with a wide range of forms, including relationships, beliefs, perspectives, conventions, customs, celebrations, and in general patterns of interaction, allowing readers to study multicultural attitudes (Triana, 2019) as literature has the power

to create room for us to reflect on cultural differences, it also helps learner foster tolerance for various civilizations (Sánchez, 2021). By means of literature, students gained values such as tolerance, respect, and empathy, which enabled them to be more receptive when encountering a foreign culture. First, Bernal (2020) stated that using authentic materials helps pupils avoid stereotypes in an EFL course. The author adds that students could examine how people's origins and prior experiences affect how they think, act, and behave. According to Gómez (2011), the necessity of accepting, appreciating, being aware of, and tolerating the distinctions found in other cultures was also emphasized by students.

With that in mind, the process of acquiring cultural awareness is deemed complete, because students can observe distinct features of other cultures and compare them to their own through literary texts, allowing them to better identify and embrace their own cultural heritage. Furthermore, the learner was able to construct new interpretations and cultural meanings through literature in collaboration with his peers. In addition, the student showed empathy and tolerance for learned cultures, implying that pupils may accept and respect cultural differences in the way others communicate, dress, or think, thereby facilitating intercultural communication, since openness, flexibility, and curiosity were emphasized as essential components of ICC development as they help kids learn to get to know others (Company & Sivero, 2019)

Approaches Employed when Implementing Literary Texts to Foster Intercultural Communicative Competence

In this section, researchers utilized several approaches and obtained comparable results; common elements of the approaches will be discussed.

The Natural Input. A number of authors employed strategies that were centered on providing students with accurate cultural input through authentic material, ergo, culture in-depth information by means of the content not intended for educational purposes. For example, Bernal (2020) proposed to employ various exercises created by the teacher and real materials—like Colombian money, movies, and literary works—as mediators to help EFL students become more interculturally competent. Meanwhile, Jiménez & Salvador (2020) created a booklet of activities to help fourth-year Bachelor of Education in Foreign Languages students build ICC through British literature in which poems, tales, and classic books were included. Each unit contained ten to fifteen tasks that were arranged in accordance with their level of complexity. In order to develop ICC, the activities were diverse, catering to various learning styles, and combined language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). The literary work served as a tool for teaching pupils about the target culture and honing their communication abilities. Study objectives were provided at the start of each lesson to orient/guide students in their learning. Moreover, Padrón & Pendás (2020) suggested some courses of action to consider when implementing literary texts, including exploring the interests, needs, and potential of the students as well as their educational, linguistic, psychological, and cultural characteristics and the selection of understandable texts that address their needs, among other things.

The following study guided by Espinosa et al. (2019) entails the construction of a guideline divided into seven sections with roughly twelve unique exercises each. The researchers developed a series of tasks to help the students with reading and the process of exchanging meaning after they had to read the literary work *Americanah*. The writers claim that the creation of appropriate materials for creative works may elicit a range of responses

from students that are geared toward helping them understand their own identities and the otherness of other persons, groups, peoples, and cultures. Besides, they point out that designing materials specifically for a given context and the many components that make it up—including our students, their cultural environment, their preconceptions, the foreign language they are learning, and the cultures associated with it—is strategic and essential if the goal of the foreign language class is the development of intercultural communicative competence. In this regard, the manner the resources are prepared is the ideal way to promote ICC in EFL classrooms while directing literary diversity.

Interaction and Negotiation of Meaning. Researchers used approaches that let students engage with the texts and their partners to interact and negotiate meaning. Two authors implemented guided reading that is about interacting with the text from an objective perspective with the teacher's guidance to negotiate meaning with the material and their companions. In the case of Arboleda & Castro (2019), they presented a task-based reading guide to getting students to talk about particular elements of the English language fiction novel they each chose to read; the genres and themes of the novels that students selected were diverse. These included science fiction, historical accounts, social and political activism, child raising, hedonism, and kid-friendly adventure. The choices were thought to be typical of each person's tastes, interests in reading, and language proficiency. According to the authors, task-based learning offers teachers and students the chance to live and interact with the target language in quite dynamic and engaging ways to construct meaning. Also, researchers implemented reading guides to offer students further opportunities for self-expression and self-reflection. This is how authors were able to encourage and motivate

students to read literature and analyze from a more objective perspective.

In the same way, in Triana's study (2019) she suggested that picture books and the creation of three didactic sequences matched to a guided reading strategy were carefully chosen to enhance the learners' investigation of intercultural attitudes and the reading comprehension process. All of the before, during, and after reading exercises, as well as the created posters, demonstrated how the students had analyzed themselves in relation to other cultures. The authors described picture books as useful teaching tools because they help students interpret what they read by implying its content through pictures and other visual cues. This material was analyzed under a guided reading approach (GR) which the author conceived as an interactive process in which readers actively engage with texts, building not only their own understanding but also the author's message, through GR students can apply their constructed knowledge resulting in their reading experiences.

In addition, Gómez (2013) used two distinct strategies that aided in conversation and the creation of meaning: contextualizing contact zones and engaging debate and conflict in the classroom. The former suggests that meaning is negotiated as students debate opposing viewpoints and build their knowledge through genuine communicative discourse. The EFL learner might participate in a discussion as a negotiator to exchange ideas. According to Gómez (2013), recognizing classrooms as contact zones is an excellent approach to promote critical ICC. Based on the topics that students bring into the contact zones, the many literacies that they bring to class may be used to foster cultural understanding and mutual recognition through collaborative learning. It is essential to point out that, among the authors of the various texts, he is the only one who has worked on

encouraging a suitable and welcoming environment in which students feel free to express their opinions without bias.

The following study carried out by Company and Sivero (2019) employed the textual intervention and collaborative work mediated by information and communications technologies (ICTs). In a textual intervention exercise, the reader must alter a section or feature of the original text and then consider the effects of the alteration. Examples of this interventionist effort include rewriting a particular episode or character in a text to reconstruct events in the original piece from a different point of view. Another example would be to "translate" selected texts into a different genre or text type. ICTs are used in their lectures to facilitate textual intervention exercises, giving students the freedom to explore at their own speed and show off their technological creativity while increasing learning through a combination of audio, video, photos, text, and animations. Collaboration work acknowledges the social construction of meaning through interaction, communication, and joint problem-solving. Co-construction of meaning and creative work promotes a space for learning, the development of meaningful experiences, and language competency in collaborative processes. In that sense, students produced content relating their cultural backgrounds and their interpretation from the text which allowed them to interact and negotiate meaning with the literary work using ICTS. The projects that emerged were original, diverse, and thought-provoking.

The next study carried out by Guerrero et al. (2016) used a three-cycle intervention and lesson planning. Each cycle included reading circles, narrative techniques, and orientation sessions. Orientation seminars were held to aid participants in understanding fundamental cultural notions, characteristics of tolerance, and dispute resolution techniques.

Following that, literature circles served as a vehicle for delivering the understandable information necessary for students to discuss, compare, and debate the subjects covered in the orientation sessions and perhaps depicted in the stories they read. With the help of storytelling, students were able to demonstrate their conceptual understanding in writing and to reflect on issues like tolerance, culture, and conflict resolution by developing fictitious or true stories based on their personal experiences. The usefulness of this method is found in how the students approach the texts, the conversation that was sparked during the orientation sessions with their classmates and the literature, and the creation of new knowledge that is included into the storytelling.

Garzón & Castañeda (2015) applied the reader response theory (RRT) which entails that the experience of the reader with the text in a particular setting is the main focus. This implies that the meaning is created by the interaction between the reader, the text, and the context rather than existing ready-made in the reader. This exchange between the reader and writer implies that the reader brings a variety of factors to the interaction, including current needs, interests, and preoccupations as well as a particular mood and physical condition. These factors have a significant impact on the meaning that the reader constructs, as well as funded assumptions, attitudes, and linguistic, social, cultural, and personal background. The reader engages in this transaction in five steps: building, imagining, connecting, and evaluating/reflecting. When a reader empathizes with or can identify with a literary work, when they create envisioned alternate worlds by conceptualizing the characters, events, and places, they are said to be engaged with it. Imaging is the process of developing visual images, which enhances the vividness of the reading experience. Connecting is the process of attaching one's personal experiences to the

text. Last but not least, evaluating and reflecting are concerned with determining the caliber of one's interaction with a text. For example, readers evaluate whether the events in the book are handled with the level of sensitivity they anticipate or if they just meet their own expectations. Classroom techniques used to stimulate these processes included journal writing, oral think-alouds, group discussions, re-writing stories, and writing reports.

In the same line, Sánchez (2009) defines relational teaching as the relationship between reader and text while constructing meaning. In this case, the researcher chose two authentic literary texts written by Ray Bradbury to work on a critical process of reading based on reading response theory (RRT). These lectures followed certain stages to guide students in the process of interacting with the text itself. The steps involved were pre-reading, initial reading, re-readings, and critical reading. It is vital to note that, in the first readings, pupils were encouraged to be actively engaged in the procedure. Students participated in this process by completing tasks that were centered on traditional literary components including characters, story, and place. Nevertheless, they were required to refine and expand their understanding of the text's significance for the final readings. All of the replies students gave after reading the two stories were collected in a portfolio since the research questions of the study sought to understand the types of responses students produced in accordance with the RRT principles and also their reading-related thinking skills. The students' awareness of their own reading process would improve as a result of this portfolio, which would also provide them the opportunity to write about reading more confidently. Additionally, class discussions were formed, initially in small groups and eventually with the entire class. These debates were based on how each student saw the two

stories they had read. As a group of readers, they began to create meaning when they conversed with their peers.

On the other hand, Gómez (2011) followed two specific approaches: the inquiry-based approach and the dialogical approach. The former is a strategy that appreciates students' viewpoints in the classroom. In order to debate concepts and express personal opinions based on the study of literary texts or other resources, learners engage in a process of asking and answering questions. It engages students in critical investigation and the development of knowledge through a process of negotiating meaning. According to the author, different types of personal reflections on the stories read can be attained by encouraging EFL students to read and debate literary texts through questions. The latter encourages learners to negotiate meaning when they encounter literary discourse. In this scenario, the dialogue is between the author, the literary work, and the readers. It is via this dialogue with other people, both native speakers and non-native speakers, that learners find out which ways of speech and thinking they have in common with other people and which are specific to them. Additionally, through fusing language and literature, EFL students are encouraged to engage in communicative meaning negotiation.

For the purpose of this study, five multicultural literary pieces were included in an advanced English course. When students studied "The Chrysanthemums" by Steinbeck, inquiry-based learning was utilized. Following the tenets of this strategy, students were provided a study guide with important questions to guide their reading. At first, they each read the article and responded to the questions on their own. They then returned to class to discuss and contrast their own comments with those of their partners. Participants read the

African American short tale "Everyday Use" using the dialogical method. In this instance, there were no questions asked because participants were conversing to convey their reactions to the literary work. They did this by interacting with others, expressing their own meanings, and verbally transferring important information about the story. Students were urged to participate in group projects and class discussions in order to start a dialogic conversation.

Development of Critical Thinking Numerous scholars employed strategies that fostered students' critical thinking on cultural issues. For instance, Gómez (2013) implemented engage in debate and conflict approach which has been defined as spaces (in this case promoted by the teacher in the EFL classroom) of cross-cultural interaction where learners identify how cultures interact, clash, and engage in power struggles, occasionally in very unequal ways, this approach contributes pupils develop critical thinking skills. The researcher points out the term "congratulatory" education of literature and culture that refers to the notion that materials are examined and discussed in a friendly and even utopian manner, omitting the actual facts regarding the history and ideology authors represent. Debate and disagreement in the classroom give students the chance to critically assess cultural concepts and gain a thorough awareness of social issues, oppressions, and global affairs from a more grounded viewpoint. When students are introduced to the study of literary texts, debate can take place in the language classroom as a way to re-evaluate unfair attitudes and naive "celebratory" views of the world. By studying multicultural issues, the learner develops the ability to critically evaluate traditional cultural settings.

Furthermore, Gómez (2014) implemented the relational teaching approach. Gómez (2014) firstly mentions EFL instructors often view history as a straight line that neatly divides the present from the past and "us" from other people, this prevents EFL instructors and students from understanding how the past continues to influence the present or how populations interact. The author highlights that it is typical practice while discussing the past to distance oneself from the historical battles that have resulted in upsetting modern-day effects like violence, marginalization, and indifference. Also, the author mentions, students know very little about the history, cultures, and literatures of indigenous peoples as well as those members of minority ethnic groups and that their perceptions of them (Native Americans, Black people, and immigrants) in the educational system are idealized and unhistorical. That is why he employs relational teaching since it invites teachers and students to realize the influence of the past on modern life through a process of cultural critique and self-reflection. Relational Teaching is a procedure that begins with commonalities and follows several interlocking historical trajectories.

These commonalities are intricate connections that help pupils deal with sameness, resemblance, and difference. Even though students may belong to a variety of cultural groups, they may find that these traditions have similar historical roots and were influenced by the same historical events. In this instance, relational teaching is utilized in the study of literary texts in EFL classes so that language learners have the chance to critically discuss commonalities through which they relate the idea of "difference" and "deviation" addressed in the literary texts to their own or other people's experiences. EFL learners can discuss similarities and "deviations" in regard to, for example, social class struggles, racism,

prejudice, homophobia, misogyny, and xenophobia in the cultural environments of themselves and of others through commonalities such as gender, social class, human rights, and free development of one's personality. Ultimately, students can acquire a critical thinking toward the cultures and significant elements that have contributed to the current culture through this cultural approach, the analysis of similarities and contrasts, and the contemplation over socio cultural concerns.

In the following study Gómez (2015b) employs the critical multiculturalism approach. It encourages students' conscious understanding about unfair social practices and oppression, which is a basis to challenge irregular and unjust issues of race, gender, class, ideology, politics, and power of a cultural group. By means of U.S. multicultural stories, the author suggested three modalities for their discussion: group work, short presentations, and written response papers. In order to understand the lesson material and to engage in critical thought regarding themes of deep culture, students first arrived to class having read the assigned material and responding to a few questions from study guides. To concentrate on the subjects raised by the questions, they worked in smaller groups. They did this while sharing and criticizing their views on the issues pertaining to deep culture. Following that, they discussed conclusions and voiced their ideas as a group. As a result, rather than through the formal study of language structures, students constructed meaning for the stories through a process of meaningful negotiation using the target language, English. Second, to discuss subjects of deep cultural significance, small groups gave oral presentations in the foreign language. They were to formulate a thesis statement, critically evaluate the arguments, and offer commentary on the supporting details from the short

stories. Students responded to the stories by writing brief essays in which they debated and discussed their opposing points of view.

Because they had already heard from other students in the classroom and could now finally confront their own findings, the goal of this activity was to encourage students to reflect on the problems of complex culture in a more thoughtful manner. While participating in these activities, students were encouraged to learn that social realities are not only transformative and heterogeneous but also display unjust historical, social, and political contexts. This was done to help students address complex cultural issues of equality and social transformation in language learning. Consequently, multiculturalism was practiced critically in the classroom, where students developed into intercultural critics of complex socio-cultural phenomena.

Results of implementing literary texts to foster ICC

Cultural Enrichment. In this category, outcomes will be explained considering the six codes found in the studies. The first code is related to cultural enrichment which refers to the increase in cultural knowledge that a person can acquire through literary texts. To better analyze this code, it is worth stressing that according to Weaver (1986, cited by Zhou, 2011), culture can be divided into surface and deep aspects, the former is about superficial traditions such as literature, games, dance, language, art, etc. The latter alludes to collective communication norms and styles, ideas about beauty, justice, and self-time, as well as etiquette and manners. In that matter, Bernal (2020) states that the use of authentic materials in an EFL classroom allows students to learn culture in-depth.

In most of the documents, researchers concluded that the use of literary texts helps students to acquire new knowledge about the English speakers' cultures since they provide a significant cultural enrichment because through them the students may recognize deep cultural characteristics (Padrón & Pendás, 2020). For example, Gómez (2011) indicates that when students read literature, they become more aware of values, beliefs, and traditions. Also, Gómez (2013) found that, in the multicultural stories, participants gained understanding about social and gender roles, they learnt about traditions and customs from diverse ethnic backgrounds. In the same way, Arboleda & Castro (2019) found that students learned more about other cultures' histories and traditions while also becoming more conscious of the complex societal factors as injustice, deprivation, economic inequality, death, and life—presented in many cultures. Moreover, Gómez (2013) demonstrated that participants were able to compare literary and cross-cultural content using a Mexican text. When reading the literary work, the students acknowledged that they had compared concerns between their own culture and those of other civilizations (Chauvinism and Cleófilas). They were able to handle cultural variety and comprehend cultural identities as a result. Overall, researchers understood the importance of literature and employed it as a source of culture to give pupils in-depth cultural knowledge, as Padron & Pendás (2020) demonstrate, literary texts exhibit general culture, arts, politics, science, ethics, and aesthetics, as well as traditions, values, real-life situations, the world, and its diversity. For instance, Gómez (2013) designed class activities and questions that help students learn cultural information they had never considered or learned before. This fosters EFL students' favorable attitudes toward a variety of intercultural expressions, which may be the first step forward into intercultural communicative competence.

On the other hand, through literary texts non-standard cultures or varieties of the language can be portrayed (Sánchez, 2021), this helps students to identify and differentiate new aspects of the culture and to compare them with their own. The aforementioned shows the strict relationship between language and culture highlighted by Mitchell and Myles (2004) as language and culture are not separate but are acquired together, each supporting the development of the other.

Development of Values. ICC is the capacity to communicate with people from different cultures in a courteous, appropriate, and effective manner; to accomplish this goal students must have a set of attitudes (Byram, 1977) that includes curiosity, openness, willingness not to assume that one's own beliefs and ideas are the only ones that are possible and correct, willingness to relativize one's own values, beliefs, behaviors, etc. the capacity to "decenter," or to consider how one's own values, beliefs, and behaviors could appear to someone with other values, beliefs, or behaviors. Also, according to Mansilla et al. (2015), reading literature from a different culture to students is a rewarding way to increase students' knowledge of various values, beliefs, practices, and traditions. Therefore, in the following section fragments will illustrate that literary texts and the development of values to foster ICC have a deep relationship.

The following code is referred to as the development of values, which relates to the enhancement and reinforcement of certain attitudes like respect, tolerance, and empathy, among others. Different authors mention that the implementation of literary texts helps to improve them, some authors focused on acceptance, respect, and empathy. For instance, Gómez (2011) found that by sharing ideas over a literary text students reflected on the

significance of understanding, tolerating, accepting, and appreciating the cultural variations we encounter in other countries. In the same way, Gómez (2015a) pointed out that students were able to develop respect and acceptance when reading. Likewise, Garzón & Castañeda (2015) stated that reading literature in language classes helps pupils understand the values and needs of others and develop empathy.

Other authors conclude that stereotypes can be avoided, for example, Bernal (2020) recognized that by using real materials in an EFL classroom students can understand how people's origins and experiences affect how they think, act, and behave. Additionally, Iruretagoyena (2019) mentioned that students gained awareness of gender roles. Also, Company et al. (2019) said students related ICC with the understanding of differences and similarities between cultures to avoid judgments. In a similar vein, Sanchez (2021) concluded that literature has the power to enable us to reflect on cultural differences while creating room to enhance tolerance toward other cultures, so, she stated that the student was able to avoid generalizing about the cultures he encountered by using literature. She also emphasizes the importance of exposing kids to many cultural contexts because this is where the intercultural factor is most evident in how our pupils need tools to handle the world's complexities without stereotyping others. Likewise, Espinosa et al. (2019) developed materials to complement the ICC by means of literature, these helped students get a more comprehensive understanding of different cultures and provide them with the resources they need to develop virtues like tolerance and respect for variety.

To sum up, the development of ICC requires to reinforce multiple attitudes; this code showed how authors were able to enhance values such as empathy, acceptance,

respect, tolerance through literary texts as pupils identified, understood and reflected over different cultural nuances.

Literature as a Source of Culture. The following code, “Literature as a source of culture”, portrays literature as a reliable material that provides authentic cultural information. In fact, literature is an "expression of experience," according to McRae (1991; cited by Mansilla et al. 2015) and should be viewed as a cultural product that encourages participatory, critical, and individualized readings. When the researcher defines literature as an expression of experience, he refers to the elements the author of the text may have depicted in it, through the characters, to express his or her own background. This is exemplified in Padrón & Pendás (2020) since through the concretization of the characters, literary writings reveal the culture and identity that underlay each social layer and each individual. Furthermore, it is necessary to keep in mind how language, literature, and culture are interconnected since, as various authors have shown, true English is depicted in literature and does so in a way that reflects culture. For instance, readers can enjoy the realistic use of English in literature, where it is used in contexts that are real and with a wide variety of linguistic forms, vocabulary, and grammatical structures. Also, literary compositions employ English in actuality. They are able to use a spoken or written language in authentic, day-to-day situations, which makes it easier to contextualize the language. Through frequent cultural allusions in the discourse, the speaker's culture, identity, and idiosyncrasies penetrate the actual use of English in the literary text. Finally, as they offer a genuine experience of facts and ideas that represent significant moments of people (the author and the characters) from other cultures, literary books bridge language and culture. In the same vein, literature can be

used as a vehicle to spread the culture of the people who use the language in which it is written (Jimenez & Salvador, 2020).

Comparatively, as illustrated in Arboleda & Castro (2019) participants acknowledged that literature plays a crucial part in learning a foreign language because it gives them access to many worlds, it accurately depicts people's lives, including their political, social, economic, and religious convictions, as well as other characteristics related to their way of life, thereby creating a bridge between individuals from various cultural backgrounds to enhance learning. As a matter of fact, students' motivation in attempting to use the target language for genuine communicative objectives might be sparked by having them view literature as a beneficial tool for sharing cultural contents. In a related manner, Chancay-Cadeño et al. (2019) assert that literature is the means by which language and culture can be connected because it offers a real-world experience of facts and opinions from various literary genres that represent significant events in people from other cultures. So, it serves as a means of learning about other cultures and of drawing comparisons between information from one culture and another.

Likewise, in order to improve learners' ICC, Company & Sivero (2019) point out that using authentic resources in the EFL classroom becomes a priority. Since the cultural goods a given community produces can help students know about and appreciate events, opinions, and national memories of a culture, authentic literary texts give EFL learners the chance to develop not only their language and critical thinking skills but also their ICC. All in all, literature does, in fact, belong in the EFL classroom because it offers a key to

encouraging students to read in English and serves as an excellent platform for conveying cultural assumptions and illustrative language use (Garzón & Castañeda, 2015).

Role of the Teacher. Teachers are crucial in encouraging ICC among EFL students. This section will outline several alternatives and recommendations found in the documents to some of the challenges described in the theoretical framework. In addition, the characteristics that the writers concur that an EFL instructor must consider in order to teach ICC will be underlined.

In the first instance, according to Godwin-Jones (2013) the presentation of culture in textbooks is frequently inaccurate, the cultural content of textbooks typically focuses on features of surface culture like food, holidays, art, and folklore; these themes are given from a tourist-inspired perspective which prevents one from delving deeply into the society. In agreement, Gómez (2015a) emphasizes that the communicative textbooks used in undergraduate language programs at some institutions and in other EFL contexts typically lack parts of deep culture that can aid learners to acquire ICC. The majority of their issues fall under surface culture and are founded on rigid, celebratory, and homogeneous ideas—all of which are representative of the foreign culture or cultures. Gómez (2015a) suggests that teachers be encouraged to think about teaching alternatives by looking for, adapting, and, if possible, creating culture-based materials that will encourage EFL learners to engage deeply with culture in place of a received version of culture. This brings up the first quality of teachers.

For pupils' ICC development, an EFL teacher should become a material designer. For instance, Espinosa et al. (2019) stated that if the goal of the foreign language class is to

develop students' intercultural communication skills, it is wise and essential to design materials specifically for that context and the various components that make it up, such as our students, their cultural environment, their preconceptions, the foreign language they are learning, and the cultures associated with it. Bernal (2020) agrees since he asserts that English language instructors can exercise their creativity when developing and customizing materials to encourage greater acquisition of the target language and its use. Additionally, teachers should create engaging lesson plans and activities so that kids can easily read because certain readings can be challenging and tedious. For example, teachers have a critical role in selecting resources and creating task-based, learner-centered activities that can best fulfill the requirements of pupils (Arboleda & Castro, 2019).

In this line of thought, teachers should locate correct resources so they can show their students culture in an accurate manner. In order to foster ICC, different authors suggest the use of authentic materials. According to Bernal (2020), authentic materials are defined as those that are not intended for teaching; this means that the material used was not generated commercially to teach a target language. In this matter, Gómez (2015a) recommends that teachers use authentic resources like newspapers, literature, documentaries, history, and movies when studying subjects like race, prejudice, social class conflict, and human rights, aspects that correspond to deep culture. Also, Bernal (2020) mentions that the use of authentic materials in EFL classrooms may be useful for teachers and students to develop not only grammatical skills but also to reinforce students' ability to understand and contextualize the language used in the classroom and the language people use in other social contexts.

Several researchers used literary works as authentic materials as they affirm it has multiple benefits for learners. For example, Arboleda & Castro (2019) literary texts are genuine resources that can be applied to students' best interests, especially the improvement of their speaking and reading abilities. Moreover, Iruretagoyena (2019) points out that by means of literature students had the chance to practice empathy and acquire international attitudes that include the capacity to decenter, deconstruct, and critique cultural products and values, including their own. However, it is critical to note that, according to Arboleda & Castro (2019), it is also essential for students to have the option to select the material they wish to read. Educators must continuously remember this while choosing a literary text since having a say in what to read makes learning more enjoyable. Giving kids the freedom to choose the book they want to approach was essential for boosting their desire to read, write, and share their tales.

On the other hand, teachers ought to serve as intercultural mediators. After gathering some data, it became clear that instructors needed to possess three distinct qualities: they needed to be transformative, instructive, and cultural researchers. First of all, Omaggio (2001, cited by Jaramillo, 2015) notes that teachers are unsure of exactly what to teach in terms of culture, what subjects to steer clear of, and which ones to emphasize more. Additionally, according to Cushner and Mahon (2009), teachers are ill-equipped to promote their students' intercultural competency due to their lack of knowledge about foreign culture, this could have a detrimental effect on how kids acquire ICC. For this reason, the instructor ought to be a cultural researcher, it is crucial to strengthen both their personal communication growth and their professional work as English teachers (Padrón &

Pendás, 2020) train in various cultural aspects, the creation of tools, and the proper procedure for developing ICC.

Also, teachers ought to be transforming as well. This means that teachers should check for changes in the cultural attitudes of their students. Olaya & Gómez (2013) highlighted that preconceptions and misunderstandings about other ethnic groups continue to have an impact on students enrolled in teacher education programs. This may be the result of the instructional methods' emphasis on the study of superficial culture. Teachers are asked to come up with alternatives that will assist aspiring EFL teachers in reducing erroneous images of other people by using more relevant resources that allow for discussion of cultural conflicts, behaviors, and beliefs. In this manner, the traditional beliefs and fixed attitudes of our unjust, prejudiced, exclusive, and discriminatory societies must be challenged, transformed, and improved upon, according to Gómez (2014), who believes that teachers interested in pedagogy, multiculturalism, and/or interculturality, must work with students to achieve these goals. Consequently, teachers should act as advisors throughout the ICC acquisition process. Teachers play a key role in establishing ICC since they need to learn how to be intercultural facilitators in order to lead their pupils in the same path (Espinosa et al. 2019).

Lastly, it is critical to note that educators must create conducive environments, depending on their backgrounds, for the development of ICC because engaging in discussions about culture, shifting perspectives, and developing new behaviors can be difficult for students. In this regard, Triana (2019) asserts that one of the most significant duties of instructors may be to choose an effective lesson plan that enables the development

of environments conducive to communication. In order to assist students in bringing up prior experiences, summarizing and synthesizing the text, and extending and evaluating their grasp of the texts, teachers need to consider the before, during, and after students' behavior. The author also highlights the need for EFL teachers to communicate cultural information without elevating the target culture above the students' own. Language instructors must foster a favorable environment and attitude toward the target culture in order to achieve this goal.

Numerous studies showing the influence of literature on developing ICC have been completed by numerous distinguished authors. After presenting the outcomes discovered, the author's conclusions will be presented in the next section.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions

Nowadays, EFL students are exposed to a variety of cultural contexts because of the increasing level of globalization and the transnationalism that results from it. To support students in this process, it is necessary to develop intercultural communicative competence. ICC is a capability made up of abilities, knowledge, and motivation that improves meaningful and successful communication in intercultural settings. The key problem previously identified was the low level of intercultural communicative competency in Latin American EFL formal educational settings. Teachers lacked the abilities required to promote intercultural competency in their students. This had a detrimental impact on the development of the learners' ICC because of a variety of variables, including their cultural ignorance, their structural tradition of teaching a FL, their lack of trust in their competence to design lessons, and their uncertainty about what to teach. This chapter will display the conclusions that were reached after a thorough analysis of the documents regarding the impact of the implementation of literature as a strategy to foster ICC.

First of all, it is concluded that teachers are essential in promoting ICC. It is the duty of educators to provide appropriate input that highlights cultural characteristics. As such, they must be very proactive because they need to find or adapt this material. Additionally, teachers must possess the necessary deep cultural understanding. Despite the fact of the little knowledge of what to teach in EFL classrooms, numerous authors and

professors have been aware of it and conducting research to further educate aspiring teachers.

Furthermore, teachers must look for various approaches and tools that facilitate students' exposure to culture while taking into account their environment, examining the students' educational, linguistic, psychological, and cultural traits as well as their needs, interests, and potential. This is tactical and crucial for the growth of multicultural communication skills. Regarding strategies, the present study lists the methodologies employed, including reading response theory, task-based learning, and inquiry-based learning, as well as the numerous objectives reached, including meaning negotiation, value development, critical thinking development, and accurate input.

In terms of materials, it is established that authentic materials—in this case, literary texts—are appropriate resources that are rich in cultural information from many civilizations, societies, and eras as it depicts unfair social practices, oppression, traditions, and customs from various ethnic backgrounds. It serves as a platform for challenging irregular and unfair issues of race, gender, class, ideology, politics, and the strength of a cultural group. In this way, literature can aid in fostering cultural enlightenment and critical thinking. It is crucial to emphasize that the content must be approached critically, involving the students in the reading and analysis process. Through the exchange of knowledge, students must develop new ideas and opinions. The teachers must accompany the students from a transformative perspective in this regard. As a result, educators need to monitor any changes in their pupils' cultural attitudes.

In a similar way, this behavior change also encourages students to develop cultural awareness, which involves accepting and understanding the cultures of others. The process

of developing cultural awareness is totally complete when pupils can identify and embrace their own cultural heritage through literary texts and compare such aspects to those of other cultures. Together with his classmates, the learner was also able to create fresh interpretations and cultural meanings through literature. Additionally, the student demonstrated empathy and tolerance for learned cultures, suggesting that students may accept and respect cultural differences in others' speech, behavior, or thought processes, facilitating intercultural communication.

The findings presented in Chapter Four demonstrate improvements in the intercultural competence of teachers and, subsequently, of students in EFL courses using literary texts. As a result, first, literary texts have a significant influence on the growth of intercultural communicative skills in Latin American EFL programs. Second, there is a clear connection between reading literature and increasing cultural sensitivity. Third, various approaches for using literary works as a resource to promote ICC have been explored. Additionally, when ICC was promoted using literature, numerous results were attained. The value of the teacher's involvement in promoting ICC was also addressed.

Finally, it is vital to point out that there has not been much recent research done in Latin America, and it was difficult to locate documents in the past ten years. Additionally, there are documents by a single author from the same country and populations that are comparable, also, most of the studies were carried out in Colombia (Appendix 5) this limits the scope of the investigation. As a result, it is encouraged that additional research be done on this area in the future.

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Appendices

Appendix 1.

Annotated Bibliography

Appendix 1.1. Annotated Bibliography Findings Selection

Appendix 2.

Matrix.

Appendix 3.

Documents Reviewed and Selected

Appendix 4.

Timeline - Research.xlsx

Appendix 5

Studies.xlsx

Table 1*Objectives, Categories and Codes*

Objective	Categories	Codes
The Application of Literature Impacts the Development of Cultural Awareness.	Literature and cultural awareness	Values Source of culture Cultural enrichment
Approaches employed when implementing literary texts to foster intercultural communicative competence.	How it is implemented to foster ICC	Cultural awareness Source of culture Approaches
To report different outcomes when fostering ICC by means of literature.	Results of implementing literary texts to encourage ICC	Role of the teacher