RAISING INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS AT A PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL BY
MEANS OF A DIDACTIC SEQUENCE

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RAISING INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS AT A PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL BY
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By

JENNIFER VÁSQUEZ HUERTAS

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Research advisor

Tim Marr, MA, PGCE (TESOL), MA (App Ling), Ph.D. (App Ling)

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# ABSTRACT

Raising intercultural awareness is a process of negotiating meaning and to have a shared understanding among people with different ideas, opinions and beliefs; it is about appreciating difference as the rule, not the exception. Public schools do not usually work with resources which engage students in intercultural exchanges and intercultural encounters; as a result, five units were put together into a didactic sequence in order to raise intercultural awareness and notice language; so that seventh grade students find the English that makes them happy (Blommaert, 2016). Results shed light on the complex process students go through when interacting with disbelief and curiosity, yet the main findings account as evidence of the significant changes students went through after explicit instruction by means of a didactic sequence. In the concluding section, the author highlights the need of taking into account students' wants and needs, as well as the prior knowledge and beliefs they have.

**Key words:** intercultural awareness, intercultural competence, noticing language, negotiating meaning, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF).

# I. INTRODUCTION

Developing intercultural awareness has not been the focus in language teaching (Lázár & Lussier, 2016) despite the efforts of including the sociocultural competence into the Common European Framework; language teachers sometimes look at it as merely factual knowledge to be imparted about a country (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002). Notwithstanding, the notion of English as a Lingua Franca (Jenkins, 2015) strongly suggests that English belongs to the world, consequently, it is imperative for language teachers to turn their attention to an intercultural, engaging perspective, where difference is seen as the rule, instead of directing it to the linguistic, structural view of the language. This means that teachers need to ensure students understand that language is the vehicle to share and convey meaning, as well as understanding that through language, people not only share their wants and needs, they also share their identities, their values and beliefs; they share culture (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002; Liddicoat & Crozet, 1999, Paige 2003). Hence, looking at language teaching as a structural, linguistic process, is simply the shallow, superficial layer of it.

Public education in Colombia need to account for people who are able to accept difference with respect, who are capable of feeling empathy and listen to different points of view. Furthermore, intercultural awareness, if thought about carefully, can benefit teachers in developing a sense of tolerance and respect which is highly needed, and intercultural language teaching could be fundamental in such process. Through the development of intercultural resources, which not only includes the linguistic part, but also the process of critical thinking, students can critically assess the resources presented (making use of critical discourse analysis) and to engage with them in different ways, which discards only superficial knowledge.

Moreover, students and teachers often tend to think that the primary aim of language teaching is to teach the structural part of the language and not language in context (Moeller & Nugent, 2014; Lázár & Lussier, 2016). As a result, I decided to work on the matter and create a solution for my students to overcome this issue. I believe that the main objective of a language teacher is to help students to become "cultural mediators"; people who are able to be open to difference, who are curious about other people's way of living and to suspend disbelief about different cultures and ways of seeing life (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002). Additionally, students should be able to critically assess different perspectives, and to decide whether they agree with them or not, with a respectful opinion about them.

Raising intercultural awareness is the objective of this research project, therefore a didactic sequence was designed in order to put together resources in the four communicative skills to critically assess them and enhance intercultural competence. It takes place at a public high school in Cali, analyzing data collected with seventh grade students from I.E.T.I. Donald Rodrigo Tafur; which is located in República de Israel neighborhood in comuna 16. The rationale behind the research project is to raise students' awareness so that they understand the way English can promote intercultural competence; which is essentially the ability to "ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities, interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality" (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002, p.5), and see the evolution of the language into a means to become global citizens (Dusi, Steinbach & Messetti, 2012; Farahani, 2013).

In the following sections the objectives of the research project will be stated, as well as the rationale behind them, which is to promote and raise intercultural awareness through a didactic sequence that includes resources in the four communicative skills. After that, the review of the literature around the topic will be presented, including case studies where the technological component is included and other kinds of reports in which guidelines have been created to promote

intercultural competence. In the following chapter, the concepts that support this paper will be conceptualized, such as intercultural competence, intercultural awareness, culture learning and teaching and the intercultural teaching principles. Lastly, the paper will be concluded by presenting the findings of the work with the didactic sequence, as well as providing some insights on how an intercultural resource would look like and extend the invitation to continue joining the discussion in order to see English as the vehicle to convey meaning with different people, with different cultural backgrounds.

Thus, the structure of the project was divided into three moments. Firstly, the instruments were designed in order to gather information, such as the surveys, the pre-posttests, and the didactic sequence. Secondly, the instruments were tested with the students over a period of two months. Thirdly, the presentation of the results was collected into the report. The project was assembled in this manner in the interest of designing a didactic sequence for teachers of a public high school in Cali in order to raise intercultural awareness in seventh graders, which included materials on the four communicative skills in order to compare what students understand by intercultural awareness before and after applying the didactic sequence and to analyze how much these resources contributed to raising intercultural awareness. Additionally, analysis on the extent of intercultural awareness increase and significant differences was held, before and after the work with the sequence.

Finally, raising intercultural awareness is a topic that has been widely discussed (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002; Liddicoat et al. 2003; Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino & Kohler 2003; Paige 2003), and I would like to join the conversation by giving an insight on how an intercultural resource would look like in order to raise intercultural awareness.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Developing intercultural competence has now shifted into a major field of study. Their major supporters are Byram, Liddicoat, Scarino and Paige who have been supporting the field with major contributions on how to become an intercultural learner (Byram, 2001, 2002; Liddicoat, 2005), and how teachers can prepare students to appreciate language as "culturally contexted meaning making" (Liddicoat, 2008, p. 2), and to reach common ground when interacting in the Target Language (TL).

Thus, language teaching has evolved throughout the years. From the audiolingual method, to the Direct method, to the Grammar-Translation, and finally arriving to a consensus: the communicative approach; all these methods have focused on language in its structural phase, focusing on rules, and how to teach them "correctly", for students to "behave in native speaker-like ways" (Liddicoat, 2008, p. 4). Though included in our standards established by MEN (Ministerio de Educación Nacional) and the Common European Framework (2001), the sociolinguistic competence is the least developed competence (Lázár & Lussier, 2016) considering that language teaching has focused mainly on how to pronounce correctly, how to write without making mistakes, how to be like a native speaker.

Hence, the aim of this research is to design/adapt resources that can enhance intercultural awareness through the means of a didactic sequence, which includes resources on the four communicative skills, for students to see how English can be a tool for becoming global citizens (Dusi, Steinbach & Messetti, 2012; Farahani, 2013). In order to reach that objective, a collection of articles, books, web pages and other set of resources were consulted to review the existing literature on how different kinds of resources have been put together, and to gather ideas on the fittest resources for the context in which the research project took place.

### A. Intercultural competence

Defining intercultural competence has been the objective of many studies and many research projects. LoBianco, Liddicoat and Crozet (1999) wrote a book about how this new paradigm shifts language teaching into the articulation of culture as "an integral part of language" (p. 11). Back in 1999, this paradigm was poorly investigated; which is why they wanted Intercultural Language Teaching (ILT), to be more visible in terms of policy making. They argue that ILT "prepares language learners to know how to negotiate comfortable third places between the self and the other/the foreign" (p. 11), and that language teachers need to engage with it, if they want change to come in their classrooms.

Moreover, Moeller and Nugent (2014) in their article "Building intercultural competence in the language classroom", define intercultural competence as the interaction based on "mutual understanding and an attitude of openness" (p.3). They are also investigating the ways in which classroom practice can enhance intercultural competence. They affirm that "Research on intercultural competence underscores the importance of preparing students to engage and collaborate in a global society by discovering appropriate ways to interact with people from other cultures" (p. 3).

In addition to the concept, Moeller and Nugent (2014) report the 5 C's of the Standards for Foreign Language learning from 2006: **Communication** (communicating in languages other than English), **Cultures** (gaining knowledge and understanding of other cultures), **Connections** (connecting with other disciplines and acquire information), **Comparisons** (developing insight into the nature of language and culture) and **Communities** (participating in multilingual communities at home and around the world). These Standards were intended to guide learners "toward becoming viable contributors and participants in a linguistically and culturally diverse society" (p.2). Nevertheless, they argue that since culture is an ever-changing process, teachers must tend to provide with opportunities to be curious about the different ways people see the world and enhancing intercultural

competence. These five C's will serve as guideline for the development of the didactic sequence in an attempt to create and adapt appropriate material for I.E.T.I Donald Rodrigo Tafur students to raise intercultural awareness.

## B. Points of articulation between culture and language

LoBianco, Liddicoat and Crozet (1999, p. 21) in their "Striving for the third place" book, defined five points of articulation between culture and language; culture being located at one extreme far from language. The role of the educator is to find several ways in which language can meet halfway with culture, moving away from the extreme part of language where grammar is prioritized, to put culture in "linguistics and paralinguistic structures" (LoBianco et al., 1999, p.116). Articulating culture and language in language teaching can start the change: broadening students' world view. English belongs to the world now, hence it is important to be prepared to have intercultural communication and to "decentre: to make the strange familiar and the familiar strange" (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002, p. 14).

Additionally, LoBianco et al., propose three modes of operation in ILT:

1. the teaching of a linguaculture.
2. the comparison between learners' first language/culture and target language/culture.
3. intercultural exploration.

The teaching of a linguaculture or links between language and culture takes the points of articulation shown below (Figure 1), for teachers to turn them into teachable material. The aim of ILT is for learners to make counter distinctions between their L1 and their L2; learning their own L1 linguaculture as well as target's linguaculture (p.22). The intercultural exploration means to take a third place to negotiate understanding and meaning.
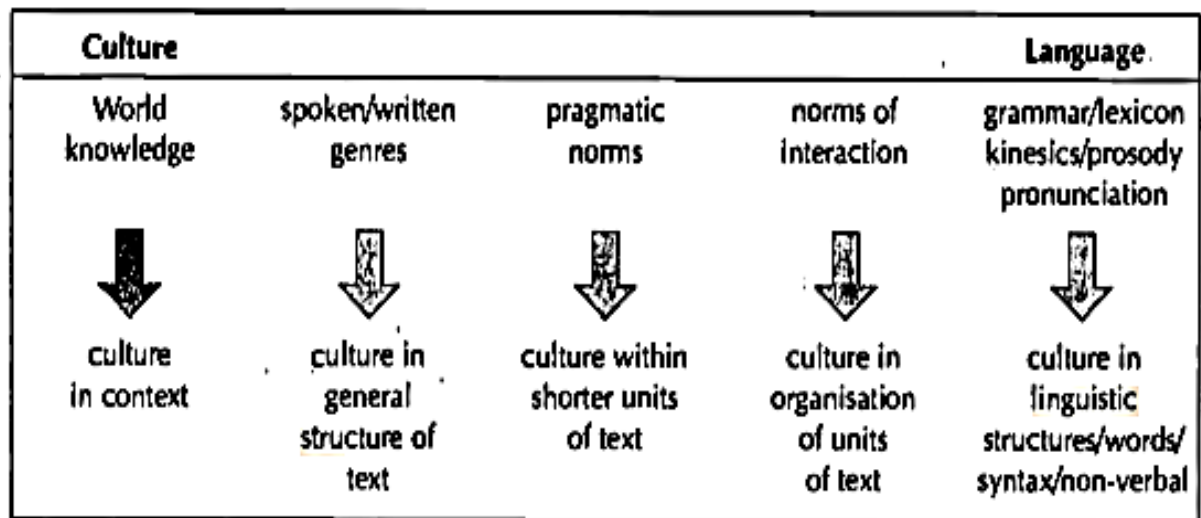
| Culture | | | | Language |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| World knowledge | spoken/written genres | pragmatic norms | norms of interaction | grammar/lexicon kinesics/prosody pronunciation |
| ⬇ | ⬇ | ⬇ | ⬇ | ⬇ |
| culture in context | culture in general structure of text | culture within shorter units of text | culture in organisation of units of text | culture in linguistic structures/words/ syntax/non-verbal |

Figure 1. Points of articulation (LoBianco, Liddicoat & Crozet 1999, p.116)

Furthermore, LoBianco et al. (1999), agree with Byram's (2002) concept of "decentre". They both state that, in order to fully achieve an intercultural encounter, where meaning is negotiated, you have to "adopt a third place", which accounts to reach common ground, where one neither leave one's culture behind, nor "acculturate" with a foreign one. They extend an invitation of adopting an "intercultural position", in which learning from other people's experiences takes place; "the third place is therefore a point of interaction, hybridity and exploration" (LoBianco et al., 1999, p. 5).

Likewise, Byram et al. (2002) define intercultural competence as the "ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities and to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities" (p. 6). For the authors, social identities refer to the identity the country provides; the multiple identities refer to the social group a person belongs to and makes part within the society (how a person performs within the society as a mother, or as a teacher for example). Therefore, Byram et al. declare that developing the intercultural dimension calls for developing intercultural speakers, or "mediators who are able to engage with complexity… and to avoid the stereotyping which accompanies perceiving

someone through a single identity" (p.5), which makes the learner consider the different roles a person performs within a community, and understand them better (ideas, opinions, ways of acting).

Similarly, Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino and Kohler (2003), describe an educational program aiming at intercultural competence as "moving well beyond a static approach to learning isolated facts about an individual culture and involves the learner in a process of transformation of the self, his/her ability to communicate and to understand communication and his/her skills for ongoing learning" (p.16). This approach is challenging for both learners and educators, given the fact that it accounts for thinking outside the box and stopping teaching/learning the way it has been done for decades, and instead, widens a new world of opportunities, in which students get to know themselves better and get to know more about other people's lives and different cultures. It is a revitalizing way to see language teaching, which is not focused on structures only, but the way you use language in context and negotiate meaning.

In this sense, reaching a native-like level is not the ultimate goal anymore; now, teachers should aim at helping students becoming "cultural mediators" or "intercultural speakers" (Byram, Nichols & Stevens, 2001), who are able to deal with cultural difference, and who accept other people's ideas and perspectives. Agreeing with Liddicoat (2008), "instead of aiming for a native-like speaker, language teaching should aim for a bilingual norm: developing a speaker who is comfortable and capable in an intercultural context" (Liddicoat, 2008, p.3). These cultural mediators will be capable of adopting an intercultural position to overcome any cultural misunderstanding and negotiate meaning, no matter significant differences they might have.

**B. Principles for intercultural language learning**

Additionally to the concept of intercultural competence, Liddicoat et al. (2003), worked together and defined five principles for intercultural language learning: 1) **active construction**, which is, through interaction with others, actively engaging and creating meaning; 2) **making connections**, which means that learning takes place when the interpersonal (social interactions) connects with the intrapersonal (internally) and the previous experiences link with the new ones; 3) **social interaction**, accounts for reciprocal relationships in the classroom where learner brings out his/her own judgements and perceptions; 4) **reflection**, where conscious awareness is targeted, and students monitor, self-reflect and reflect on other people's ways of seeing life, and 5) **responsibility**, which takes learners' attitudes and disposition into consideration. (pp. 47-51).

These principles have widely been put into practice to design and/or adapt materials (see Liddicoat and Scarino, 2013). The authors also took them as the basis for their discussion on resources. They argue that:

1. active construction: a resource that allows learners to develop their own understanding through the text by noticing aspects on language and culture.
2. Making connections: a resource that can be personalized to the learner; that connects to learners' experiences.
3. Social interaction: a resource that allows students to engage with others about it, and understanding different ways of interpreting it.
4. Reflection: a resource that engages learners in an "interpretative process", where they can articulate new understandings of language, culture and their relationship.
5. Responsibility: a resource that affords opportunities to be responsible with the communication a learner may have with diverse others.

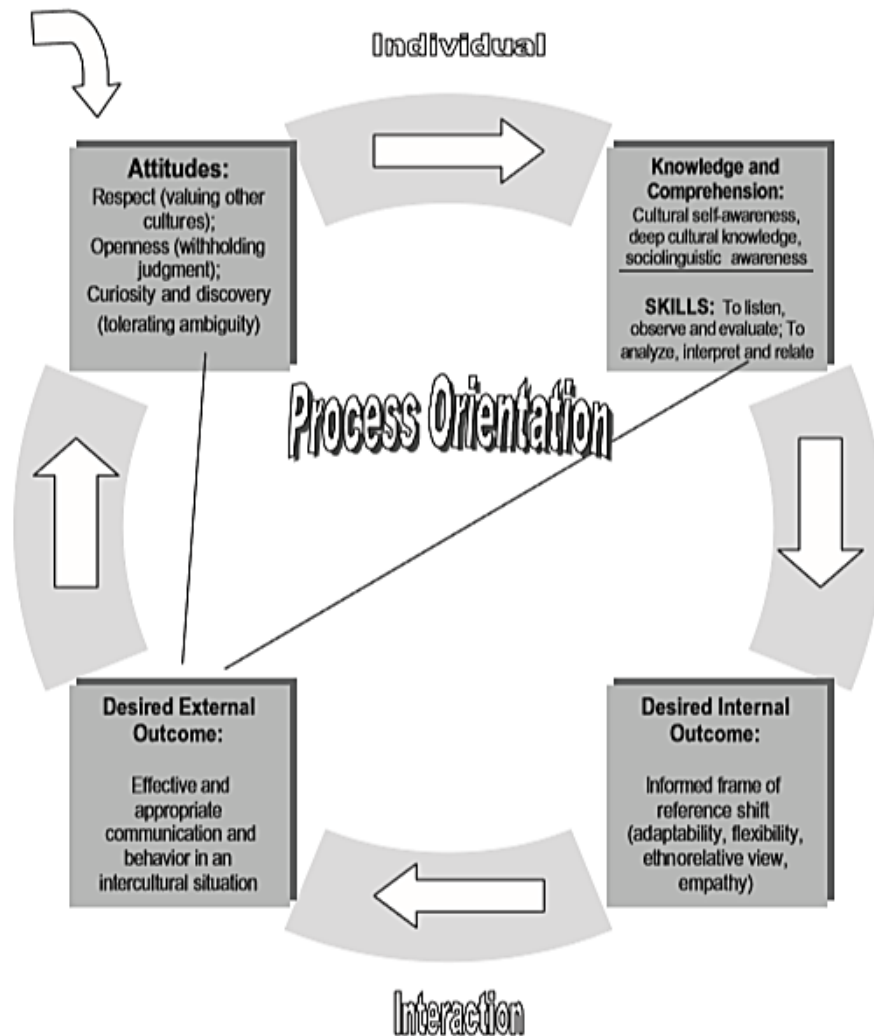**D. Process model of intercultural competence**



Figure 2. Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competence (2006), cited in Deardoff (2009)

Deardorff (2009) affirms that intercultural experience is not enough for developing intercultural competence (preface). There must be explicit and planned instruction inside the classroom in order to enhance ICC. She argues that developing intercultural competence is a life-long process and that teachers must have a scheduled and conscious plan for students to engage with the process. Deardorff's ideas, once again, agree with Byram's empowering statement: the native speaker

form is no longer required and accepted in EFL; instead, it is a matter of understanding that the process has changed, and non-native teachers can also be a part of cultural teaching. Therefore, Figure 2 gives teachers an outline on how to plan classes that can enhance intercultural competence.

### E. Culture in Language Teaching

There have been many approaches to culture in language teaching (Liddicoat et al. 2003). These authors, in their "Report on intercultural language learning" reviewed the literature around the concept of culture, and stated that these groupings "represent different views… different levels of concern… and different understandings of the place of culture in languages education" (Liddicoat et al. 2003, p.5). In addition, they present a timeline of the ways in which culture has been thought of in language teaching.

They argue that one of the most traditional paradigms in language teaching is the teaching of the **high culture**, particularly in literature, which is measured in terms of the amount of reading you do and knowledge you have of the literature of the TL. More recently, the authors describe that culture was taught as **area studies**, where culture was seen as learning about the target language country, which comprises history, geography and institutions within it. Following this paradigm, the authors report the work of Gumperz (1982) and Hymes (1974, 1986), whose contribution lead to a very strong approach in the 1980's: **culture as societal norms**. This approach views culture as what a cultural group is likely to do and understanding certain ways of acting and certain beliefs the group may have (Liddicoat et al. 2003). Finally, the authors acknowledge **culture as practice**, as "context-sensitive, negotiated and highly variable" action (Liddicoat et al. 2003, p.6). Finally, Liddicoat et al. point out that they developed their work into this approach to culture, where the learner needs to put himself/herself under an intercultural position.

Similarly, Paige, Jorstand, Siaya, Klein and Colby (2000) state that culture learning is "the process of acquiring the culture-specific and culture-general

knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures" (p.4). For them, **culture-specific** refers to what is relevant to a given target culture (knowledge and skills); whereas **culture-general** refers to knowledge that is "generalizable in nature and transferable across cultures" (p.6). Byram (2001, 2002) takes this approach to culture learning and conceptualizes it as well.

Byram et al. (2002) affirm that cultural knowledge (the authors refer to this as *savoirs*) falls under two components: 1) knowledge of social processes, 2) knowledge of illustrations of those processes and products (how other people are likely to perceive you) (Byram et al., 2002, p. 8). Furthermore, the skills (the authors refer to this as *savoir comprendre*) are made up of the ability to see how different/alike two or more cultures might be by comparing information and putting them side by side. There are other sets of skills: the skills of discovery and interaction (the authors refer to this as *savoir apprendre/faire*). These skills allow learners to acquire new knowledge and integrate it with previous knowledge. Moreover, there is an ability to critically evaluate other people's perspectives through the acquisition of another set of skills called critical cultural awareness (the authors refer to this as *savoir s'engager*), which allows students to assess criteria of one's own culture and other cultures as well (Byram et al., 2002, p. 9).

Likewise, Paige et al. (2000) emphasize that the overall goal of cultural learning is "1) consciousness-raising in regard to perception and perspective and 2) an ever-increasing ability to recognize at least in a limited way what things might look like from the viewpoint of members of another culture" (p. 8-9). To sum up, the major goal of language learning should aim at developing in students a sense of awareness on how different and/or how similar they might be in regards of other people's way of seeing life.

## F. Resources

Liddicoat and Scarino (2013), in their "Intercultural language teaching and learning" book, devoted a whole chapter to describe a successful intercultural resource as well as offering theoretical background on the kind of resources that are useful for developing intercultural competence. They claim that "resources provide language learners with experiences of language and culture that then become available for learning" (p.83). This means that resources are a way of exposing learners to new genres, registers and different varieties of the language; hence, we go back to the notion of English as a Lingua Franca (Jenkins, 2015), where ELT is not about teaching about United States or United Kingdom, but to expand students' knowledge of the different variations and world Englishes (Kachru, 1992). In addition, the authors claim that a resource for intercultural learning needs to "enable access to and insights about the language and culture that is being learned" (p. 84), although teachers may not focus on only one target culture, but they might include the number of cultures they see fit.

Nevertheless, Liddicoat and Scarino acknowledge that no resource can "completely meet the needs of individual teachers and their learners, and any resource will require adaptation for use with particular group of students" (p. 102). They conclude by stating that a resource can only be successful when "the teacher has adapted it for particular use and context; when students can engage with it and students can become a resource for themselves" (p. 105). Thus, all resources need to be carefully selected and properly evaluated for meeting the needs of the teacher. This chapter alone has provided the current author the tools to better understand what an intercultural resource would look like, and to properly assess them on their utility.

**G. Case Studies**

Like the current author, Croatian Master student Rogalo (2017), in her master's thesis wanted to investigate different techniques and resources to enhance intercultural competence. She studied these techniques and resources and how teachers use them at the primary level, where she herself, offers them. Then, she conducted a small-scale case study with thirteen teachers (both Croatian and International) to determine the estimate of use and perception of their intercultural awareness process in class. The results suggest that teachers use a limited set of techniques and resources, and that they still need to find ways of developing culturally competent students, confirming once again, that language teachers are one step behind in language teaching, looking at language as merely a process of structures.

On the other hand, confirming that intercultural competence is poorly developed by language teachers is the study that Richards, Conway, Roskvist, and Harvey conducted in New Zealand (2010). The authors studied ICLL implementation and awareness in seven volunteer teachers throughout a professional program during the 2008 service year at AUT University in New Zealand. The course was very successful in developing linguistic competence but less effective in developing interculturally competent teachers. Only two teachers engaged in ICLL during the observation process, which was held three times during the year. They hope that by including pedagogic principles of ICLL in the Generic framework, teachers can obtain greater chances at embracing ICLL. Having this information in hand can only ratify what has been stated before: teachers leave aside the cultural component of language no matter what country they are in.

Nevertheless, in Australia, researchers have committed to developing intercultural competence (Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino & Kohler 2003; Crichton, Paige, Papademetre & Scarino 2004; Scarino, Crichton & Woods 2007; Liddicoat 2008; Liddicoat & Scarino 2013 and O'Neill, Scarino, Crichton, Heugh & Xuan 2016).

In order to respond to the need of integrating the intercultural dimension into the language curriculum, a study was conducted at University of South Australia (UniSA) by Crichton, Paige, Papademetre, and Scarino (2004); in which the project team created an integrated set of resources in order to stimulate self-reflection on what it means to be involved in intercultural learning, given University's international nature. The outcome was a guideline with a set of resources that can be incorporated in graduate courses.

Liddicoat (2008) is also interested in integrating intercultural resources into the teaching practice, for that reason he conducted a case study from Japanese language teaching and learning. In this paper, Liddicoat offers a framework for teachers to engage with different ways in which language curriculum and practice can be seen from an intercultural perspective. He provides theoretical background and some aspects of classroom practice by proposing a series of tips for teachers to understand how to take language samples and turn them into "culturally-rich experiences" (p. 9) to allow opportunities for self-reflection.

Additionally, at UniSA, two more studies were conducted in terms of developing English language and intercultural learning capabilities by the research team composed by O'Neill, Scarino, Crichton, Heugh, and Xuan (2016). The case study number one, was an intervention whose goal was to lead to effective English language development for students from diverse linguistic, cultural and faith-based backgrounds at UniSA. The participants were from three English as an additional language (EAL) courses, with data collected from written assessments, self-reflection- feedback and individual interviews. The project team accepted code-switching and translanguaging as an inevitable process in bilingual and multilingual societies, acknowledging that students' L1 serves a significant function and role to support and strengthen English capabilities. This case study supports the current author's research context, considering that her students all have a true beginner level, in which the L1 needs to be used.

Likewise, case study number two, aimed to develop an intercultural communication course in an undergraduate course, which had a goal of enhancing students' ability to become effective intercultural communicators. The project team focused their attention on teaching, learning and assessment, with data collected from interviews, written assessments, observations and meetings. The findings were extensive, but the main one was that students saw the intercultural orientation relevant and necessary as future globally-minded professionals. These findings confirm the need of including the intercultural dimension in language teaching, so that students can become global citizens. In this context (public high school in Cali, Colombia), global citizens can mean accepting difference and engaging in communication with people from other cultural backgrounds (Venezuela for example), and promoting respect for human dignity (Byram et al., 2002), no matter political, religious or any other stance they have.

Finally, at UniSA, Scarino, Crichton, and Woods (2007), provide information from a case study of collaboration between an offshore (open learning) UniSA program and an educational institution in Malaysia, with focus on Woods' experiences of delivering this course, an ESL specialist; through an 18-month period. With the help of self-reflective writing, in-depth interviews and collaborative analysis, Woods realized that she needed to make changes for another cultural setting and not transposing the Australian program to Malaysia without any mediation, no matter the open learning nature of the course. This paper provides tools to recognize that changes need to be made in order to fit the context in which learning takes place. Resources without any adjustment are just templates without meaning (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013).

In order to enhance intercultural awareness, Vlachos, Netikšienoٞ, and Concheiro (2009) developed a project with the objective of creating a virtual web tool for EFL students through online collaboration from three international groups: The Greek group, who were EFL teachers, supported the pedagogical part; the Lithuanian group were the creators of the app, and the Icelandic group created the

marketing campaign. No results were presented due to ongoing study. Nevertheless, the authors concluded that tele-collaborative programs enhance language learning and intercultural awareness through online communication. This kind of cooperation would be wonderful to use, unfortunately, I.E.T.I Donald Rodrigo Tafur does not have the appropriate resources for undergoing a collaboration like this.

Moreover, the three-year study that Liddicoat, Scarino, and Kohler conducted in 2017, has given the current author another perspective on how school structures can influence changes within schools. Deciding that language curriculum needs to account for interculturally competent learners can make some teachers uneasy in that they need to change the teaching practice that they have used for so many years. That's what school culture is, "unwritten cultural norms, developed and reinforced by managers, teachers and students, which impact on teaching practice" (Humphries & Burns, 2015, p. 241). This school culture is hard to change, but not impossible. That is what the research team did in three Australian schools, where they changed their language learning curriculum with the aim of increasing language learning. As external participants, they could see the cultural norms within the schools and help internal leaders to change them and adopt new language policies. These changes were made in terms of time on task and significant curriculum content.

## H. Conclusion

Resources to enhance intercultural competence is a major field of study, but unfortunately, language educators continue to minimize its contributions to language learning. Liddicoat and Byram have spent several years investigating different ways in which teachers can raise intercultural awareness; to allow students' "opportunities to reflect on their own language and culture" (Liddicoat, 2008, p. 4). Rogalo master's thesis (2017) aimed to know how teaching practice included the intercultural dimension, but she failed to provide teachers with the tools for doing so. This research project is not going to assume teachers know how to raise intercultural

awareness; instead, it is providing the resources to do so, and the review of the literature on the topic provided the guidelines to design a didactic sequence which included resources in the four communicative skills, based on contributions made by these authors. Developing an interculturally competent student (Liddicoat, 2008) is an urgent need if we want to enhance tolerance and empathy in our students.

Finally, intercultural competence should be the main goal in language teaching, given that fact that it enhances in students the ability to have a shared understanding between people who may or may not have the same cultural background, without any conflict whatsoever. Plus, intercultural teaching needs to be a creative involving process where resources need to be adapted in order to meet learners and educators' contexts and expectations (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013).

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## A. CONTEXT

The study was conducted at I.E.T.I Donald Rodrigo Tafur, located in República de Israel neighborhood in comuna 16. The school was born due to the efforts of the community, which conformed a pre-technical school committee in 1979. The committee supported the need of a school in a document, collected the community signatures and sent it to the Education Secretary, the Municipal Planning, the Internal Revenue Secretary and the Municipal Council. It was not until 1992 that the committee managed to make The Municipal Council to create the school and the construction began in República de Israel neighborhood in August that year. Subsequently, 15 teachers, a dean, an academic coordinator, a secretary, and a treasurer were named by means of municipal decree number 1151.

In 2001, as of law 715, the government established a criterion in order to reorganize the educational sector, asking primary schools to merge into a single educative institution. Therefore, I.E.T.I Donald Rodrigo Tafur is the high school branch, and there are five elementary branches that make part of it. Thus, from hereafter, the school is constituted by one Dean, five coordinators, 102 teachers, 18 members of the administrative sector and 3154 students. On account of the school technical nature, there are four technical subjects, which are eligible. Students have the chance to rotate among them in grade 6 and 7, so that in grade 8 they choose the specialty. These are: Computer science, Technical Drawing, Electricity, and Electronics. In this sense, Donald Tafur is the only technical school in the sector competing against other five, which makes it the highest ranked in the neighborhood. Students who attend it come from a low social stratum and see the specialties as an opportunity to get into the job market.

## B. PARTICIPANTS

The participants were 28 seventh grade students with a low proficiency level in English. Group 7-5 was randomly chosen, with students ranging between 11 and 14 years old. The afternoon shift has a distinctive feature, in which students are usually older than the ones from the morning shift. Thus, in this group, there are two students who are 14 years old, four students who are 11 years old, six students who are 13 years old, and sixteen students who are 12 years old; thirteen of them are girls and fifteen of them are boys.

English classes are three times per week, with students claiming to have been studying it for more than eight years. Unfortunately, in elementary schools, English is worked one hour per week, with untrained teachers.

## C. TYPE OF RESEARCH

In order to find answers to the set of research questions, a qualitative-descriptive approach (Mackey & Gass, 2016) was used, one based on interpretive analysis with "careful and detailed" data description (2016: 162) in natural settings, where there is no attempt to control the context. Furthermore, a small group was chosen in the interest of gathering deeper, more nuanced data from a smaller target without falling into generalization.

### Research questions

- ❖ To what extent did the resources in the didactic sequence benefit students to notice and discuss some features related to intercultural awareness? Specifically, to what extent did the resources in the didactic sequence benefit students to become aware of what it implies to use English in the global contexts?

❖ What were seventh graders' beliefs regarding the use of English as a Lingua Franca, where intelligibility and meaning negotiation play a key role, before the work with the didactic sequence?

❖ What were seventh graders' beliefs regarding the use of English as a Lingua Franca, where intelligibility and meaning negotiation play a key role, after the work with the didactic sequence?

❖ Were there any significant differences in promoting curiosity, self-awareness, reflection and critical thinking, among other aspects related to intercultural awareness, after the work with the didactic sequence?

I came with these particular set of research questions given the fact that the main aim was to design and adapt resources so that they could fit students' context and raise intercultural awareness; which called for a measure of achievement and success. Furthermore, the need of being aware of students' perceptions before and after the work with the sequence was of great importance due to the fact that it was valuable data to compare and finally assessing the success of the didactic sequence. The final question felt into a backup-question category, in account of its nature to corroborate the extent to significant differences after the appliance of the instruments.

## D. PROCEDURE

The research was divided into three stages in order to gather information about the significant (if any) outcomes of the sequence.

Stage 1 was devoted to gather information about what seventh graders thought of intercultural awareness without any intervention from the researcher. This was made by the means of a nine-question survey (survey 1) which compiled

students' ideas on the topic before applying the didactic sequence and a pretest, which was aimed at obtaining beliefs and ideas and working on students' preconceptions.

Stage 2 included a one-month period working with the didactic sequence, which comprised resources carefully designed and adapted in the four communicative skills for raising intercultural awareness. Five units were put together, adapting the school's curriculum to it.

Stage 3 was to gather information about significant differences in students' ideas of intercultural awareness, with the help of a second survey (survey 2) and a posttest, which were designed with great care in order to assess the same criteria: noticing language (genre, register, style) and cultural behavior; expose learners to different variations of English; grasp on concepts such as accent, intelligibility and comprehensibility, and negotiating meaning - adopting a third place.

## E. DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

A survey and a pretest were applied before the work with the didactic sequence. At a later stage, a second survey and a posttest were applied in order to obtain subjective impressions (Nunan, 1992) and to determine students' ideas in regard to their intercultural awareness process.

Both sets of instruments were valuable in assembling pieces of information that were needed for the report, due to the fact that the surveys were intended to obtain data concerning the population of the study as well as students' opinions about general information related to intercultural awareness, whereas the tests were intended to obtain the data concerning the specifics.

The general information collected with the help of the surveys considered aspects related to the most general picture of what students considered before the treatment as well as getting the statistics which could expand the data from the population, such as age, gender, English learning background and so on; which similarly connected students' prior knowledge concerning with native-speaker models, bilingualism and accent with what they would like to include in the sequence so that it could be directed into targeting students' desires (see appendix 1). Otherwise, data from the population would have been neglected and inferred if surveys had not been applied.

Additionally, the more detailed information linked to the five concepts stated above (see stage 3 in the procedure) was provided by the tests, which supported the results gathered in stage 1. The reason why there was the need of using both sets of instruments is that they complemented and supported each other in gathering as much information as possible as to offer a clearer picture of all the required and essential data for the report.

Similarly, the first set of instruments, which were Survey 1 and pretest, were used with the objective of gathering introductory ideas which students might have regarding the five variables stated above. The second set of instruments, which were Survey 2 and posttest, were used with the purpose of collecting information about the significant differences students might have obtained due to the work with the didactic sequence. The difference between the two sets falls in the time variable, given the fact that they were applied with two months apart.

The rationale behind applying two set of instruments before and after the sequence was that the primary aim of the surveys was to collect students' opinions on the resources and topics they would like to include in the sequence, and to evaluate the sequence itself. The surveys were of great importance in gathering deeper information which strongly supported the results of the tests, as well as

setting the social and academic background of the participants.  In contrast with the tests, which were designed with the objective of assessing the same criteria at both different periods of the study: noticing language (genre, register, style) and cultural behavior; expose learners to different variations of English; grasp on concepts such as accent, intelligibility and comprehensibility, and negotiating meaning - adopting a third place; before and after the sequence.

Mackey and Gass (2016) define surveys as a resource to collect data on "attitudes and opinions from a large group of participants" (p. 62) in the form of a questionnaire. Mackey and Gass report two types of questionnaires: closed and open ended. They affirm that a "closed-item question is one for which the researcher determines the possible answers" and those answers can be quantified, "whereas an open-ended question allows respondents to answer in any manner they see fit", which allow students to express their thoughts and opinions. (p. 93).

Likewise, Mackey and Gass (2016) define pretests and posttests as the instruments that "ensure comparability of the participant groups prior to their treatment, and a posttest to measure the effects of treatment" (p. 149). In this case, the 'treatment' concerned was the students' experience of being taught a didactic sequence based around the idea of intercultural awareness. Therefore, these tools were applied in order to gather information on the contribution of the didactic sequence in raising intercultural awareness in seventh grade students.

Specifically, the didactic sequence was developed as a resource to "provide language learners with experiences of language and culture that then become available for learning" (Liddicoat and Scarino, 2013, p. 83). These resources included written texts, websites, and images, which allow for "the possibility of receiving input from another participant and require output from the learner" (Liddicoat and Scarino, 2013, p. 83).

It is worth noting that the process of data collection was troublesome, to say the least. Public schools in Colombia need to overcome all sorts of problems: infrastructure struggles, lack of technological resources, strikes, among others. In this specific case, there were no strikes, but there were time-related issues. The school is going through an infrastructure reform, so that only nine classrooms were available and suitable for class. Therefore, we were working with two schedules: sixth, seventh and eleventh grade had class from 1:00 to 3:30 pm, whereas eighth, ninth, and tenth grade had class from 3:40 to 6:30 pm (the afternoon shift). This schedule calls for having class with the same groups every two weeks.

In order to sort out this obstacle, I asked my colleagues to grant me their class time in order to collect the data in 7-5 group, which is the focal group. When I did not have class at that same hour, my colleagues were free, but when I also had class, I left a workshop for the other group, so that the other teacher just made sure students were working on it. Thus, it was a matter of negotiating with other teachers in order to fulfill the objective: collecting all the data for the report.

In regard to the process itself, students felt uneasy when filling the survey and pretest. They were not used to be asked what they would like to learn about or in what way, nor to talk about their opinions on someone's level of proficiency. In addition to disbelief, students showed excitement towards the work with the sequence, due to the fact that they were accustomed to follow patterns and routines, rather than being asked to notice features that were unseen before. Moreover, students started participating more and giving their points of view, which was hard last school year. Lastly, students were asked to saw the posttest video at home so they could work with it more easily in class, which in fact it was. They saw the video reiteratively, which was of great benefit in starting discussions about concepts such as register and paralinguistic features in their own way.

Finally, the process of data analysis was organized by having the two surveys and the two tests analyzed in parallel one next to the other. In this way, matters of impressions before and after the sequence can be highlighted. Moreover, the sequence itself was analyzed in order to determine its appropriateness and usefulness regarding its objective. There were some numbers involved, which made charts relevant in the analysis; nevertheless, most of the collected data was about students' feelings, beliefs, and opinions about certain topics, in which charts were not useful.

## IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, there were three stages involved: Stage 1, which involved the work with Survey 1 and the pretest; Stage 2, which was devoted to the work with the sequence; and Stage 3, which included Survey 2 and the posttest. The analysis will be divided in three levels: **didactic sequence**, in terms of determining its usefulness regarding its objective as well as mentioning students' point of view regarding the topics that were included in it; **comparison of survey 1 and survey 2**, which were analyzed in parallel one next to the other so that matters of impressions before and after the sequence could be highlighted; and **comparison of pretest and post-test**, which analyzed five different concepts that are tied to intercultural awareness: noticing language (genre, register, style) and cultural behavior; exposing learners to different variations of English; grasping concepts such as accent, intelligibility and comprehensibility, and negotiating meaning - adopting a third place.

### A. Didactic sequence

The didactic sequence was designed in order to promote intercultural awareness taking into account the area plan for seventh grade in a public high school in Cali; in which the first term topics were included into five units. The main goal was to raise awareness in students so that they understood the way English can promote intercultural competence and see the evolution of the language into a means to become global citizens (Dusi, Steinbach & Messetti, 2012; Farahani, 2013).

Likewise, the activities presented in each of the five units were adapted in order to fulfil with the design checklist Marr and English (2019) provide, in order to adapt and design materials in the interest of teaching to "give opinions or evaluate something", and helping students to become "active noticers of language". Therefore, students were invited to re-genring (Marr, 2019), changing and playing

with genre and register, knowing what to say to whom and how to say it according to the situation and context. The objective was to achieve what Blommaert (2016) considers as the goal in language teaching, "language learning is effectively register learning … Registers that controlled informal and cultural communication modes" (p. 12).

As a result, five units were put together with the following aims: noticing language (genre, register, style) and cultural behavior.; exposing learners to different variations of English; grasping on concepts such as accent, intelligibility and comprehensibility; and negotiating meaning - adopting a third place. These categories were chosen given their relevance in understanding the different teaching approach which was about to take place. They are the shift into an intercultural language teaching, which does not focus on form, but in content and context.

The design also had its basis in Graves and Garton (2014), who note that "localizing content enables learners to talk and write about their own experiences, concerns, and culture through English" (p. 6); with many Colombian referents in English, as well as variations of English around the world. The five units were:

Unit 1: Stereotypes
Unit 2: My Family and Me
Unit 3: Children's Rights
Unit 4: Preconceptions
Unit 5: Myths and Legends

The sequence starts with a small introduction and defines the concepts which support it. Likewise, it is worth mentioning that a number of activities and resources were adapted from intercultural guidelines found in the web, which were in turn the basis of studies in a number of academic settings.

In the first unit called: Stereotypes, students were invited to review some vocabulary in the language they chose, with a quick skim through it with the help of the teacher, given the fact that a new school year had just started. In addition to the review, students were introduced to the concept of 'ascribed identities' (i.e. when others impose a pre-conceived identity on an individual due to, for example, their physical appearance) by watching the video "What kind of Asian are you?". The clip shows a fictional casual meeting between two North Americans, a woman and a man, while jogging. The man's essentializing assumptions about the woman and her Asian physical traits cause a conflict between them (See page 7 of the didactic sequence). Students answered some questions which were drawn from the video, as well as re-creating the video with a partner. The purpose of the video was for students to re-genre (changing and playing with genre and register, knowing what to say to whom and how to say it according to the situation and context), and making sure that this time there were no miscommunication issues. Overall, it was a gratifying experience to see students' videos and the way they engaged in the activity.

Furthermore, in the second unit called: "My Family and Me", students were exposed to different variation of English, such as Iranian and Jamaican English. They read a small text about the changing definition of a nuclear family, which consisted in mother, father and children. This text was chosen with the sole purpose of including the ever-changing nature of our reality. Moreover, the technological component was used at this stage, asking the students to use the **Voki** app, in which they had to create an avatar of themselves and record their voices explaining what kind of family they belong to, as well as watching two videos for them to: 1) grasp the different types of families there are, and 2) listen to an Iranian descendant explaining his family tree. At the end of the unit, students were asked to answer some questions in regard to register, which for them was to decide the kind of vocabulary they use according to the people and the situation they are in, and to create their own family tree as a craft project. The work with the app was outstanding.

Students were deeply involved in the activity and actually speaking English, which was rewarding to see.

Likewise, in the third unit called "Children's Rights", students were familiarized with the forty-two rights of a child. They were asked to reflect on the importance of them as well as making use of the imperative words to come up with activities that ensured those forty-two rights could be met. In this unit, students were asked to use learning strategies such as guessing meaning from context, and underlining words they could recognize through cooperative work. They were asked to work in groups, and they were given three rights each, using the classroom as a resource (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013) to understand the meaning of each one of them. The idea was to gather the information and compile it into the **Padlet** app, unfortunately, it could not be achieved due to the fact that the majority of the students do not hold an email account. Nevertheless, the outcome of this experience was enriching, in view of the fact that students were consciously reflecting on their social problems and what can be done to overcome them.

In the fourth unit called "Preconceptions", students made use of the possessive adjectives by addressing stereotypes on pretty girls. This way, students could discuss self-image and what people might think of a person out of physical appearance. Additionally, students were shown a picture of Colombian actress Sofia Vergara together with a short clip of her show "Modern Family", but were not told her name or nationality. They were asked to write her biography adding details about name, age, nationality, professions and hobbies; leading the work of the genre of a biography. At the end of this activity, teacher told them the actress' name and read her real biography. It was curious to see the face of disbelief when I told them she was Colombian, considering that many of the students thought Sofia was North American in view of her blonde hair. Nonetheless, students were consciously pondering how to write a biography (genre), and deciding whether they got some details right in their invented biography. As a concluding activity, students were

asked to write a biography of either a famous or a relative person who they admire for their ability to speak English. It was fulfilling to read biographies about cousins and aunts who speak English here in Colombia, and that students acknowledge their efforts in learning a foreign language.

Lastly, In the fifth unit called "Myths and Legends", students got familiarized with myths and legends from Valle del Cauca. Students were distributed into four groups, each with a different question for them to share the answers with the rest of the group. After the discussion, students chose one of the three myths on this web page: La llorona, La tunda, or the goblin. Each myth was turn into a group, so that the student who chose either of them joined other classmates who shared the same interest. They discussed about it, recalling the questions they previously answered. Then, students were asked to create their own original myth in L2, which was worthwhile to see, since they were working in the same topic (Myths and legends) in their Spanish class. Therefore, they had many tools to work with and the results were absolutely mesmerizing.

Finally, it should be stressed that the work with the sequence faced the lack of technological issues related to actual resources and lack of internet connection. However, this specific issue was overcome by taking personal laptop and two tablets which had data connection through the cellphone. This was the only way for which the work with the Voki app and You tube videos was achieved; regrettably, the work with the storykit and Padlet apps could not be achieved.

In this sense, it is worth highlighting that the sequence did make a difference in raising students' intercultural awareness to the extent of realizing the importance of adopting "negotiable third places" when communicating. In the following analysis-level the results will be explained in detail, which will allow to remark the significant differences.

### B. Comparison of survey 1 and survey 2

The two surveys were analyzed in parallel, with the aim of spotting significant changes both in quantitative and qualitative data. They provided the data regarding the population of the group, the age, the number of years of formal study of English, and students' opinions and ideas. Survey 1 was the first approach to data available, and the results were not as I had anticipated. The most striking point in the survey was that of the native and non-native speaker models. I saw myself underestimating my students, thinking that they were going to be enlightened with my work regarding to non-native speaker models. However, students consider the worth of bilingual teachers in the process of learning a foreign language, considering monolingual native speakers unfit to teach an L2, since he/she will not understand what they want to express.

The concept of bilingualism was in nature unavoidable to approach, since speaker models were of importance to discuss. Baker (2006) in his book, points out the ever-changing and evolving nature of bilingualism, which is never static over time and place. Additionally, May (2008) highlights the importance of having clear and supported ideas about bilingualism/immersion education, and the role of L1 and L2 as languages of instruction. In this specific scenario, the concept is supported by Baker (2006), which acknowledges a bilingual person as a complete linguistic entity, who is able to think in the languages in his/her repertoire, and who performs at different levels according to the context, the participants and the purpose; which in turn gets language education one step forward to leave the "native/non-native speakers" models aside for good, and valuing the worth of a learner who has spent numbers of years learning a foreign/second language.

In this case, students' focus was quite narrower, in which they stressed on the importance of having a teacher who communicates in both the mother and foreign language, inasmuch as being able to operate in both of them, so that

whenever there was a misunderstanding issue, the teacher had the tools to face them and could relate to them. Though there were five students who did believe a native teacher was a better one in Survey 1; in Survey 2, which was applied after the didactic sequence, it is evident that native models are not a requirement nor a necessity for them.
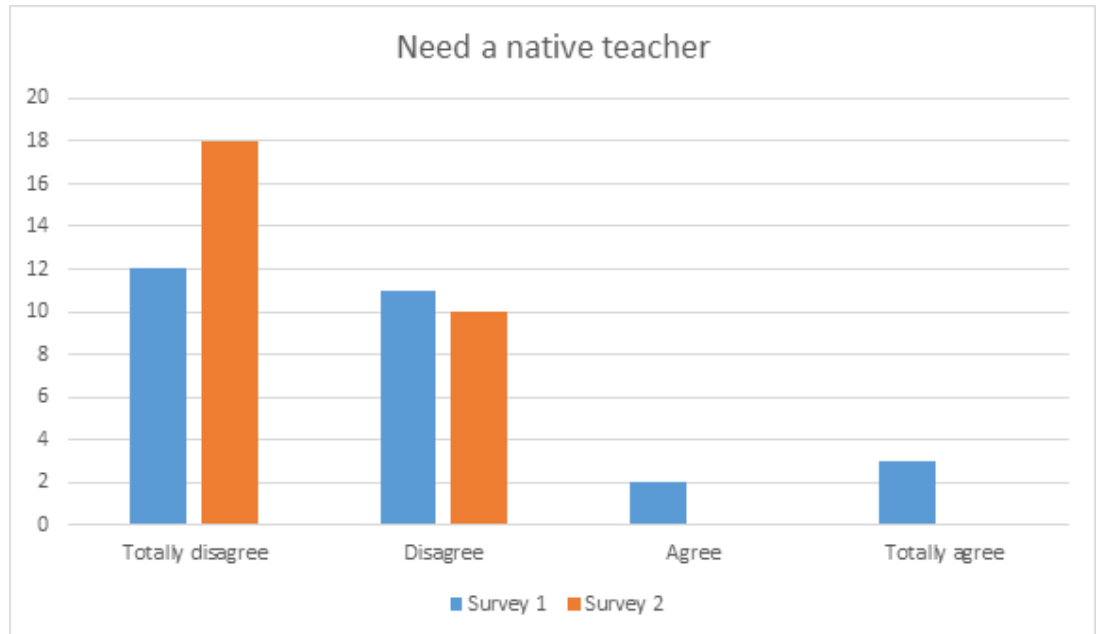


Similarly, the second curious item was the bilingual item (question 3. See Survey 1 and 2 in appendix 1 and 2). Students were asked if they consider themselves bilinguals, and in both surveys, they answered "No". When confronted for their answers, some of them argued that they don't feel comfortable when using English as a means of communication. It can be explained by the lack of good instruction in the past as well as the lack of contact with the language. In this sense, question 3 and 4 relate to each other in the way that in both surveys, the answers remain mostly constant and not too different apart. As they feel uneasy when interacting with English, they consider themselves non-bilingual. The following charts compile students' answers regarding the items 3 and 4 of the survey (see appendix 1).

Are you bilingual?



Comfortable when communicating in English
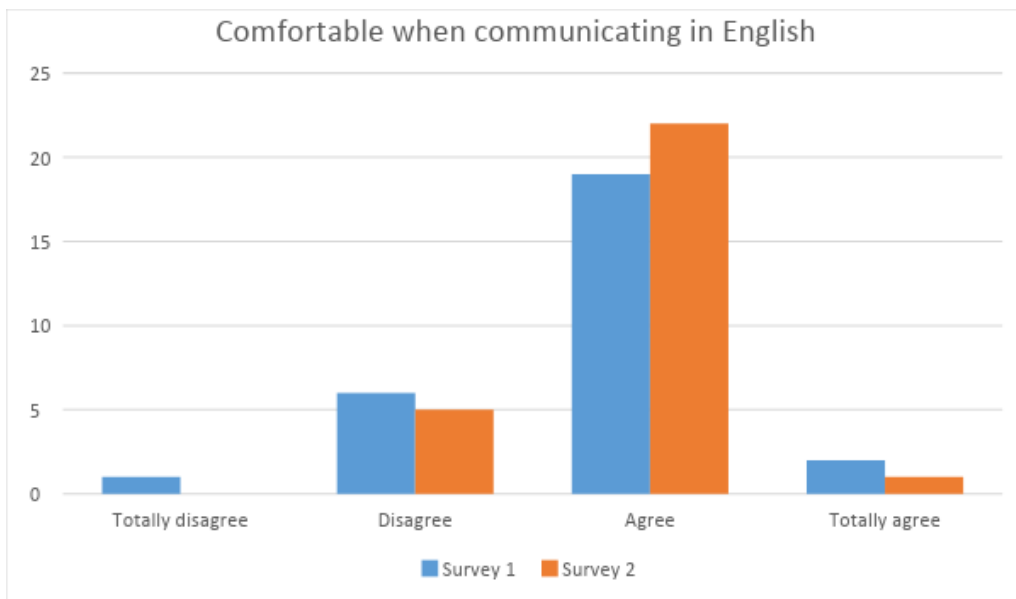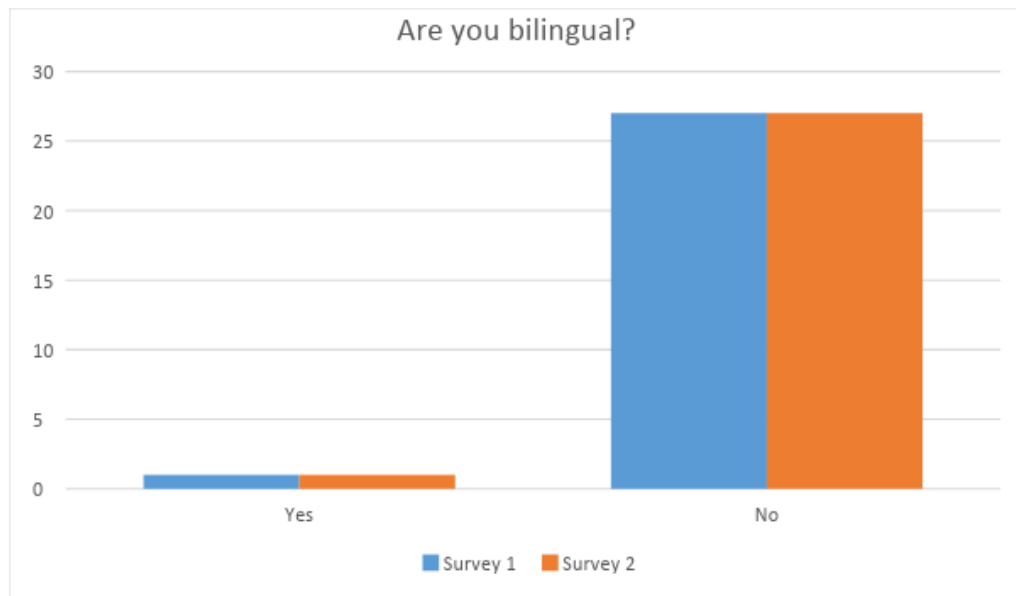
In Survey 1, students listed some reasons why they consider English important. These answers, compared to the ones they provided in Survey 2, are evidence of the change of students' attitudes towards learning English. After the work with the didactic sequence, where students were asked to notice language and cultural behaviors, as well as appreciating difference, they began to see the learning process quite different, thinking in going to college for example; which was not in

their initial perceptions. Before working with it, students were thinking on going abroad only, and that English is important only if you travel; then, after the work with the sequence, it is notably visible that they understand the nature of English as a lingua Franca and as an international language, used to communicate with anyone anywhere in the world. Notwithstanding, the traveling compound remained stable.



Reasons why English is important
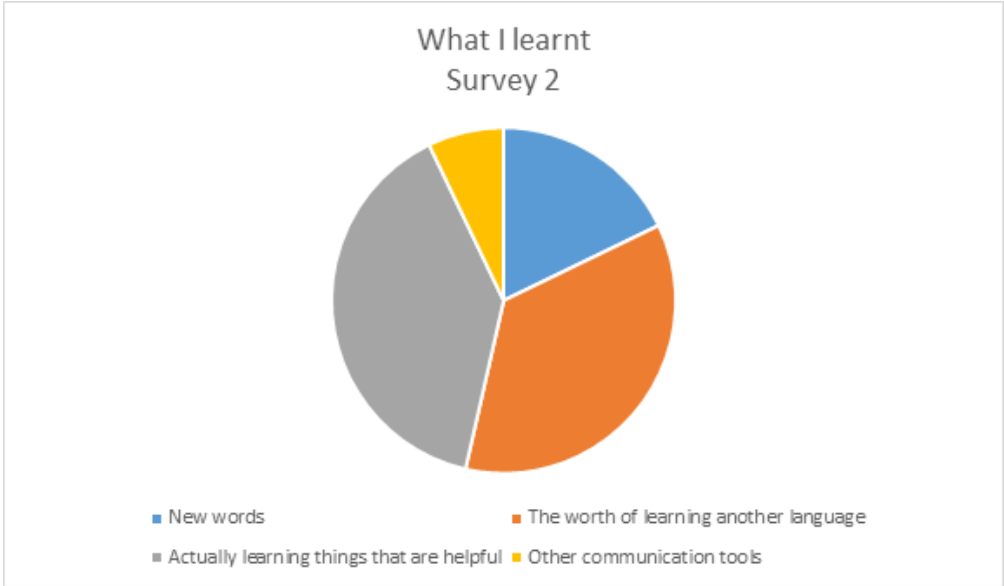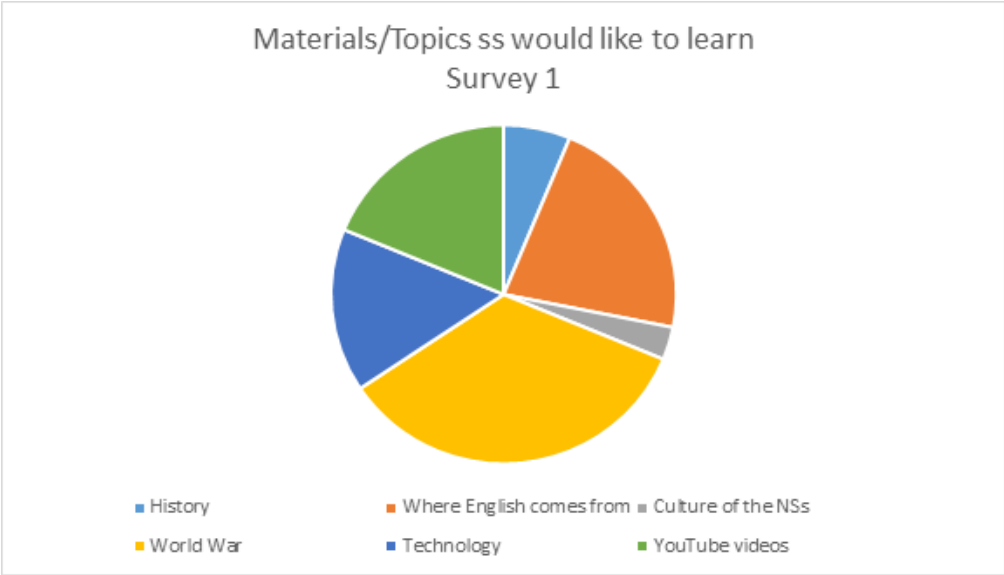


Reasones why English is important
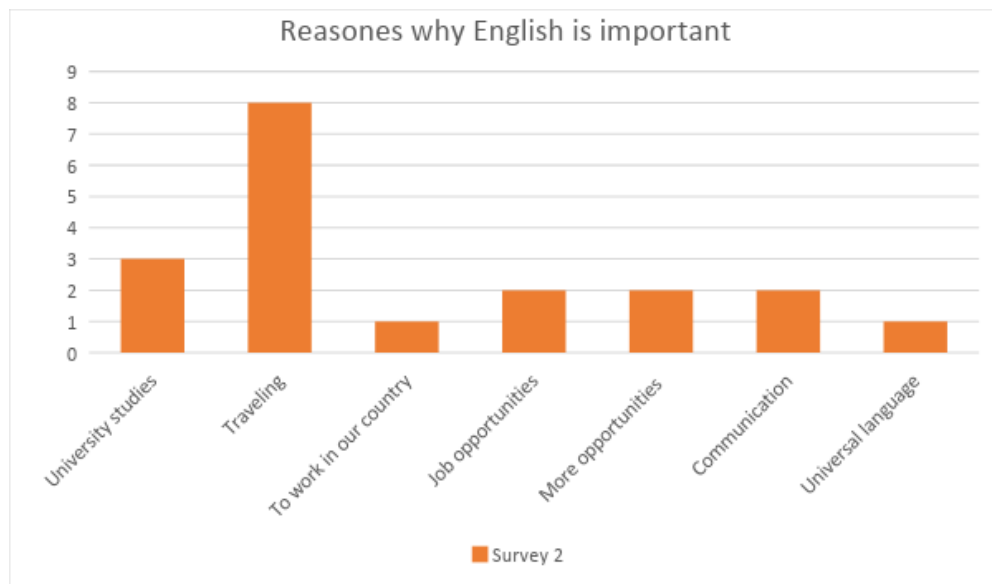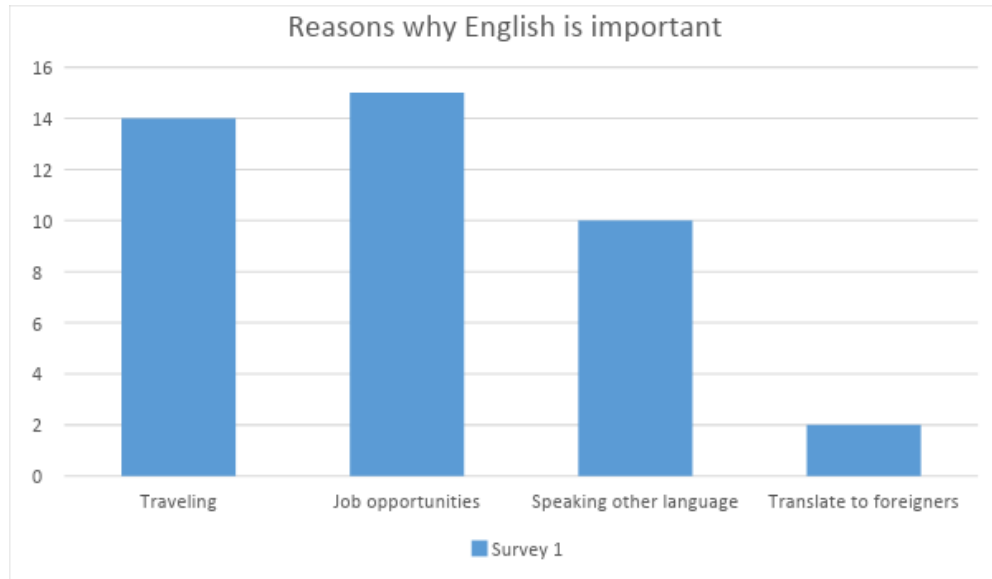
Furthermore, in both surveys, students were asked to choose between a student who can speak at a native-like level, or a student who is intelligible and comprehensible with a Colombian accent. Yet again, I was surprised by students' answers. In their initial perceptions, they mostly chose student B (intelligible and comprehensible non-native speaker) rather than the obvious answer (for me at least). When they were asked to elaborate their answer, they pointed out their Colombian roots and how proud they were of being Colombian. Thus, it is indisputable that in Survey 2, none of them chose Student A and his/her native-like pronunciation.
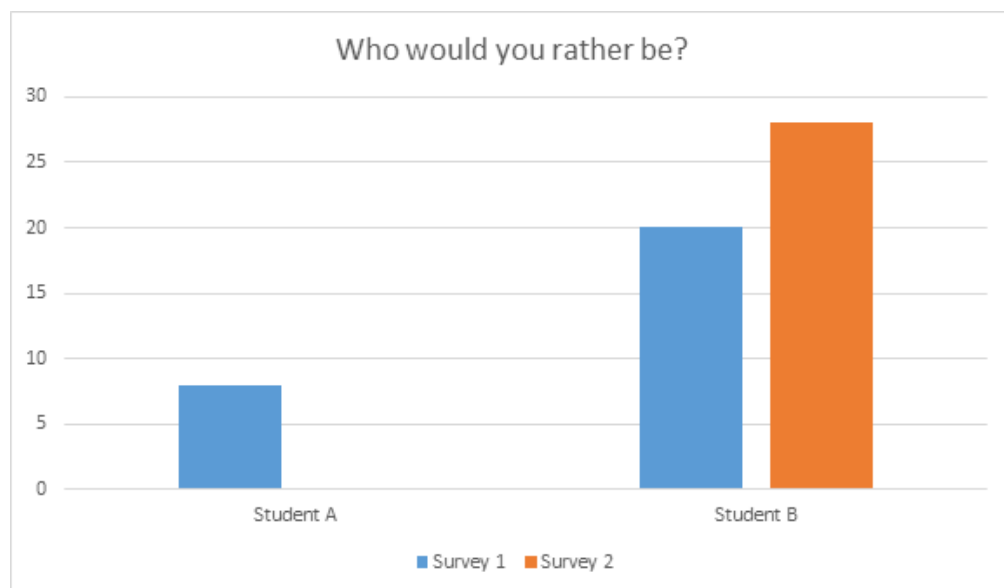


Finally, the last question of each of the surveys were different. In Survey 1, they were asked to write a list of topics or resources which they would like to work with. In Survey 2, students were asked to write their opinions of the didactic sequence. The results of the first survey were taken as the basis for the design of the sequence. I took some of their answers, such as the technological and cultural component, but not all of them, since it had to comply with the curriculum content proposed for the grade. Similarly, the answers in Survey 2 were gratifying. Students highlighted the worth of learning a language, which for me was asking my students

to reflect on the English that makes them happy (Blommaert, 2016). In terms of paralinguistic features, students refer to them as communication tools, which they began to pay attention to. In the component of "learning helpful things" students refer to it as noticing language in terms of registers and genre, which students worked with in the sequence.



Materials/Topics ss would like to learn
Survey 1

- History
- Where English comes from
- Culture of the NSs
- World War
- Technology
- YouTube videos



What I learnt
Survey 2

- New words
- The worth of learning another language
- Actually learning things that are helpful
- Other communication tools

### C. Comparison of pre-test and post-test

In the final level, both pre-test and post-test analyzed the five components previously mentioned: noticing language (genre, register, style) and cultural behavior; exposing learners to different variations of English; grasping on concepts such as accent, intelligibility and comprehensibility, and negotiating meaning - adopting a third place. These components are deeply related in the intercultural raising process.

In the pretest, students were asked to watch a video in which the footballer Falcao is being interviewed in a Manchester United dressing room [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUQZifVTlJI**], and then to respond to the video by means of a five-question test. They took the test one week after Survey 1, with no intervention of the teacher, in order to get the most reliable data possible. Students were asked to watch the video at home, yet they were given the opportunity to re-watch it once again in class. In this video, Falcao is just starting their English learning process so that he thinks his answers through quite a lot. The objective of using this video was for students to take Falcao as a learning example, as well as stressing the use of other tools in order to achieve successful communication (i.e. paraphrasing, back-channeling, among other).

In the posttest, students were asked to watch a video in which the singer Juanes is being interviewed by Ryan Seacrest at a radio station [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZR3arRHbLy4**], and then to respond to the video by means of a five-question test as well. They took the test one week after the work with the didactic sequence, and a reflection of the topics and concepts seen in it. Students were asked to watch the video at home, yet as in the pre-test, they were also given the opportunity to re-watch it once in class. In this video, Juanes is being interviewed by Ryan Seacrest, a radio host. Juanes is talking about his latest record, stressing the need of learning English before singing in English. This specific topic

was discussed in class, emphasizing the learning continuum every learner goes through; there is no need of having high levels in a language before engaging in meaningful tasks.

In the first question, the objective was to obtain students' impressions of native and non-native models, asking them to describe the proficiency level of both Falcao and the interviewer. Students described Falcao as having a very low level, hesitating and thinking quite a lot to before replying, whereas they designated a very high level, native-speaker attribution to the interviewer, considering him a more capable speaker. It raises curiosity to come across with these answers, when in the surveys they were not inclined to native-speaker models. In the pretest, they undermine Falcao's efforts to speak, by attributing too much attention to the native-speaker model.

In contrast, in the post-test, as it was noted in the survey level, it was clear that students understood more the value of learning a language, and did not refer to native-speaker models at all. Rather than praising native speakers, in this question they praised Juanes' ability to speak English. They noticed how easy it was to understand him (referring to intelligibility and comprehensibility), as well as noting the lack of hesitation by his part. Regarding Ryan Seacrest, they perceived how well and easygoing he was in the conversation the two were holding.

The second question was intended to notice language in regard to genre and register, which they clearly did not grasp in the pre-test. Some of them could only spot the kind of relationship between the two speakers and what they were talking about. Overall, they did not notice language at this stage; whereas in the post-test it was positively achieved. All of them recognized the genre of an interview, and could name the characteristics of it, the types of relationships and the different registers which can be used in one. Moreover, some of them could even determine the kinds

of interviews there are, and listing this particular interview as one of advertisement of Juanes' new record at the time.

The third question was related to intelligibility and comprehensibility, in which students were asked if what Falcao was saying was understandable. 90% of the students answered "No", arguing that he hesitated quite a lot, and that he thought his answers through in excess. The other 10% said that it was understandable at some point, but that he had a very low level, compared to the interviewer's level. In contrast, in the post-test, students realized how well Juanes was speaking English, no matter the accent. They praised the value of having two languages in one's repertoire, and that our Colombian accent is something they are proud of. They came to that conclusion after the work with the sequence, when variations of English were constantly included, and pride of roots was seen.

The fourth question was intended to determine whether meaning-negotiating was taking place and if students could notice it. In the pre-test, none of them could establish the interviewer's adoption of a third place so that Falcao felt comfortable in the communication exchange. It is evident that without explicit instruction, the noticing process will not take place. Whereas, in the post-test they amazingly could. They noticed when Ryan started talking about Cumbia, a Colombian rhythm, and the way he could adopt a third place in order to understand something that is not related to his culture. I reiterate, I underestimated my students a bit, and in this particular question, I was not sure they were going to be able to grasp such an abstract constraint; confirming once again, that intercultural awareness needs to be raised.

In the fifth and final question, the objective was to spot paralinguistic features. Students were asked if they could notice other communication tools which Falcao used so he could make himself understood; yet once again, the goal was not achieved at this stage. After explicit instruction, in the post-test, they were able to do. They noticed how the two speakers moved their hands, or their heads, when

they were raising their eyebrows to show surprise, and other types of facial expressions which are used in a conversation.

In conclusion, the results of the pretest were the data which backed up the design of the sequence. This data supported the need of explicit instruction regarding language itself: genre, register, cultural behavior, among others. As well as Blommaert (2016), I too consider the goal of language teaching register learning. As Blommaert puts it, "language learning is effectively register learning … Registers that controlled informal and cultural communication modes" (p. 12). In sum, learning the English that makes you happy.

Finally, the results of the posttest are the ultimate confirmation that raising intercultural awareness is a matter of planning. If teachers plan/adapt/design materials for their specific group of students, in which intercultural competence in fostered, many changes will come their ways. Furthermore, the results show the change throughout the process, where at the end of it, students are able to notice so many unseen features in the English class.

In the following chart, the findings will be summarized in detail.

| Stage 1 Survey 1 and Pretest | Stage 2 Didactic Sequence | Stage 3 Survey 2 and Posttest |
|---|---|---|
| ❖ Though, students showed preference for a bilingual teacher (someone who speaks both languages so that he/she shares a language, therefore | During the work with the didactic sequence, students displayed their ability to grasp on concepts such as register when talking to different people in different contexts; genre | ❖ Students listed a wider range of reasons why English is important, looking at it as a way of progress not only abroad, but also in our |

share values, culture and beliefs, someone who can understands students and who is able to adopt negotiable third places (Byram et al., 2002), a small number of students were inclined in choosing a native-speaker teacher.

❖ Students could not identify the genre of an interview nor state its characteristics.

❖ Students thought that knowing how to speak English is only profitable abroad.

❖ Students did not recognize concepts such an being intelligible and comprehensible, rather than having a native-speaker accent.

❖ Students thought of the interviewer as being more suitable and

when working with different texts such as interviews biographies, myths and legends; intelligibility and comprehensibility in regards to listening to different variations of English, and understanding the nature of English as a lingua franca; noticing language rather than focusing on rules when listening carefully and directing their attention to choice of words and/or pictures that can convey meaning so they can guess from context, as well as playing with the genre, and selecting carefully other types of tools, such as back-channeling for example.

In conclusion, students were very much engaged and involved in the intercultural teaching approach which was taking place in class (and which

country given its lingua franca nature.

❖ Students do not consider themselves bilingual, but do consider the many benefits of bilingualism. Teacher pointed out the profits of being an intercultural mediator when referring to being bilingual, although in the survey they focused on the ability to speak two languages.

❖ Students understand the worth of a non-native English teacher and the outstanding effort he/she has made into becoming one, and that having an accent is not something to be ashamed of; it it's something to be proud of.

❖ The majority of students could spot paralinguistic features, which take

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| having the best level compared to Falcao, whom they designated as being incompetent and uncomfortable.<br>❖ Students were not aware of other communication tools which can be of great benefit, such as facial expressions. | will continue throughout the school year). | place in a regular conversation.<br>❖ The striking result was that of students understanding the worth of learning another language, and I quote "actually learning something useful".<br>❖ Students were conscious of Juanes' Colombian accent and saw him as being very fluent and having a very good level.<br>❖ Finally, it is worth standing out the fact that students engaged in a deep conversation about what Juanes told in the interview "I wanted to learn English properly before singing in English". Some students agreed but some others highlighted the fact that learning is a process, which takes time, and there is no |

| | | need to have a very high level in order to engage in a meaningful communication. |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | | |

It is worth of concluding that the extent of intercultural awareness increase in seventh grade students at Donald Rodrigo Tafur is high taking into consideration the results and discussion of the three instruments used in the research. In both instruments: surveys and tests, it is evident the significant differences related to intercultural awareness students portray before and after the work with the didactic sequence. Notwithstanding, it is not advisable to generalize results given the limitation of the study to only one seventh grade group. This group has its own characteristics which may or may not be replicated in the other groups. Nevertheless, the invitation is to conduct a longer study with a larger group, and to compare results.

# V. CONCLUSION

The findings of the current study can shed some light to researchers in the field with regards to the design and adaptation of materials for specific groups in the Colombian context. As stated previously, intercultural awareness cannot be raised if teachers are not conscious about the implications of it. Fostering intercultural competence is not about "celebrating" foreign holidays or role-playing situations at an airport; intercultural competence calls for negotiating meaning, and becoming "cultural mediators"; people who are able to be open to difference, who are curious about other people's way of living and to suspend disbelief about different cultures and ways of seeing life (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002). Thus, when explicit instruction and high levels of awareness of the importance of leaving aside the focus on form, which has been the approach for more than a century in the teaching field, students can raise intercultural awareness as well as acknowledging difference as the rule, and the way we are all invited to become global citizens by the means of English as a Lingua Franca.

It is worth highlighting that the sequence did make a difference in raising students' intercultural awareness to the extent of realizing the importance of adopting "negotiable third places" when communicating, as well as being willing to listen to different points of view. In both sets of instruments: surveys and tests, the evidence portrays the significant differences related to intercultural awareness students displayed before and after the work with the didactic sequence. Although, it was not expected to start the process with higher levels of intercultural awareness, as in survey 1 and pre-test showed, it was clear that the picture changed significantly from before and after the treatment.

Therefore, the results support the need of teacher training in which language educators can understand the shift into an engaging, intercultural teaching approach, where form is simply one more part of the puzzle, rather than the most

important part; training that allows teachers to adapt and design materials in the interest of teaching to "give opinions or evaluate something", and helping students to become "active noticers of language" (Marr & English, 2019); training that allows teachers to become noticers of language themselves.

Additionally, it is important to stress how the findings answered the report's research questions. The first research question intended to find the extent to which students benefited from the sequence to become aware of what it implies to use English in the global contexts, which, as stated previously, was considerably high, taking into account what students considered before and after the sequence in regard to native and non-native-speaker models, intelligibility, accent, English variations and paralinguistic features. The results were positively different from one period of the treatment to the other. Before the treatment, students were drawn to native-speaker models, considering them as the sole authority, which must be followed; they did not consider accent or intelligibility as consistent features that play an essential role in the learning process, as well as depicting lack of language noticing.

Then, after the treatment, students portrayed openness to accept that learning a foreign language does not entitle one must reach a native-like level; but understanding the worth of a bilingual person, which in Baker's (2006) words, is acknowledged as a complete linguistic entity, who is able to think in the languages in his/her repertoire, and who performs at different levels according to the context, the participants and the purpose. In addition, it is remarkable to spot the extent of awareness increase related to language noticing; and the way language changes according to specific scenarios, as well as being opened to negotiate meaning in situations where people may neither share one's language nor ways of living.

Moreover, I can conclude that if significant changes were made with two-month worth of working with the sequence, then working with intercultural, language

noticing resources can be of great asset for both students and teachers. Raising intercultural awareness, in which English is seen as a Lingua Franca and a means to become a global citizen, lowers teachers' anxiety in reaching a native-like level, and simply communicating with it. It is about noticing, both language and cultural features, where teachers do not focus on form but on content.

Furthermore, it is important to remark the relevance of the study in the school context. Taking into account the lack of resources, teachers are asked to design their own materials, which was the main issue to face in the first place. Thus, designing one's own material, and working with it in order to raise intercultural awareness is of great importance for students to broaden their world view and come to realize the many advantages of learning a language; not only rules. Likewise, many authors around the world have tried to join the conversation of designing resources where teachers raise intercultural awareness. This study was a small-scale attempt to join that conversation, and localize content for my specific group of students, in my specific teaching context.

Similarly, the invitation is to take into account what students would like to do with their English, finding the English that makes them happy (Blommaert, 2016), and the kind of resources they would like to use. In addition to this, it is important not to underestimate students, and assuming they know nothing, because in fact, they know more than one can imagine; if teachers allow themselves to listen, students would like to be heard.

Finally, my future research direction would be to conduct a small-scale study, this time with the English teachers' team in order to gather information about the kind of materials they design and/or adapt for their students, and how (if they do) they raise intercultural awareness and perceive the advantages of learning a language.

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# VII. APPENDICES

## Appendix 1 – Survey 1

| | |
|---|---|
|  | **INSTITUCION EDUCATIVA TECNICA INDUSTRIAL DONALD RODRIGO TAFUR GONZALEZ**<br>**2019** |

## ENCUESTA 1

Tomado y adaptado de Fernández Agüera, 2016

Elija la opción que usted crea pertinente teniendo en cuenta el enunciado.

1.  ¿Es usted?

                Hombre                       Mujer

1.  ¿Cuántos años tiene? _____

1.  ¿Se considera bilingüe?

             Sí                      No

1.  "Me siento cómodo (a) usando inglés para comunicarme"

En total desacuerdo     En desacuerdo     De acuerdo     Totalmente de acuerdo

1.  ¿Cuantos años ha estudiado inglés?

2 años o menos            3-8 años            Más de 8 años

1.  Nombre las razones por las cuales usted considera aprender inglés importante:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

1.  ¿Qué estudiante preferiría ser?

**Estudiante A**: "Puedo pronunciar muy bien el inglés. La gente piensa que soy nativo (a)".
**Estudiante B**: "Puedo hablar claramente. Nativos y no nativos me entienden, aunque tenga marcado mi acento colombiano".

Argumente                              su                              respuesta:
_____
_____

1.      Para poder tener un muy buen nivel de inglés, mi profesor (a) tiene que ser nativo.

En total desacuerdo      En desacuerdo      De acuerdo      Totalmente de acuerdo

Argumente                              su                              respuesta:
_____
_____

1.      Haga una lista de los materiales y/o temas de los que le gustaría hablar en clase de inglés.
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Appendix 2 – Survey 2**

| | |
|---|---|
|  | **INSTITUCION EDUCATIVA TECNICA INDUSTRIAL DONALD RODRIGO TAFUR GONZALEZ**<br>**2019** |

## ENCUESTA 2

Tomado y adaptado de Fernández Agüera, 2016

Elija la opción que usted crea pertinente teniendo en cuenta el enunciado.

1.  ¿Es usted?

                 Hombre                        Mujer

1.  ¿Cuántos años tiene? _____

1.  ¿Se considera bilingüe?

                 Sí                        No

1.  "Me siento cómodo (a) usando inglés para comunicarme"

En total desacuerdo       En desacuerdo     De acuerdo   Totalmente de acuerdo

1.  ¿Cuantos años ha estudiado inglés?

2 años o menos               3-8 años                  Más de 8 años

1.  Nombre las razones por las cuales usted considera aprender inglés importante:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

1.  ¿Qué estudiante preferiría ser?

**Estudiante A**: "Puedo pronunciar muy bien el inglés. La gente piensa que soy nativo (a)".

**Estudiante B**: "Puedo hablar claramente. Nativos y no nativos me entienden, y no importa el acento marcado de mi país".

Argumente su respuesta:
_____
_____

1.      Para poder tener un muy buen nivel de inglés, mi profesor (a) tiene que ser nativo.

En total desacuerdo      En desacuerdo      De acuerdo      Totalmente de acuerdo

Argumente su respuesta:
_____
_____

1.      Escriba sus impresiones de los recursos y/o temas trabajados en la secuencia didáctica.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Appendix 3 – Pre-test**

## PRE-TEST

Look at the following video and answer the questions:

**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUQZifVTlJI**

1. ¿Cómo describirías el nivel de inglés tanto de Falcao como del entrevistador?

    _____
    _____
    _____

1. ¿Qué clase de conversación es esta? ¿Cuál es la relación entre los participantes? ¿Qué caracteriza el lenguaje de una entrevista?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

1. ¿Se entiende lo que Falcao quiere comunicar?

    _____
    _____
    _____

1. ¿Cómo describirías al entrevistador? ¿Se incomoda por la falta de fluidez de Falcao?

    _____
    _____
    _____

1. ¿Qué otra herramienta comunicativa notaste en el video? (gestos, expresiones faciales, lenguaje corporal, etc.)

    _____
    _____
    _____

## POST-TEST

Look at the following video and answer the questions:

### https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZR3arRHbLy4

1. ¿Cómo describirías el nivel de inglés? (Tanto de Juanes como de Ryan Seacrest?

_____
_____
_____

1. Describe la situación. ¿Cómo es la relación entre ellos? ¿Qué clase de palabras o interacciones se usan en este tipo de situaciones?

_____
_____
_____

1. ¿Se entiende lo que Juanes quiere comunicar?

_____
_____
_____

1. ¿Cómo describirías al entrevistador? ¿Le permite a Juanes sentirse cómodo al hablar inglés?

_____
_____
_____

1. ¿Notaste alguna otra característica comunicativa en la conversación con Juanes?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Appendix 5 – Didactic sequence**

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1drWk0gGoL8eTboG-oa0eloLEZwG5-

P4b/view?usp=sharing

**Appendix 6 – Informed consent**

**CARTA DE CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO**

Yo, _____, identificado con cédula de ciudadanía número _____, autorizo a mi hija(o) _____ con NUIP _____ para participar en un reporte sobre interculturalidad para trabajo de grado de la maestría en enseñanza del inglés de la Universidad ICESI. Los estudiantes serán grabados en audio y/o video y no representan ningún riesgo para los niños. Los datos obtenidos serán para uso académico exclusivamente y podrán ser usados para investigaciones y/o publicaciones físicas y/o virtuales de tipo académico. La identidad de los niños se mantendrá en reserva. Esta información no se usará con fines lucrativos.

Firmo de conformidad,

_____.

C. C.

Dada a los _____ (   ) días del mes de _____ de dos mil diecinueve (2019).