

BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA



FACULTAD DE LENGUAS



THE INFLUENCE OF THE NATIVE TEACHERS' INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN THE EFL STUDENTS' LEARNING PROCESS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF LANGUAGES FOR
THE DEGREE OF LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL
INGLÉS

BY

ANA LAURA TOXQUI FLORES

THESIS DIRECTOR:

DR. NORMA FLORES GONZÁLEZ

PUEBLA

NOVIEMBRE 2021



BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA



Facultad de Lenguas

**THE INFLUENCE OF THE NATIVE TEACHERS' INTERCULTURAL
COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN THE EFL STUDENTS' LEARNING
PROCESS**

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Languages for the Degree of Licenciatura
en la Enseñanza del Inglés

By

Ana Laura Toxqui Flores

Thesis Director:

Ph. D. Norma Flores González

November, 2021



BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA

Facultad de Lenguas

**THE INFLUENCE OF THE NATIVE TEACHERS' INTERCULTURAL
COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN THE EFL STUDENTS' LEARNING
PROCESS**

This investigation has been read by the members of the Committee of

ANA LAURA TOXQUI FLORES

**And is considered worthy of approval in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

Acknowledgments

First of all, thanks to my parents for loving me and giving me the opportunities they never had, for always trying to do the best they can, for making me who I am. For all the talks we had when we faced problems. To my sister, who is always there to give the best advice and guide me professionally. Even when she is busy, she has been encouraging me to look for more opportunities and has helping me to solve any problems because you are the older sister. You and mom are my guide in this life.

To my best friend Olga Cordova, I thanked God for allowing us to meet at university. You made my stay at university more enjoyable. Your friendship is one of the most appreciable things I have. Thanks for always being there for me when I had bad days and when my days were beautiful. For trusting me as a teacher and making me trust in myself.

My special gratitude to my thesis advisor for supporting and encouraging me to finish this research project: Dra. Norma Flores González. Your guidance and knowledge have done a lot for me. I have learned many things. Thanks to your advice, patience, and time, I have become a better researcher, and your talks have motivated me to continue my professional development as a researcher.

Thank God for bringing into my life the people I need at the right moment.

Dedications

To my mom and dad, my family. To me because I did not expect any less from myself.

ABSTRACT

The present investigation attempts to identify how native teachers' intercultural communicative competence influences students' learning process when students learn English as a foreign language. There are two main purposes in this quantitative investigation. The first research purpose is to identify how intercultural communicative competence interferes with students' learning process. The second is to distinguish the abilities that intercultural communicative competence promotes within this learning process, and how teachers take advantage of those abilities to guide students to become intercultural speakers.

The results show that teachers integrate skills and sub-skills that are part of intercultural communicative competence. However, there are only a few skills and sub-skills integrated into their classes. Also, there are not enough follow-up activities to tighten students' skills up and develop intercultural communicative competence.

In addition, results indicate strategic and pragmatic teachers' competencies do not ensure that students will improve language skills such as reading and listening, but the correct use of authentic material will be beneficial. This investigation concludes by remarking on the importance of integrating intercultural competence in the classroom and the implementation of authentic materials to decipher cultural aspects.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Acknowledgments.....	ii
Dedications	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of content.....	v
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Introduction to the problem	1
1.2 Rationale for the topic selection	2
1.3 Purpose of the study.....	2
1.4 Research questions.	2
1.5 Research setting	3
1.6 Significance of the topic	3
1.7 Key Terms.....	4
1.8 Conclusion	4
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction	5
2.2 Second Language Acquisition	5
2.3 Teaching and Learning	6
2.3.1 English language Teaching (ELT)	7
2.3.2 Teaching Adults.....	7
2.3.3 How Adults learn	8
2.4 Interculturality.....	9
2.4.1 Intercultural communicative competence.....	10
2.4.2 Intercultural competence in native speakers.....	11
2.4.3 Interculturality in a learning process	12
2.4.4 Intercultural communicative competence in the English Foreign learning process	13
2.4.5 Teaching intercultural communicative competence in an EFL classroom ..	13
2.4.6. FREPA as a reference for language and culture	15
2.4.7 Activities that promote intercultural competence in an EFL classroom	15
2.4.8 How to evaluate the intercultural competence in an EFL classroom	17
2.5 Conclusion	18
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	

3.1 Introduction.....	19
3.2 Research design	19
3.3 Subjects	19
3.4 Instrument	20
3.5 Data Collection Procedures	20
3.6 Data Analysis Procedures.....	21
3.7 Conclusion.....	21
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS	
4.1 Introduction.....	22
4.2 Research questions.....	22
4.3 Answers to Research Questions.....	22
4.3.1 How does native teachers' intercultural competence interfere with students' learning process?	22
4.3.2 What abilities does intercultural communicative competence promote?	32
4.4 Conclusion.....	42
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION	
5.1 Introduction.....	43
5.2 Summary of the findings.....	43
5.3 Accomplishments of the aims.....	44
5.4 Limitations of the study	44
5.5 Suggestions for further research.....	44
5.6 Personal reflection.....	45
5.7 Final comments.....	45
References	46

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the problem

Becoming a competitive communicator in a globalized world is a requirement, and in the case of education, it is not the exception, especially in the language learning field. However, getting such competence implies more than knowing the language. That is why language as well as culture, is necessary. For this reason, English teachers should reflect intercultural competence not only in their classes but also with their habits, behavior, and ideas. When someone teaches a language, the key is to understand the process involved in learning a new language to help students achieve it.

Indeed, language learning is the process that implies learning vocabulary to use the most complex grammar forms and applying intercultural competencies in authentic contexts to communicate.

It is crucial to mention that intercultural competence has linguistic fields, essential to be a proficient speaker. For instance, Sociolinguistics and intercultural competence analyze situations with different conditions and backgrounds where foreign language students talk about any fact with a suitable level of comprehension (language and cultural competence).

A second important area is discourse analysis that involves the different manners that speakers use formal and informal language in a context and how they have a variation between both cultural backgrounds.

A well-known problem with the English teaching process is that teachers consider only the knowledge and do not consider cultural features. This problem has attracted more attention when it is eminent that they are the closest models that students might have in classes to be aware of cultural changes.

Then, it is necessary to know how intercultural competence has influenced the learning language process to manage the stage and help students to be competitive in both knowledge and culture. Thus, it goes further than learning a language; it is to become culturally competent in a globalized world using English to communicate and respect other cultures.

According to Deardorff (2006, 23), a “teacher is a vital link to develop intercultural competence in young people”. Thus, native teachers might contribute in the phase where students adopt and adapt authentic samples of language culture by applying it in their everyday context speech to become intercultural speakers.

1.2 Rationale for the topic selection

Through time, culture has been seen as a fundamental element in teaching language. When learning English, speakers noticed the importance of culture because it involves the competency to understand and be aware of the cultural changes, which are between a native language and a target one. A clear example is when people traveled abroad, and a native said jokes.

On the one hand, the foreigner usually does not understand its sense. On the other hand, for natives, it is funny and makes sense; thus, the foreign experiences this because of the lack of culture and intercultural competencies.

Besides, native speakers use colloquial expressions followed by an imaginary level of harshness, regionalisms, and slang. Those features are easy to distinguish in a mother language but not in the target as learners, and even more difficult if they are not in real and meaningful contexts.

At this stage, culture is again a crucial aspect of success with communication. As a result, specific competencies like mind-openness, for example, are necessary to identify teachers as the closest models learners have for understanding those cultural elements in native teacher speakers.

Hence, intercultural competence provides learners a deeper cultural self-understanding that they might learn from native teachers' behavior and speech.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to know how intercultural competence impacts the students' English learning process to have a complete understanding of the effects of native teachers' intercultural competence on students when they are learning English as a foreign language.

Besides, teachers' intercultural competencies help students acquire notions of the language and fundamental cultural aspects, the main elements to be a competent user.

Thus, the study pretends to analyze how native teachers' intercultural competence interferes with students' learning process in their daily classes and identify the abilities or skills that intercultural competence promotes.

1.4 Research questions

Two research questions will guide this research. It is worth mentioning that the topic of the study addresses several areas taking into account previous studies. However, this time, it will be focused on

abilities related to intercultural competence and the process itself, since according to the context, it is necessary to know and explore those areas. Then, the research questions are the following:

1. How does native teachers' intercultural competence interfere with students' learning process?
2. What abilities or skills does intercultural competence promote?

1.5 Research setting

This research took place at the English Teaching Bachelor of the Benemerita Universidad Autonoma de Puebla, Mexico. The program of this major has four main areas: Linguistics, Teaching, English target language, and general university training.

The sample was composed of students that took classes with native teachers due to the purpose of the study.

Besides, subjects are native Spanish speakers who are learning English for being English teachers, and their ages are between 18 and 27 years old.

1.6 Significance of the topic

This study is essential since it adds to understanding the influence that teachers' intercultural competence has in students' language learning process in an EFL classroom by considering that culture has a crucial role within the learning English procedure and that native teachers could contribute to the development of intercultural awareness.

As native teachers, they must go beyond grammar and teach some samples of their culture. In that way, students would also be aware of changes, valuing them and their cultural background in different contexts.

Furthermore, students may have the opportunity of being intercultural speakers, and it includes better management of words and expressions in their speech, in other words, appropriate use of the language. No matter if the other speaker is a native or if it is his lingua franca.

As future teachers, their role is teaching more than grammar, as it has been for a long time. Teachers must include cultural patterns and allow the students to know how they work.

Finally, it is fundamental to remark that teachers' principal role is to guide students to understand the reason behind all those patterns and have deeper discussions about different cultural topics to be familiar with more vocabulary and language pragmatics. Then, at this stage, the study recovers its essence and importance to be researched.

1.7 Key Terms

Intercultural competence. “It is the ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to visible behavior and communication that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural interaction” (Deardoff, 2006, p. 245).

English foreign language learning process. “Process by which learners build up their linguistic knowledge of the second language (L2)” (Ellis, 1989, p.74).

Interculturality. “It is defined as the dynamic articulation between ethnic groups (internally) and with the hegemonic society, in a search of a permanent harmonic space of social participation in more equitable conditions” (Medina and Sinnigen, 2009, p. 258).

Intercultural speaker or mediator. “Someone who crosses frontiers, and who is to some extent a specialist in the transit of cultural property and symbolic values” (Clouet, 1997, p. 315).

Native speaker. Someone who has spoken a particular language since they were a baby, rather than having learned it as a child or adult. (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019).

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter is a general overview of the research focusing on the reasons for the chosen topic. It also highlights the problem of the study, its purpose, the research questions, and the setting. Lastly, there is an explanation and definition of each key term.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss the literature relevant to the aims of this investigation. It has three main sections. The first one is related to language acquisition; the second section is on learning and teaching adults, and the last section provides essential information about interculturality.

2.2 Second Language Acquisition

Nowadays most people are interested in learning more languages besides their native one. It is necessary to take into account some basic concepts to understand the second language acquisition process. According to Ortega (2009):

Second language acquisition (SLA, for short) is the scholarly field of inquiry that investigates the human capacity to learn languages other than the first, during late childhood, adolescence or adulthood, and once the first language or languages have been acquired. It studies a wide variety of complex influences and phenomena that contribute to the puzzling range of possible outcomes when learning an additional language in a variety of contexts (p. 2).

Moreover, the process of language acquisition is not always in a conscious way. People realize that they are using the new language in a communication manner, but they do not become aware of the process that it is carrying out. Simultaneously, people use the language more frequently, and they will be able to intuit if the grammatical sentences are proper.

It is a feeling that may help unconsciously know if a word or a sentence were said right or wrong even though the person is not aware of the rules they need to follow (Krashen cited in Gass, 1997).

Both authors emphasize that SLA refers to how people acquire other languages and reiterate the unconscious process realized. Besides, it involves how the learner works with the language input provided to start practicing it. Thus, knowing what is learned and needed to be proficient in the foreign one is crucial for learning a language (Gass, 2008). Consequently, the goals of SLA are mainly to give us ideas about how the process is.

Rod (1997) states that “the goals of SLA, then, are to describe how L2 acquisition proceeds and to explain this process and why some learners seem to be better at it than others” (p.6).

In second language acquisition, various factors could help acquire a new language faster and play a fundamental function during the procedure, which is a process that does not have a predictable ending because the learner will constantly be acquiring knowledge in his second language.

Therefore, “Second language acquisition is a complex field which approaches the attempt to understand the processes underlying the learning of a second language (Gass & Selinker, 2008, p.5)”.

2.3 Teaching and Learning

Nowadays, learning English as a foreign language is the key to having the opportunity to communicate with more people. Teaching and learning a language refer to mastering or instructing a nonnative language outside of the environment where it is commonly spoken, in this case, learning English in Mexico, where Spanish is the first language. Then, it is fundamental to highlight the distinction between foreign and second language learning.

A second language implies that the learner resides in an environment where the acquired language is the language of communication. A clear example of this is when children living in the USA learn both languages, English as the first language because they live in that community; however, they also learn Spanish because their parents speak it; thus, Spanish is their second language. In the area of research, English has gained importance through the years, and now English plays the role of Lingua franca (Kramer & Catalano, 2015).

“Lingua franca is a vehicular language which allows inter-comprehension among people speaking different mother tongues, as a neutral language which nobody can claim ownership, but also as the mother tongue of one of the parties in the exchange” (European Union, 2010, p. 8).

Besides, English is the language to communicate in business or other areas because even though every party involved speaks a different mother tongue, they may be able to communicate effectively since both may speak English as a foreign language.

Teaching and learning a foreign language is hugely different when pupils are learning their mother tongue. The first relevant aspect is their age, and within it comes that learners may face pressure because learning a language is not the only activity they accomplish.

There are also activities such as work or study where learners need to focus on them as well. Hence, if learners are grown-ups, they might need to use complex and use difficult concepts or topics since they learn a foreign language for specific purposes without having enough time for it (Robinson & Selman, 1996).

2.3.1 English language teaching (ELT)

Teaching a language is a whole process. Every single language has different strategies to allow the students to acquire every aspect of the English Language. According to the British Council, English language teaching (ELT) refers to the activity and industry of teaching English to non-native speakers (British Council, 2019). Therefore, every native or non-native teacher must know that teaching English belongs to a community and schools, researchers, and publishing houses.

According to Archana & Rani (2017, p.2), the "teacher's job is to convince the student that education fulfills the need and learning in the classroom. A teacher has to think from the learners' perspectives before she/he plans to interact with students". The teacher may also have their strategies, but those could not work in all levels and neither all students.

Planning a class has to consider age, purpose, time, learning styles, context, and intercultural competencies. In addition, teachers will not teach in the same way to a junior high school student and an engineer.

Junior high school students may want to improve all their language skills. In contrast, an engineering student may focus only on vocabulary related to the area and formal language because they may want to learn English related to their jobs.

Besides, teachers must apply strategies to teach according to their learners' requirements and objectives of a program. They need to keep improving pronunciation and being a model by developing different roles to have suitable classes.

At this point, it is essential to mention that there are seven roles they may play as a planner, informer, manager, monitor, involver, resource, diagnostician, and parent/friend in the case of children (Mustafa et al., 2012). Furthermore, such roles guide students to improve their language skills, and at the same time, teachers may improve their teaching style.

2.3.2 Teaching Adults.

There are various elements to consider to teaching a language, and one of them is age. The process of growth has its changes in every step. In the language learning process, age interferes in the learning process due to the priorities and responsibilities adults have in their lives.

Of course, adults have characteristics that teachers need to consider, which may help choose the best teaching strategies and to plan a better lesson. According to Harmer (2007),

adults are more disciplined which helps to have a better academic progress in classes, also pupils have lived more hence they have more experiences and adults have a clear understanding of their goals, they may know why they are learning English and the purpose of it (p.84).

However, teaching adults is not as easy as it seems. It requests to understand situations about students' lives, and indeed, it is necessary to have strategies to face them. Some problems that teachers may face are

An irregular attendance in classes is caused by work, career, family and organizational problems that are inevitable in adults' lives. Adults who often work in the important positions in the companies and have to fulfil responsibilities can hardly bear the transition to the role of student who is corrected and reprimanded by the teacher. Those people are afraid of ridicule and criticism from the other adults as well (Michalska, 2015, p. 124).

Teaching adults is challenging because, as the authors mentioned, classes may be the only opportunity to take advantage of time. It is challenging since, as a teacher, you need to catch their attention to make them feel comfortable and challenge themselves out of their comfort zone (Cozma, 2015).

They supported the idea that when teachers have an adult learner group, teachers and students may experience anxiety during the ELT process because adults are more aware of learning needs. Besides, they are not in their comfort zone, and then, they need to take advantage of time dedicated to the target language to fulfill their needs during the classes taken.

Some characteristics of teaching adults are the methods to teach them. They need mainly to hold a conversation in English related to language for business, traveling, and working. Hence, teachers need to focus on practicing and being a helper for learners during their performance. At this point, Michalska (2015) supports the idea that the two main methods that are more useful are the direct method and community language learning.

Indeed, Community language learning is an interpersonal process associated with the interaction between people. In this method, participants want to talk and practice the target language to learn a new language. After all, this method focuses on the ability to maintain a conversation professionally, where the teacher's role is to guide them in those conversations.

2.3.3 How Adults learn

An important aspect to consider in teaching adults is to have the knowledge needed to teach them. That is to be aware of how adults learn. It is like a compliment; one may not work without the other. Adult learning and memory are elements that teachers need to consider to have a good level of learning.

In this respect, there are two types of memory, long and short-term. At this point, O' Malley and Chamot as cited in Tukiainen, 2003 argue that

information is stored in two distinct ways, either short term memory, the active working memory that holds modest amounts of information only for a brief period, or long term memory, the sustained storage of information, which may be presented as isolated elements or more likely as interconnected networks (p. 17).

The essence of this is about how teachers will make significant learning for life. Thus, if the content is not meaningful, it will be in the short-term memory.

In contrast, content that allows students to solve daily-life problems is the knowledge teachers must promote in classes because it is in the long-term memory. Besides, this kind of content helps students keep practicing what they have learned during the classes and improve different language skills.

2.4 Interculturality

As a new way to teach languages, interculturality has to do with teaching in education. To understand what interculturality involves, De la Torre (cited in Medina & Sinnigen 2009) defines interculturality as “the dynamic articulation between ethnic groups (internally) and with the hegemonic society, in search of a permanent harmonic space of social interrelation that promotes into the important future processes of decentralization and social participation in more equitable conditions” (p. 258).

As a social group, every member must respect different characteristics and backgrounds involved in that group, especially when you are learning a language. People might be Mexicans, and they belong to a social group with its costumes, values, and traditions, which is already known. Still, when one member of that group decides to learn another language, the subject starts to identify all the differences and changes involved, and it could seem weird at first time and incredible.

However, those are aspects of the other culture, and as a learner, it is necessary to give and have the chance to get involved. The learner has to understand, tolerate and adapt according to the circumstances, not forgetting his cultural background.

Thus, interculturality involves several skills. As a matter of fact, it implies a different setting where people have to deal with the differences between contexts. These relationships are capable of exchanges that could happen through the interactions between them. Arias, cited in Medina & Sinnigen (2009), points out that:

Interculturality is not the simple coexistence of different cultures, but rather the sharing of these cultures in their difference, and sharing is only possible from living of everyday life among culturally differentiated communities, each with its own and distinct meanings of existence. It implies dialogical meetings and a continuous relation of alterity between concrete subjects, among human beings endowed with distinct visions of the world, among those that produce symbolic exchanges of senses of meanings (p. 258).

Students are learning a new language, and the ones who have been among cultural exchanges are the professors (native or nonnative), who may share cultural differences. Thus, students do not need to live among English native speakers to learn them.

Another definition of interculturality regarding Trujillo (2002) is:

Interculturality is based on attitudes and tries to avoid the standards and perceptions that people may have about cultures giving them a blank space to fill with people's perceptions making their own by interacting and having the opportunity to know more about all the cultural aspects to develop a general comprehension of cultures and to modify (or strengthen) the learners' attitude towards more positive stances rather than negatives (p.108).

Therefore, interculturality is part of the language. To practice a new language, people need to know more about cultural aspects to understand it. That is why the learner must develop intercultural communicative competence.

In summary, interculturality deals with the perception that people have about any topic before knowing the background. The reason it works in that way is to see the differences through different eyes. Furthermore, it deals with interculturality and the opportunity to develop intercultural and communicative competence.

2.4.1 Intercultural communicative competence

Different perspectives have appeared in teaching languages, and one of them seems to be interculturality as a competence. Intercultural competence is something that students need to develop to have better communication.

To understand what this concept involves, Deardoof (2006) explains that “Intercultural competence is the ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to visible behavior and communication that is both effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions” (p. 245).

A student who speaks Spanish knows that when someone sneezes, he should say *salud*, but when you speak English is different, the person who sneezes would say sorry instead.

The speaker accomplishes that shift due to two reasons. First, he has the targeted knowledge and vocabulary needed for the situation. Second, he changes his speech according to the language spoken at that moment, and it must be appropriate to the cultural changes between

languages. Then, it is what intercultural competence involves; those aspects for shifting and adapting.

Furthermore, Harmer (2012) states a similar idea related to the previous example “the capability to shift cultural perspective and appropriately adapt behavior to cultural difference and commonalities. This capability is determined in terms of a range of orientations along the intercultural developmental continuum of intercultural competence” (p.3).

Both authors agreed that intercultural competence involves respecting the behavior in a different context with different communities since shift and adapt let understand the importance of respecting cultural differences. However, being an intercultural speaker needs not only communicative skills but also social skills. A recently work by Meyer (cited in Clouet, 2002) states that

Intercultural competence is a combination of social and communicative skills, including: empathy, ability to deal with conflict, ability to work collaboratively, flexibility, foreign language awareness, awareness that culture causes different discussion styles, speech speeds, interpretation and thought, techniques for handling interactional difficulties on one’s own cultural background and tolerance of ambiguity (p. 315-314).

2.4.2 Intercultural competence in native speakers

Every single person may start to develop intercultural competence. For this research purpose, the native speakers’ intercultural competence is the goal because when students learn a new language, the closest model to acquire it could be the native speaker.

As a matter of fact, “in language teaching, the implicit aim has been to imitate a native speaker both in linguistic competence, in the knowledge of what is appropriate language, and in knowledge about the country and its culture” (Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey, 2002, p.5). Native speakers know about choosing an appropriate word, phrase, or idiom to say something according to the situation and the level of harshness that those words emphasize.

Using the same amount of words in our language will not have the same consequences as the foreign language. That is something that a language learner must achieve by acquiring an intercultural competence by himself or by having the opportunity to learn from a native. In addition, Kpurtisin (2000, cited in Lee 2005) argues that being a native speaker is the following:

English is the language of my heart, the one in which I can easily express love for my children: in which I know instinctively how to coo to a baby: in which I can sing lullabies, tell stories, and recite nursery rhymes, talk baby talk. In Japanese, there, as artificiality about my love: I cannot express it naturally or easily. The emotions I feel do not translate well into the Japanese language, and those

which I have seen expressed by Japanese mothers do not seem sufficiently intimate when I mouth them (p.6)

As the author mentions, intercultural competence compensates for language and allows speakers to express culture. Thus, native speakers know that something is not working with their language because they have spoken it since they were babies and through thousands and thousands of situations they have faced daily.

In contrast, learners may have fewer opportunities to play with the language in different situations. At least someone (no matter who) gives them the tools to develop competence to help them use the language appropriately.

At this point, Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2000) mention that no matter the teacher's background, what matters is the way the teacher is approaching the language, allowing students to analyze different cultures through facts and things; this may help learners to have an awareness of the people's perspectives and respect them.

2.4.3 Interculturality in the learning process

While it is fundamental to know how the learning process works, it is also essential to identify the role of interculturality. There are many perspectives about how it works. The following authors give the clearest.

According to Trujillo (2002), “interculturality is one of the most important single education objectives of current language teaching. It represents a hopeful point of contact between the individual, school curriculum, and society. However, definitions of culture and interculturality still represent societies as watertight compartments” (p. 108).

Therefore, interculturality is the key for students to have a door open toward a new society to construct a self-understanding. It is a process that starts when a person who has decided to learn a language makes comparisons between their own and the other culture. Thus, the learner knows by learning more and more about the language. The purpose of such a process is to help learners understand and respect how people see the world. As a result, interculturality takes part in the English foreign language learning process with other components (Rose, 2004).

Finally, Vega (cited in Trujillo, 2020) explains how culture works in the communicative process. This author states it plays three roles when the speaker is learning and using the language to communicate:

1. The speaker adapts the speech to the foreign language learning background information to facilitate comprehension.
2. The speaker should address and interfere through different cultural schemata, which means the same foreign language background.
3. The speaker modifies his background to have a better communication process when he addresses the receptor

As been seen, interculturality is not only about production; it also involves body language.

2.4.4 Intercultural communicative competence in the English Foreign learning process

There is a model developed by Byram (1997) that focuses on teaching language and interculturality. It attempts to include non-verbal communication while recognizing that many teachers would not see the need or feel qualified to teach nonverbal communication. It drew on the theory other than applied linguistics and sociolinguistics.

This model is based on applied culture and language, looking to raise the language level. Not only learning grammatical rules, although cultural changes that a language has itself. Intercultural competence involves six main dimensions, which are the following: Linguistic, Sociolinguistic, Discourse, Strategic, Sociocultural and Social, and Linguistic competencies (Byram, 1997; Coperias 2007)

Besides, a fundamental definition included in this model is the word *savoir*, and Byram (cited in Deardorff 2009) defines it as

The ability to evaluate critically and, on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries. This definition involves a number of assumptions, but it mainly focuses on "ability" to realize some activity; it is part of defining intercultural competence as abilities, knowledge and dispositions (p. 323)

Even though this model points out the necessity to teach under the intercultural competence model, there are two types of teachers' profiles where one of them does not see its importance and has negative perceptions about ICC. Therefore, it is fundamental to make the teacher aware of the advantages ICC has for the learning process, and the most important is to help them integrate language and ICC as a whole in their teaching.

2.4.5 Teaching intercultural communicative competence in an EFL classroom

Intercultural competence has become a crucial element because it could develop skills that are helpful to have appropriate communication.

A study carried out by Pappamihel (2004) and Deardoorf (2009) shows that “After taking one class in multicultural education and another one specific to the needs of English-language learners, early childhood teacher education students still exhibited a low level of it” (p.245).

Thus, it is necessary to develop a syllabus where teachers can apply interculturality through different levels. Teaching intercultural competence once is not enough to achieve a suitable proficiency level because it requires constant effort.

Like other processes, intercultural competence carries out its own, “during this process, the coining of the phrase intercultural speaker was accompanied by the introduction of the phrase of intercultural competence within the field of foreign language education and then, the monograph, intercultural communicative competence” (Deardoorf, 2009, p. 323).

It also has steps to follow. For example, during this process, you become an intercultural speaker with all the abilities and sub-abilities that it requires.

The concept of intercultural speakers has been developed through the years. Indeed, “there is a substantial history of linking the teaching of language per se with knowledge about one or more countries where the language is spoken” (Byram, 2009, p. 321).

In addition, Alcon (2007) explains the concept of an intercultural speaker in three chunks, inter, cultural, speaker. First, the word -inter is related to being at the intermediate point of any subject. Speaking about languages, it would be finding yourself in the middle of both languages, respecting and understanding both at the same level without having favoritism, just in the intermediate point.

Second, the term -cultural is the growth of your mind in different aspects such as behavior, tastes, and values within a society. Lastly, the word speaker means a person who speaks formally or informally to communicate.

To conclude this, an intercultural speaker is a person who speaks in both language backgrounds in different societies to communicate effectively.

Consequently, teaching intercultural communicative competence in an EFL classroom has challenges to overcome. It does not matter if the teacher is a native or non-native because in both cases, they must work on adapting methodology or techniques to work with intercultural communicative competence in the syllabus or the lesson plan.

Being an intercultural speaker demands several elements like skills. There are five principles in total that an intercultural speaker is required to build up: know how to be, to know, to understand, to learn and to engage (Byram, 1995; Byram, 1997).

2.4.6. FREPA as a reference for language and culture

As the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) measures proficiency level in a language, there is also a framework for pluralistic approaches that focuses on what this study aims to analyze.

Its name is Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures (FREPA). It started as a project where five researchers worked on its development with two versions English and Spanish. Its aim is:

To produce, on the basis of FREPA a tool for use by teachers. This tool will help raise their awareness about the necessity of a global approach to resources that the learner must construct for himself in the process of developing his plurilingual and pluricultural competence. It will help teachers to adopt a general plan such as “relying on initial linguistic competences of all learners, and of putting in place the synergies within the learning process of all languages (Candelier et al., 2012, p. 1)

This project divides the competencies into seven, all of them as references of pluralistic approaches and cultures. According to Candelier et al. (2012), a learner could develop all of them to activate knowledge, skills, and attitudes by adopting and adapting.

That is why C1 involves managing linguistic and cultural communication, and C2 aims the production broader ideas taking into account a linguistic and cultural repertoire, where both have sub-competencies within themselves.

Besides, C3 focuses on decentring, while C4 aims to explore unknown linguistics and cultural components. Moreover, C5 implicates distancing, and C6 focuses on making critical analyses in different contexts. Finally, C7 identifies other perspectives and the way they are different.

2.4.7 Activities that promote intercultural competence in an EFL classroom

Promoting intercultural competence could be difficult. However, as teachers, there is a way to achieve it. At this point, Byram (2009) suggests “knowledge should be accompanied by action, and the competences described, to be used as objectives for teaching and learning, include skills of communication mediation, and conflict resolution, which echo the description of the competencies of the intercultural speaker”(p. 327).

It is so because activities are good tools to work with ICC, but they may not be enough to promote intercultural competence. In addition, it is useful to integrate appropriate material; then, students will be able to work with ICC authentically.

In a follow-up idea, it is recommendable to use authentic material but ensure that learners understand its context and intention. Concerning this, materials from origins with different perspectives should let learners compare and analyze them because "it is about learners acquiring more than factual information" (Gribkova, 2012, p.19).

According to Nunan (cited in Byram 1997), teachers can use tasks to promote intercultural competence instead of activities. These tasks must stipulate which are the components students will work on.

Besides, the components must be adapted to reach the objectives of a task, develop communicative skills and cultural awareness. Generally speaking, the authors agreed that aims must be related to ICC, developing skills that ICC involves itself. Additionally, Chlopek (2008) suggests four steps when teachers work with activities to promote ICC:

Teachers can (1) conduct activities in the students' native language, (2) introduce activities which pre-teach vocabulary or structures and key concepts, (3) simplify texts or design activities in such a way that students can cope with a more difficult text, and (4) adapt activities in agreement with the students' stage of cognitive development (p.12)

However, there is a different meaningful approach that focuses on intercultural communicative competence. Although it is bound to three more competencies: linguistic, strategic, and pragmatic, it is the least worked in an EFL classroom (Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, 2008).

It is a fact that all these competencies take part in lesson planning. It could be unconsciously but at least once teachers work with them. When a person is learning a new language, the pupil needs to develop four skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. As teachers, we design activities to focus and improve every skill according to the lesson's objective. Fortunately, there are activities to focus on IC and language skills.

Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2008) suggest some activities:

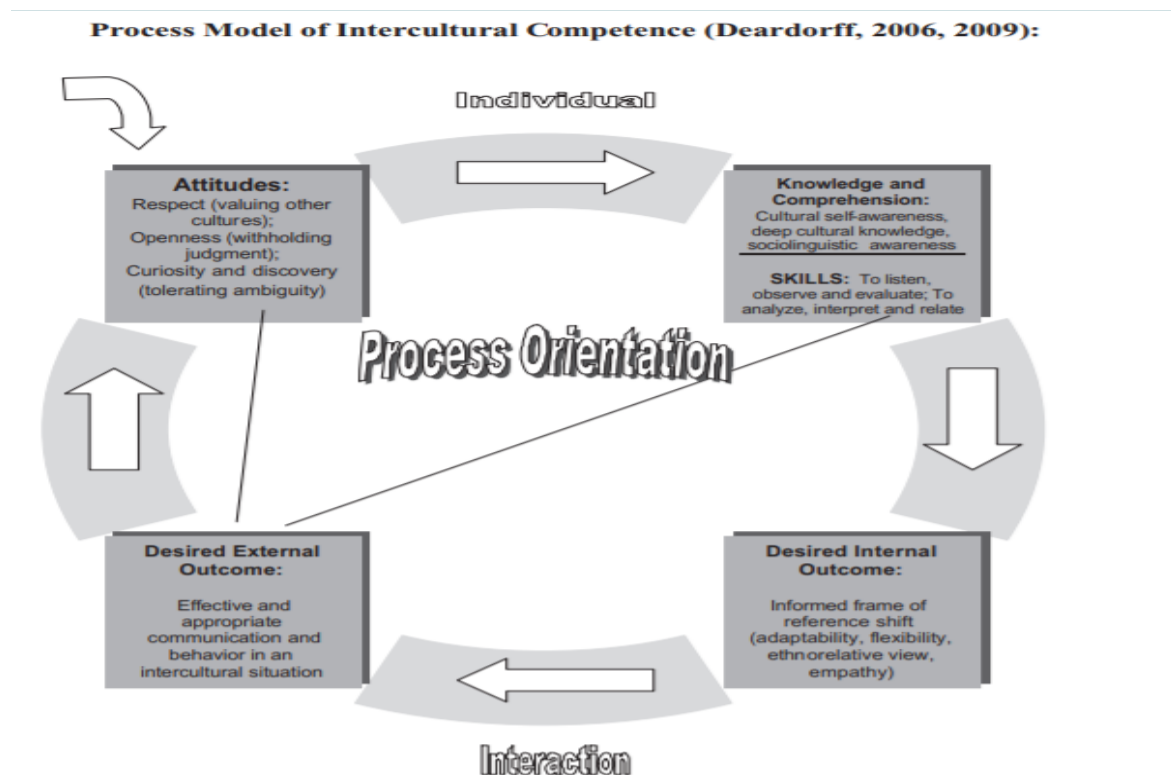
First, work on listening because it allows to work with intercultural misunderstandings; it could be a tape or a video, and SS should find a solution. Moreover, analyzing songs, jokes, or anecdotes from a TV show or a TV series are also suitable tasks to promote in classes.

Then to practice speaking, face-to-face tandem learning, role plays, and videos are convenient. One suggestion to work on reading is to use newspapers, magazines, books and promote critical reading because such material is authentic.

Finally, work in writing. Here, the authors recommend asking students to write stories or emails about cultural misunderstandings.

2.4.8 How to evaluate the intercultural competence in an EFL classroom

There are five factors to evaluate intercultural communicative competence. These are mentioned by Byram 1997, which refers to the *savoirs*. Nevertheless, there is also a more recent model of intercultural communicative competence by Deardoff (2006, 2009). This model takes into account Byram's *savoirs* and focuses on the process model of IC that will help to have a clearer view of how to evaluate IC. The graphic that follows has two parts belonging to the orientation process.



Assessing Complex General Education Student Learning Outcomes (Penn, 2011, p.67).

Individually, there are three different sections: attitudes, skills and knowledge, and comprehension. These elements help to have appropriate objectives to evaluate intercultural competence. First, it is crucial to select what features (attitudes, skills, knowledge, and comprehension) teachers will work in class, and these need to be linked to the goal or purpose of the program, which needs to be very specific (Deardoff, 2011).

Besides, Fantini (2009) agrees with the previous idea, and all need to be related to syllabus, objectives, activities, etc.

Assessment is also related directly to explicitly articulated goals and objectives, and that assessment measures their attainment by the learner. What is to be learned and measured are related; they are, in fact, the same. Moreover, since the goals and objectives are about developing intercultural competence components, "a clear understanding of intercultural competence and these components again emerges as critical to the process" (ebid, p. 461).

In addition, to evaluate intercultural competence and the elements from the class, it is vital to decide at the beginning of the course the type of assessment; that is, summative or formative.

On the one hand, assessment of ICC should be more formative than summative because it aims at developing ICC and keeping the learning processes active. Thus, the teacher focuses on gathering information to identify the students' strengths and weaknesses.

On the other hand, "in summative evaluation, the intention is not emphasized when assessing ICC because it sums up attainment at the end of a course with a grade" (Lussier and Golubina, 2007, p. 29).

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter provides a review for this research that focuses on language acquisition, teaching and learning a foreign language to adults, interculturality, and intercultural communicative competence in native speakers and the EFL classroom. Finally, a description of activities to promote ICC, explanations on how to evaluate ICC, and FREPA were the core to understand the study.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the method to analyze the phenomenon of the study, the instrument to collect the data, the procedure to analyze it, and the sample that was part of the study.

3.2 Research design

This research has a quantitative approach because the goal is to know how native teachers' intercultural competence interferes with students' learning process and identify what abilities or skills intercultural competence promotes based on students' perceptions. Then, according to Bryman (2012), quantitative research is "a quantification in the collection analysis of something" (p. 35) that enables the interpretation of findings with numbers (Sampieri 2014), especially from questionnaires with Likert scales of agreement.

Besides, the study was cross-sectional since the instrument was applied once at the end of a term.

3.3 Subjects

This research took place in Puebla, Mexico at the Facultad de Lenguas from the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, specifically in the programs of teaching English.

The student's profile is a highly competent teacher able to strengthen personal and academic professional development with English-speaking culture. Thus, the undergraduate student will be fluent in English at least B2 (Facultad de Lenguas, 2019).

The syllabus of the educational program has six English language targets with teachers who are native speakers, too.

Subjects who are part of the sample have characteristics needed to answer the questionnaire, focusing on the purposes of this research. Hernández et al., (2014) define sampling as a specific and representative group from which accurate data is gathered.

At this point, some characteristics of the sample are the following:

1. All the subjects of this research project were students from generation 2016
2. 20 % of the subjects are male and 80% female
3. The whole sample had a class with a native speaker
4. All of them belong to the English Teaching Bachelor

4. Students take different subjects, and all of them have had the opportunity to have an intercultural experience in and outside the classroom.
5. They are between 21 and 24 years old.

3.4 Instrument

This study aims to answer questions related to intercultural competence and its impact on students. In accomplishing the above goal, a questionnaire was chosen as an instrument because regarding Mujis (2004, p. 36), "survey research is well suited to descriptive studies, or where researchers want to look at relationships between variables occurring in particular real-life contexts".

The questionnaire has 15 items with four multiple-choice options per item. The questions are closed-ended and include a section for general information like age, gender, and semester.

According to Muijs (2004), "the main advantage of this method is its familiarity to users, the fact that it allows users to complete the questionnaire at their convenience, and the fact that it allows them some time to think about their answers".

In addition, some questions were adapted from an instrument already applied (Clouet 2012), and the rest of the items were from the Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches Languages and Cultures (FREPA).

Regarding its structure, it took into account the main subdimensions of intercultural competence. Moreover, eight out of fifteen items reveal information to answer the first research question focused on teachers' intercultural competence and students' learning process. The rest (twelve left) answer the second question that deals with the abilities intercultural competence promotes.

Thus, the questionnaire provides meaningful information about perceptions of how intercultural competence contributes to students' English learning process and the abilities intercultural competence fosters in such a process.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

As mentioned above, the instrument has 15 closed-ended questions and was piloted and analyzed with the SPSS software to have reliability and validity. After this process, 40 students who were part of the sample answered this instrument at the end of a term (cross-sectional study).

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures.

Data analysis procedures play a fundamental role in quantitative research. At this stage, all the data gathered was analyzed quantitatively since “Quantitative data focuses on numerical descriptions and comparisons of groups among variables because data analysis is typically conducted through the use of statistical software programs” (Mertler, 2019).

First, the 40 questionnaires classified into two research questions were analyzed. After, the percentage from each option was presented in graphics to interpret the results.

Thus, in the following chapter, there will be two sections. The first one is related to native teachers’ intercultural competence and students’ learning. The second one deals with the abilities intercultural competence promotes.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter mentioned the methodology chosen to achieve this project and the place where it was. It also described the characteristics of the subjects and the data collection and data analysis procedures.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the gathered findings from the instrument applied to the subjects. It has two sections that focus on how intercultural competence interferes with the learning process and the abilities that IC fosters.

4.2 Research questions

The basis of this research is the two following questions.

1. How does native teachers' intercultural communicative competence interfere with students' learning process?
2. What abilities does intercultural communicative competence promote?

4.3 Answers to Research Questions

The results from 40 questionnaires are in the following sections.

4.3.1 How does native teachers' intercultural competence interfere with students' learning process?

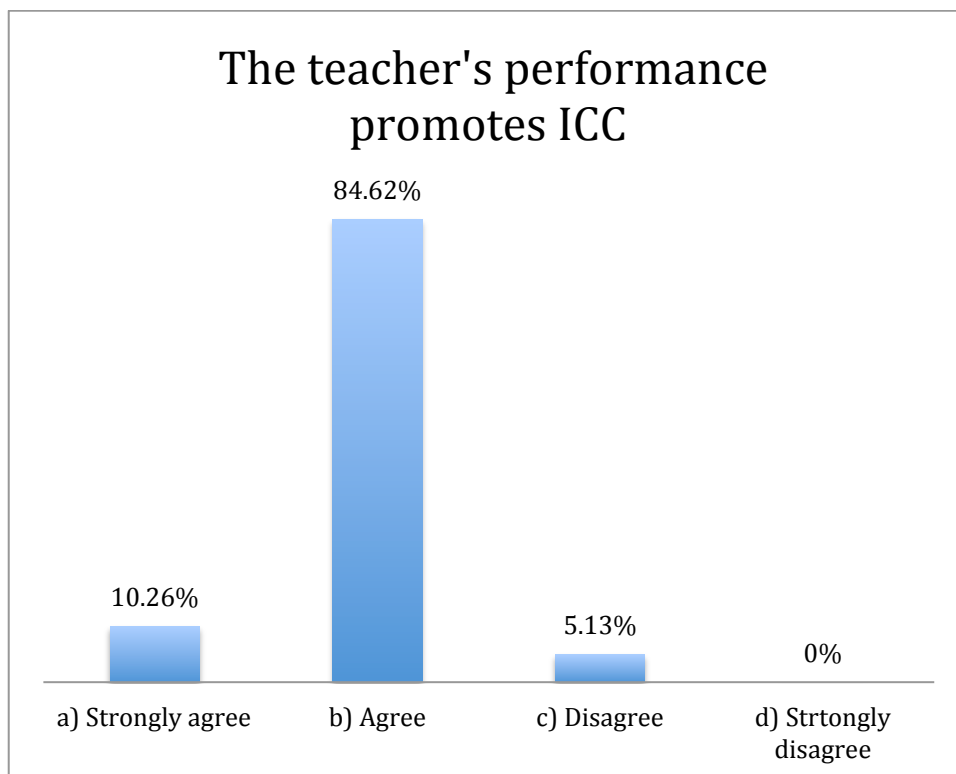


Figure 1. The teacher's performance promotes ICC

The teachers' role is a crucial element in the practice of intercultural competence. Evidently, in Figure 1, 84.62% of the students feel that the teacher transmits intercultural competencies during his classes. The model emphasizes attitudes of respect and openness towards cultural aspects of the language even though students could not value cultural elements since they are skipping a step on developing ICC.

In addition to this, 10.26% agree that teachers transmit culture and use intercultural competencies. Indeed, they feel comfortable asking the teacher about cultural changes in the language, which means they have opportunities to approach ICC. They feel the necessity to express what they think about this foreign culture. It leads to those cultural features pertinent to analyze to be a better communicator as a student and a better facilitator as a teacher.

5.13% assure that despite a good relationship between the teacher and students, they cannot apply the ICC in their target language since they see both language and culture as separable, and definitely, this aspect affects the process.

At this point, Byram et al. (2002) mentioned that the problem is the way the teacher is approaching the language where they should allow students to analyze different cultures.

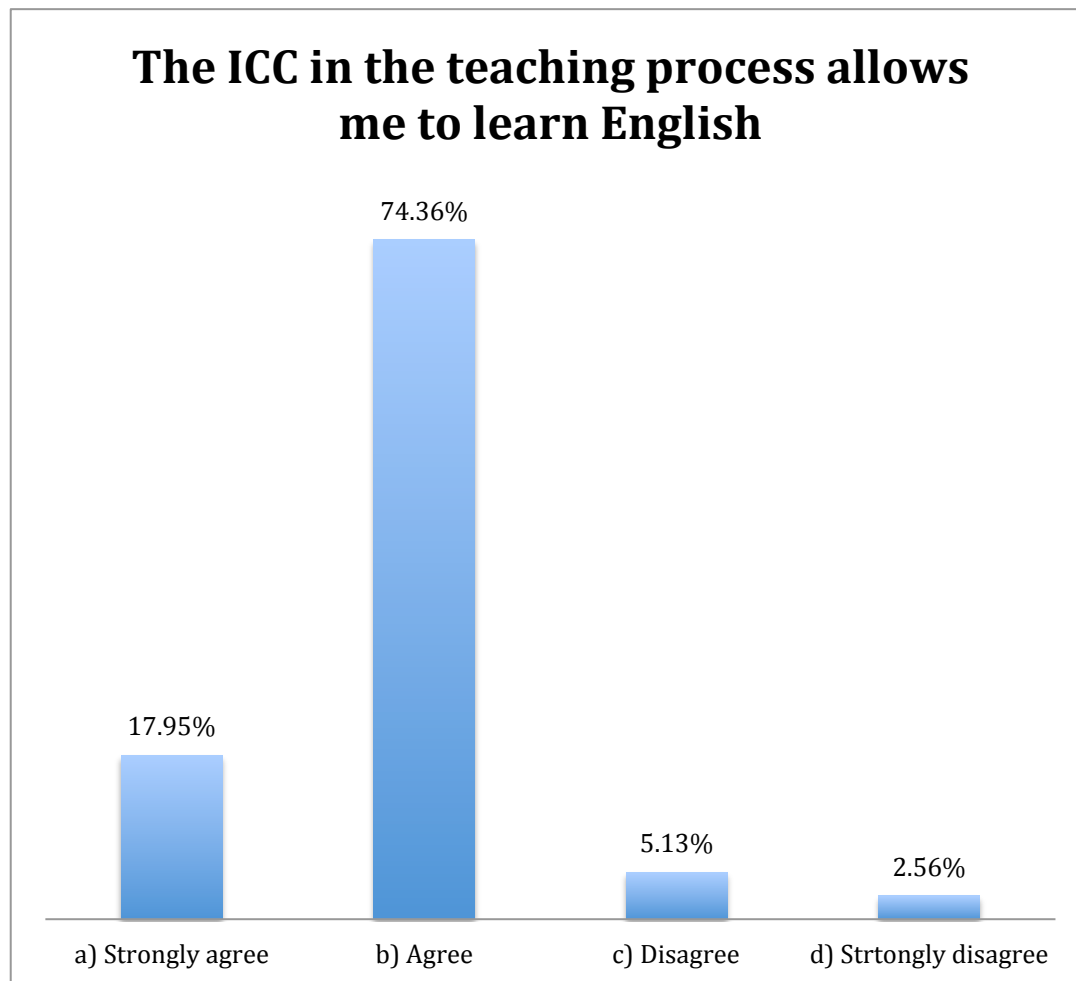


Figure 2. The ICC in the teaching process allows me to learn English

Results have shown that ICC interferes with the students' learning process that means they practice conversations to discuss ideas, thoughts, and feelings that imply culture. These conversations focus on a variety of grammar topics according to the level where the students are. Generally speaking, they develop linguistic competence in different contexts (Clouet, 2012). It implies that teachers integrated linguistic competence, which plays a part in ICC. Besides, it is essential to realize that native speakers or teachers have already developed this competence considering English is their first language.

Furthermore, 17.95% indicate that they have lessons to exchange information referring to culture or social groups. In these classes, participants had the opportunity to experience conversations with cultural data, but those opportunities might not be enough.

That is why teachers must make decisions about which aspects they teach or emphasize. It is for both native and non-native speakers even though every teacher differs in approach to the language (Byram et al., 2002).

Moreover, only 5.13% believed that culture (global perceptions) or intercultural features were present in classes that interfere with their learning process. Finally, 2.56% strongly disagree that teachers included cultural aspects in class.

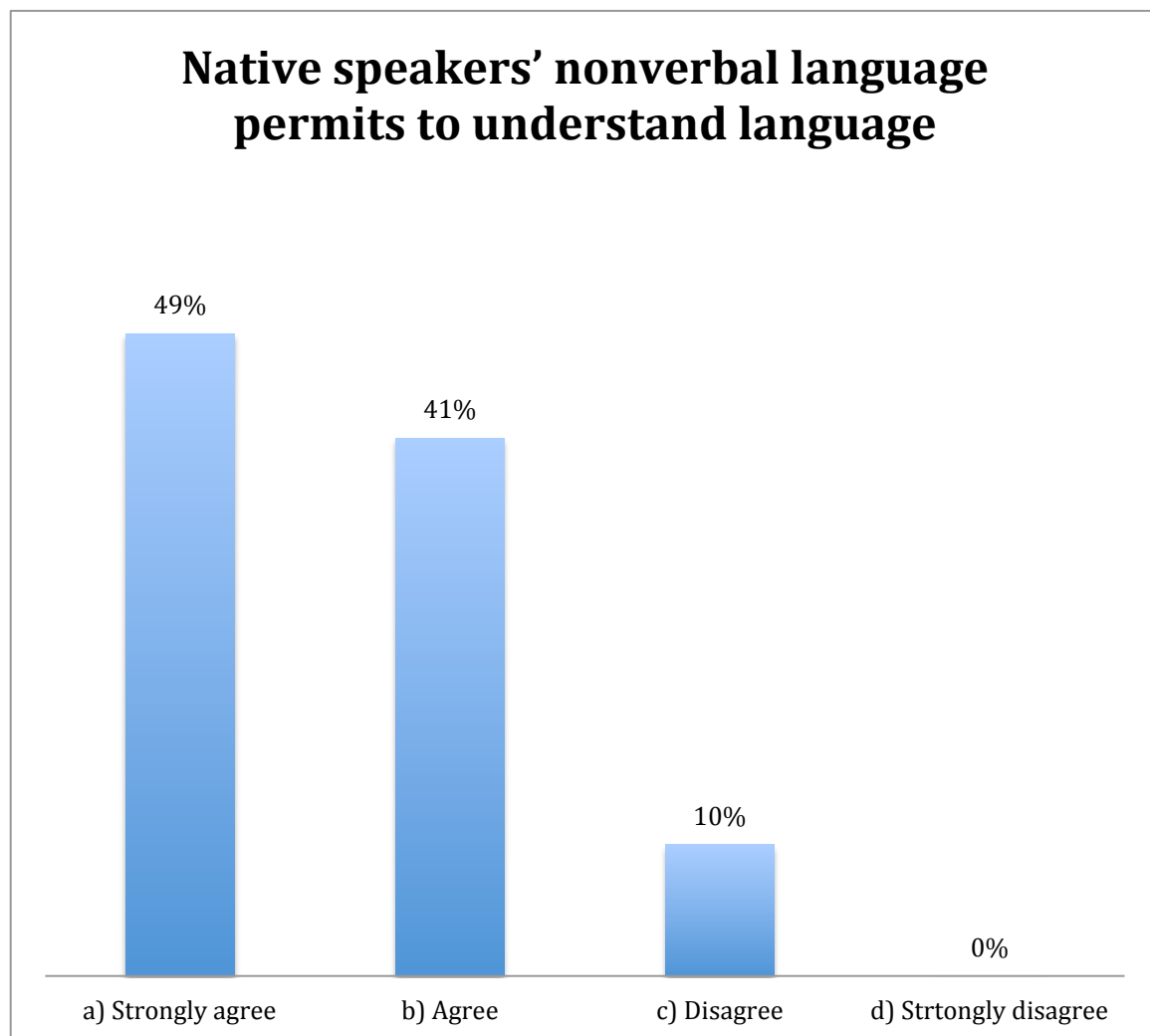


Figure 3. Native speakers' nonverbal language permits to understand language

Subjects' answers show that the nonverbal communication is different from theirs since native teachers do not have the same background. According to Jackson (2014), nonverbal actions, which take part in nonverbal communication, are influenced by the speaker's linguistic and cultural background, such as space usage, gesticulations, and speech level.

Indeed, kinesthesia has a fundamental role as an extended area belonging to nonverbal actions because movements complement verbal language and, of course, transmit meaning too. For example, body postures, gesticulations, expressions, and eye movements are nonverbal actions (Jackson, 2014).

At this point, the graph shows that 10% of the subjects disagreed and considered that eye contact was different or had a different connotation from their language.

However, 49% strongly agree that posture shows intercultural competence and helps them to understand language. Thus, it interferes with the learning process by letting students grasp the language. Besides, 41% considered that gestures are part of the culture and also foster understanding of language.

A high percentage (49%) supports teachers' postures denote different feelings from one culture. Based on some studies, postures are interpreted according to similar dimensions by people from different cultural backgrounds. However, they are not aware of the assigned importance to specific aspects of these dimensions if the teacher does not emphasize them (Kudoh & Matsumoto 1985; Matsumoto & Kudoh 1987).

Furthermore, gestures are culture-specific; gestures' meanings differ in different cultural settings. Regarding it, subjects agree that a positive movement in one context may be considered offensive in another. For this reason, students highlight the different meanings native teachers' gestures make (Jackson 2014).

In summary, nonverbal communication takes part in intercultural competence because body language is not the same in every culture.

Finally, as can be seen, students are integrating intercultural communication in some way in their learning process that the majority of the sample is aware of these variations.

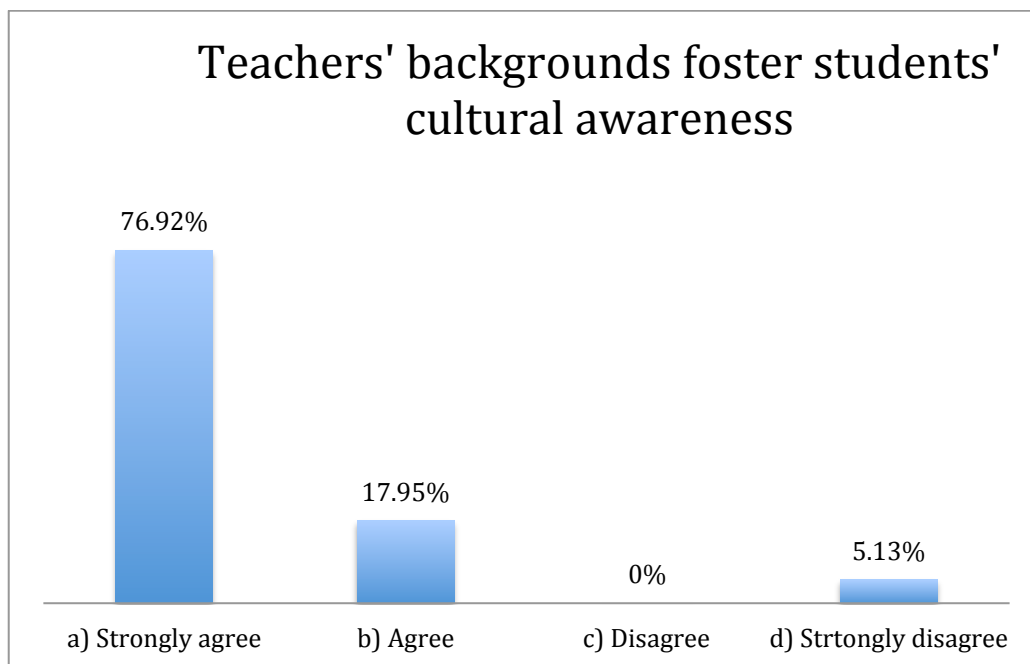


Figure 4. Teachers' backgrounds foster students' cultural awareness

In response to the previous question, 76.92% replied that cultural background is one of the most prominent aspects in classes since teachers are native speakers and have experience and knowledge about their culture.

In this respect, Villalobos (2011) points out that the most relevant attributes native teachers possess are innate knowledge of grammatical rules of the language and a grasp of meanings. Those attributes allow native speakers to communicate within different social settings, and it is a way of identification in their language community.

Also, 17.95% of the sample pointed out that cultural background interferes with the learning process positively. Indeed, topics such as economics, cultural perspectives, and etiquette are common elements during the class.

Nevertheless, 5.13 % strongly disagree with including history and culture in class even though different authors assure culture and language are linked, and it is impossible to teach a language without it.

Moreover, citing Yang (2014), learning and teaching languages are always connected to culture because it is an essential part of both processes because countries and ethnic groups have different perspectives, which means that every culture is different from others; that is why they could be similar but never the same.

Therefore, culture is a broad area, and teachers should focus on a specific activity to integrate it into lessons through topics about history, economics, politics, and cultural background.

In summary, the cultural background does take part in the learning process since teachers share experiences about holidays, food, habits, and perceptions of the global world, which are a suitable way to make students interested in the target language and at the same time, it will help them to be aware of language's cultural changes and get the intercultural competence.

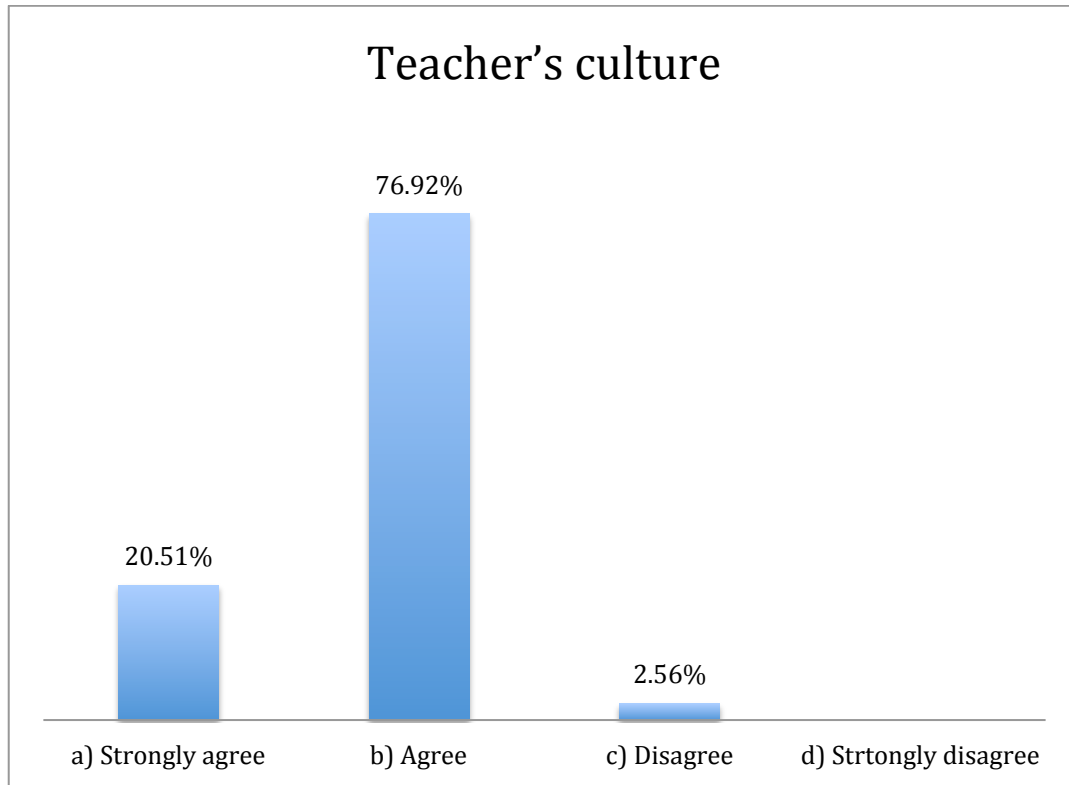


Figure 5. Teacher's culture

Considering that culture is present in classes, this graph focuses on the way teachers address this topic when they lecture students. According to the previous graphic, the majority of the respondents (76.92%) agree that teachers' culture impacts their learning process because they talk about their experiences in culture and language or show them objects from a specific culture. That is because teachers already possess characteristics that allow them to share experiences and the implementation of authentic material is another way to facilitate students to understand one context towards the foreign one (Gribkova, 2012).

Moreover, only 20.51% of the respondents strongly agree that teachers emphasize the similarities and differences between students' and teachers' cultures by bringing objects from the foreign culture to analyze them and talking about their experience related to culture or language.

In contrast, few participants (2.56%) indicated that even though teachers talk about their observations of intercultural relationships since they share experiences related to culture, they had not had the opportunity to be in contact with foreigners as a way to analyze culture, and that is why they disagree with the idea of intercultural competence. Indeed, they think authentic supplementary material is not applied in class yet.

In this respect, Byram (2009) suggests that these talks based on experiences must be with activities where students could practice and reinforce their communications skills.

This finding confirms that ICC is in lessons, but there are no activities to guide students through their learning process. Then, this makes it difficult to get benefits from the teachers' culture.

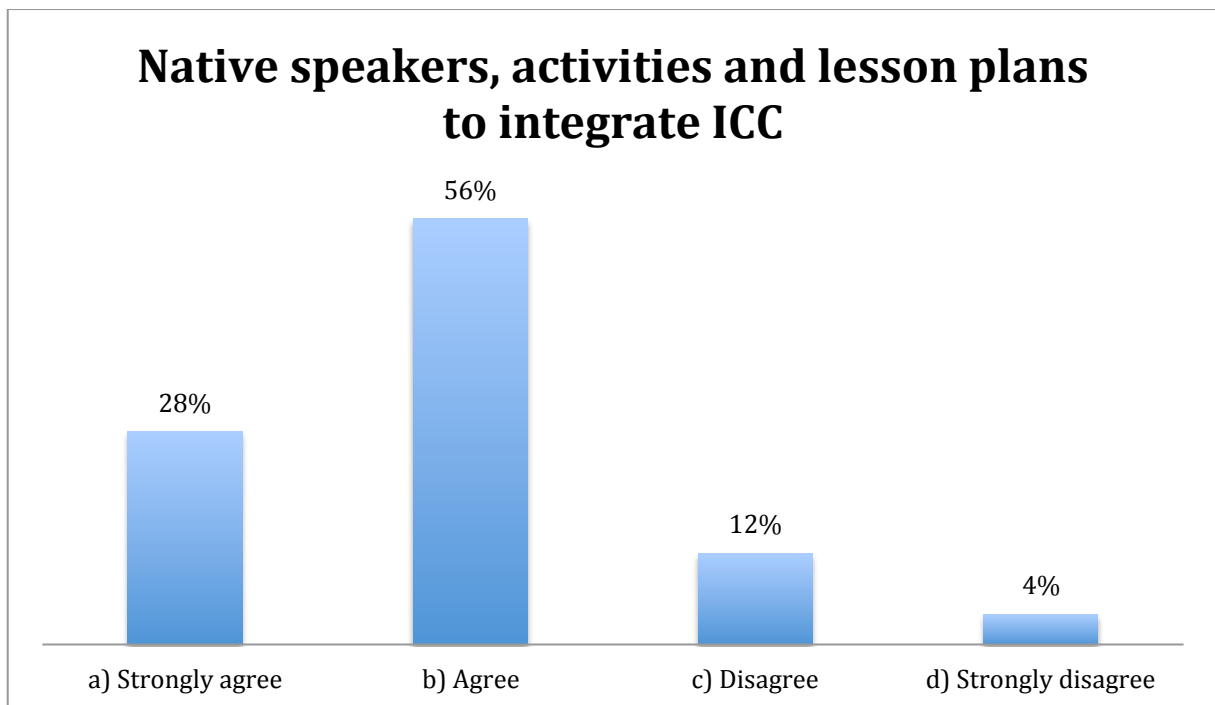


Figure 6. Native speakers, activities and lesson plans to integrate ICC

Another evidence of how native speakers' intercultural competence interferes with the student's learning process is in lesson plans and activities. As known, lessons take several steps since they have to reach an objective, and the activities performed in a classroom need to link to it to satisfy student's needs. In this respect, in figure 6, the results show native speakers integrate these linguistics units even though those do not ensure that students will use them in their daily speech.

84% of these students agree that native teachers integrate informal words, phrases, and slang in their discussions and activities, which along with the body language, help them understand authentic materials and learn the target language.

At this point, Jackson agrees that gestures, facial expressions, and more nonverbal codes might not be easy to understand when people are learning a second or foreign language.

Evidently, language teachers make a great effort to enhance students' fundamental knowledge about culture (Scheu, 1996); however, it is difficult to combine knowledge and culture, especially when there is a traditional teaching method.

In contrast, 12% express that teachers integrate beliefs and values, but they disagree with those aspects due to their lack of skills to interact or discuss those topics since they do not acquire new knowledge of a culture or accomplish a cultural practice.

In addition, 4% strongly disagree that intercultural competence is into classes or activities. Indeed, they consider it difficult to integrate knowledge and culture in real-life situations. Thus, despite all areas of concern as body language, perception of values, and beliefs, they point out the necessity to work on them.

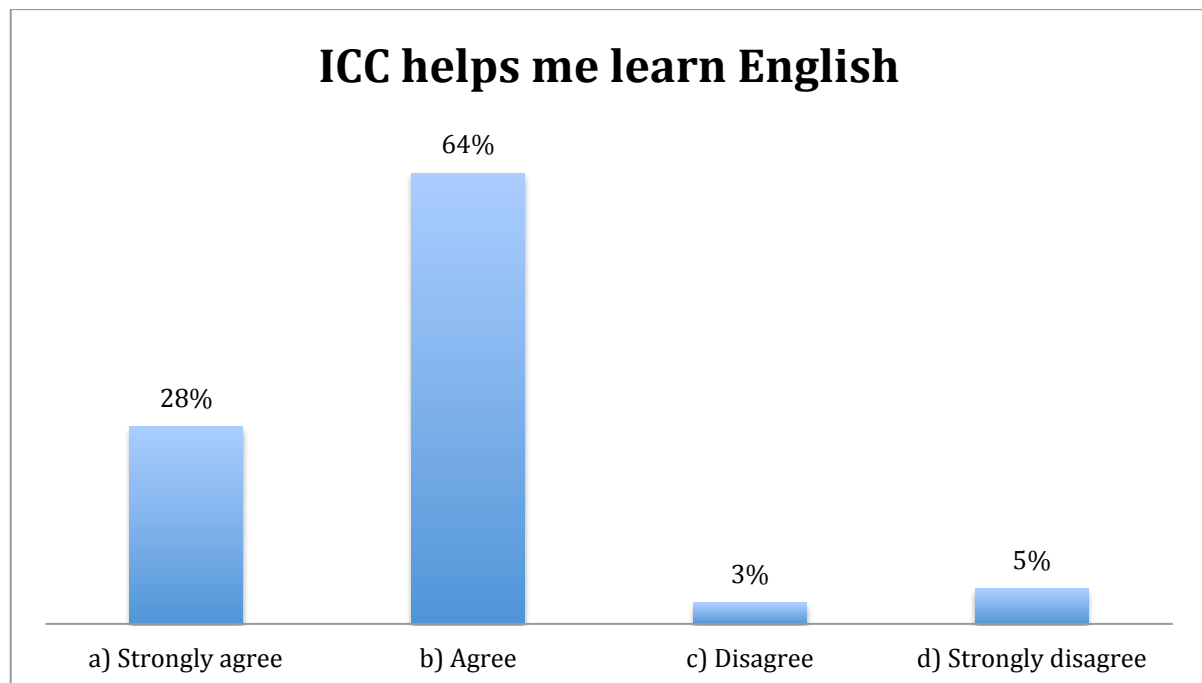


Figure 7. ICC helps me learn English

As seen, 92% of the sample agree that ICC allows them to learn and understand English and language related to culture as jokes by analyzing every component of language and making sense with the help of intercultural competence.

These results corroborate that cultural elements are essential to understanding jokes, colloquial language, and even the academic target language (Sheeraz, 2015).

In contrast, 8% of the subjects disagree that ICC is helpful to learn colloquial expressions, informal language, or academic one. Regarding this fact, Jackson (2014) mentions that this happens because contact with the other culture to understand what the meaning is behind jokes or informal language is missing. Thus, if students and teachers integrate intercultural competencies, both will recognize and create humor because it plays a vital role in the progress and maintenance of meaningful intercultural relationships.

In general, these findings support the idea that teachers do integrate ICC competencies (92%) in their lessons. Besides, they lead to confirm that the target language helps students solve real-life situations when speaking English.

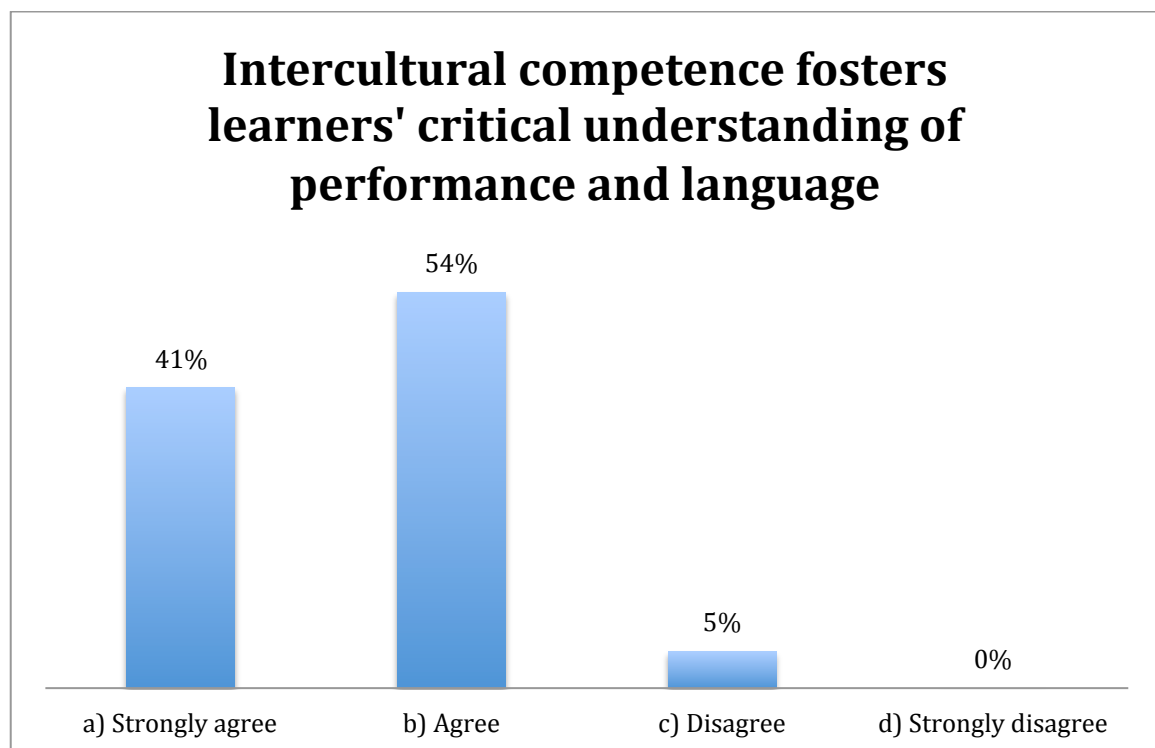


Figure 8. Intercultural competence fosters learners' critical understanding of performance and language

Students' perceptions (95%) suggest that cultural aspects help a critical understanding of different cultures, languages, and performances because they agree to the advantage of ICC. These results highlight that students are aware of the importance of cultural aspects in their learning language process.

In this respect, FREPA suggests that those aspects are activated by competencies, knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Besides, one of those competencies involves a critical understanding of the foreign and students' culture. Thus, when someone decides to learn a second language, he should be aware of the cultural implication and the necessity to respect other beliefs, ideologies and comprehend other behavior because culture involves numerous aspects such as history, lifestyles, costumes, or the language of the country as well as talking about theater or literature (Hernández and Samaca, 2006).

Results also confirm Coperías's conception (2007) about ICC, seen as building up of more competencies like sociocultural and social competence that focus on people's values and beliefs.

Also, results suggest that for learning a target language, it is crucial to implement communicative strategies focusing on developing learners' efficiency in communicating language through cultural aspects (Clouet, 2012).

Contrary, 5% of the sample think that ICC is not enough to understand speakers' language and performance, even for interacting with Anglophone people.

In summary, almost all of the sample recognize that native teachers' ICC interferes positively with the learning process.

4.3.2 What abilities does intercultural communicative competence promote?

Working with intercultural competencies implies taking into account different elements like activities, resources or materials, and the use of non-academic language in both virtual classrooms and on-site sessions. Thus, the following section will point out what skills students develop thanks to the different factors of the ICC.

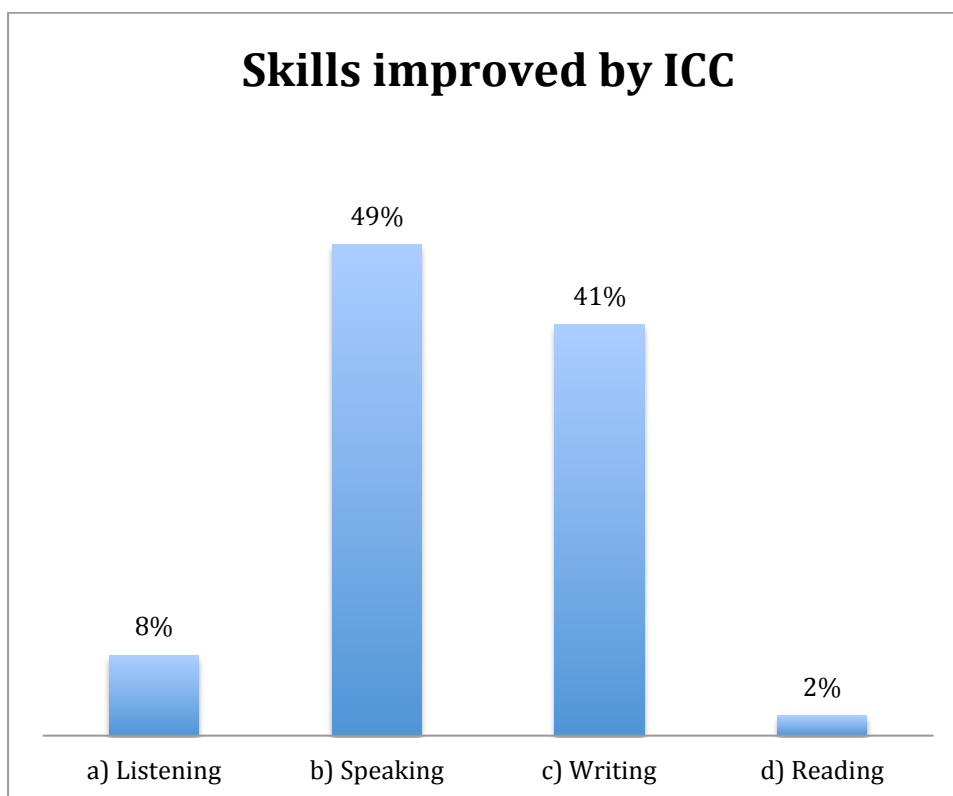


Figure 9. Skills improved by ICC

From the results, it's clear that the whole sample agrees that intercultural competencies develop different skills.

49% of the respondents agree that ICC develops speaking, while 41% point out writing since concerning their perceptions, teachers use unique and authentic activities, methods, and techniques for meeting students' needs. Besides, they deliberately choose the best resources (Villalobos, 2011) to improve language skills through different activities.

Surprisingly, a low percentage fostered listening (8%) and reading (3%) by using ICC. As it is known, native and non-native teachers are guides and examples for students to learn pronunciation. However, for native speakers, it is effortless since they acquired the English language as their mother tongue.

Besides, it is interesting to note that even when English-speaking teachers have developed innate skills, those skills seem not to be helping at all.

The findings also demonstrated that among all the competencies a native speaker has, the strategic and pragmatic competencies were the most developed. In that way, native speakers do not need to work on their Pragmatic and strategic competencies because they have already

developed them. It allows native speakers to focus more on interpersonal relationships and attend to Pragmatic conventions of the language (Lee, 2005).

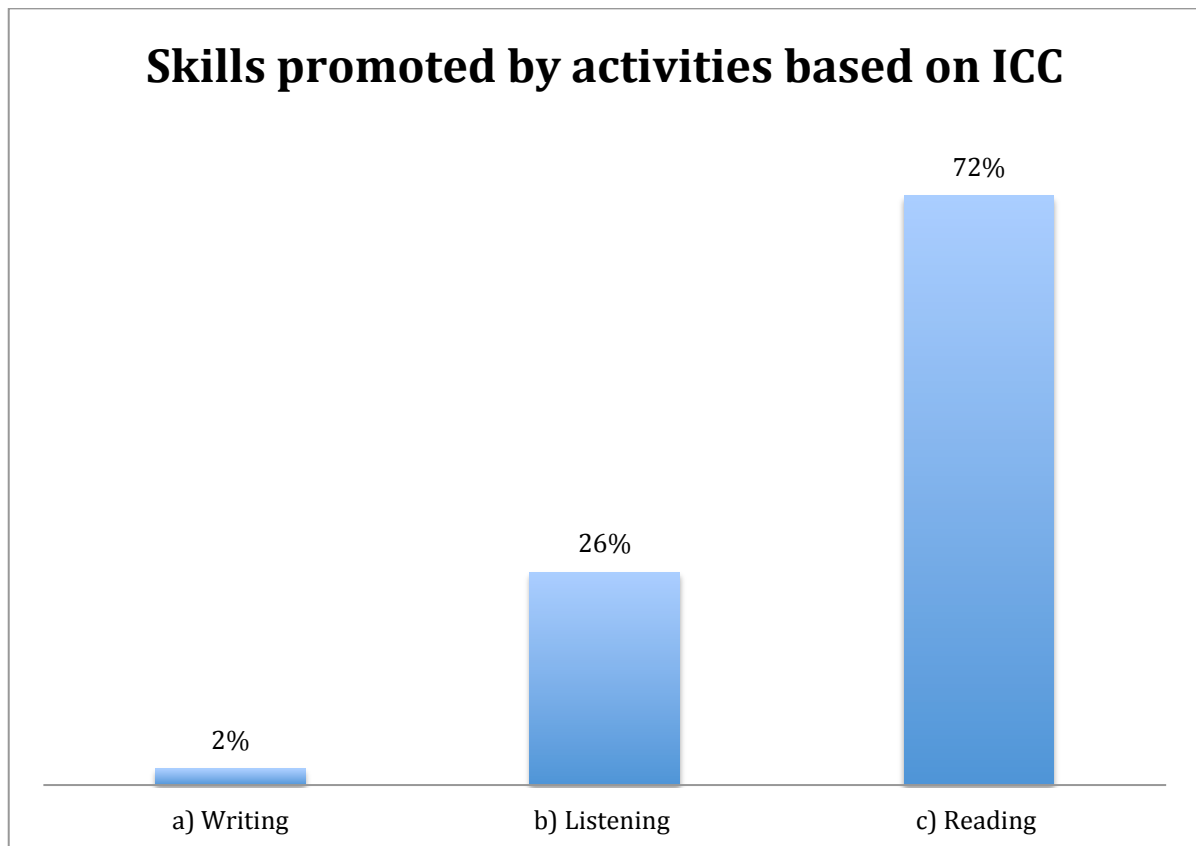


Figure 10. Skills promoted by activities based on ICC

All in all, 72% agree that the activities based on ICC develop reading skills. At this point, the most popular activity integrated into classes was foreign culture. Therefore, integrated reading material is an effective way to teach cultural features when it is applied appropriately. It is in good agreement with a study carried out by Genc (2017) since it pointed out that reading materials provide many advantages. As a matter of fact, the author states that for teaching cultural elements to university students, or adults the implementation of reading text is not suitable.

In addition, students are more motivated to participate in the lessons when the readings are related to students' interests. The use of reading material allows them to start seeing their target language to be developed every day, not only a set of rules they need to learn.

Moreover, 26% expressed that activities based on ICC promoted listening skills. Here the most common activity was to describe traditional music. That activity followed these steps:

first, they listened and read while teachers played the audio and displayed some visual aids to allow the participants to train their listening skills to observe and analyze cultural phenomena, one of the skills that FREPA mentioned.

Lastly, only 3% of the respondents assured that they developed writing skills by comparing aspects of their culture and the foreign one. It suggests that students do not compare cultural or linguistics features.

Despite this, the results show that applying activities with integrated cultural components will provide students the opportunity to learn their target language through the development of specific skills (Palfreyman & Dawn, 2010).

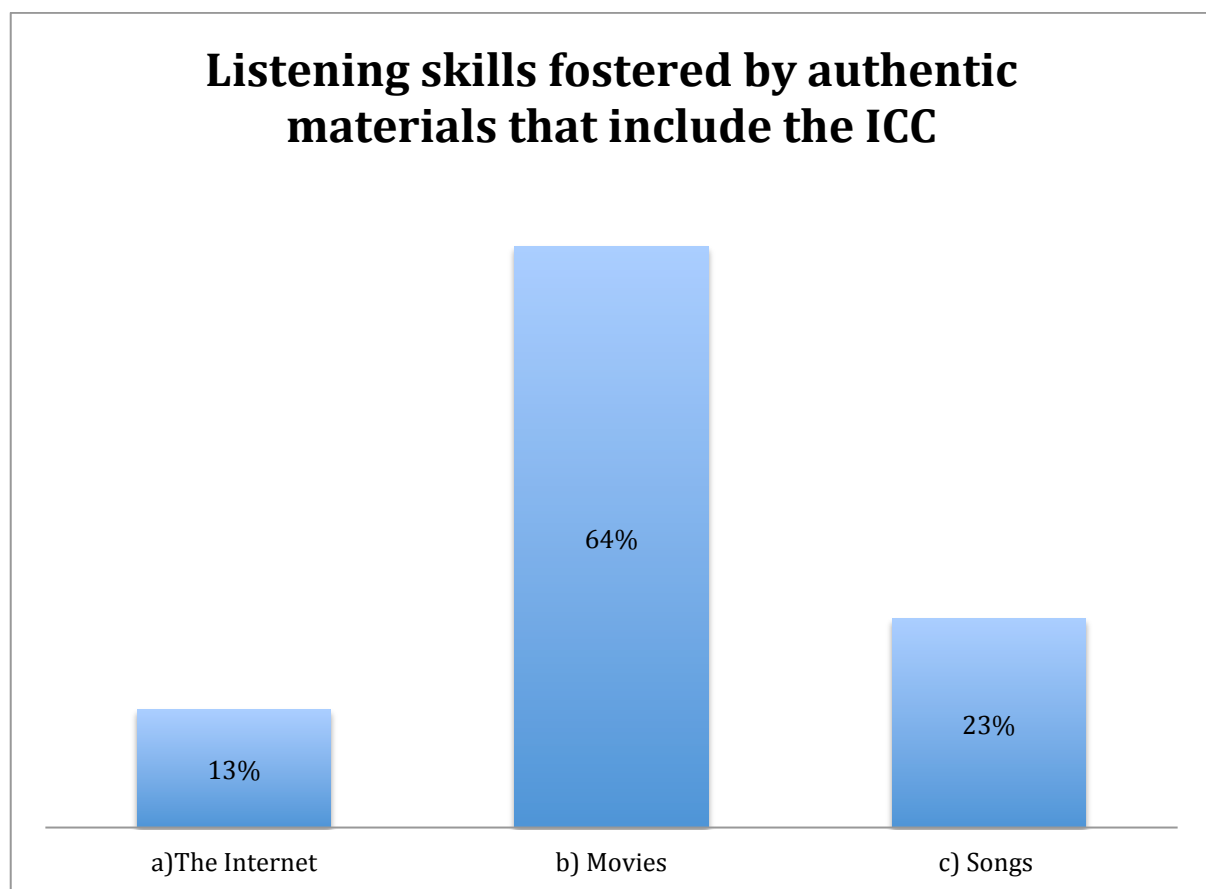


Figure 11. Listening skills fostered by authentic materials that include the ICC

There is authentic material for listening that promotes culture and ICC thanks to technology, social networks, and different platforms that spread information for specific purposes.

Key findings emerge that confirm the listening skill as the most practice and reinforced one by the use of movies (64%) and songs (23%) because the last ones are full of culture and important events that are remarkably emphasize of ICC.

These findings are possibly due to the implementation of streaming services that make possible the use of movies everywhere at any time. In that sense, teachers can choose from a selection of material movies that meet all the requirements and cultures. Besides, films could be a valuable exercise in deciphering other cultures, and with teacher guidance and help, students learn nuances of cultural theories and constructs efficiently using films shown in the classroom (Pandey, 2012).

Unexpectedly, results reveal that only 13% use videos from the Internet for learning cultural aspects, which play a part in audio-visual materials.

As seen, it does not matter the format of the materials, but what is a must is to choose authentic materials to teach culture and ICC. These results match Aniro's comments (2007) about the essence of material to teach cultural aspects of intercultural competencies. However, it is not enough to implement it; indeed, the key is to apply a method that enables students to see it as a source of education and learning. Also, teachers must guide students through its use because they might find it hard to make sense of the unfamiliar features and cultural features of those.

Moreover, authentic material in the classroom is crucial to provide the opportunity to practice with the real-life language. It is a motivational factor because students become familiar and see that community and language from a different perspective (Reid, 2014).

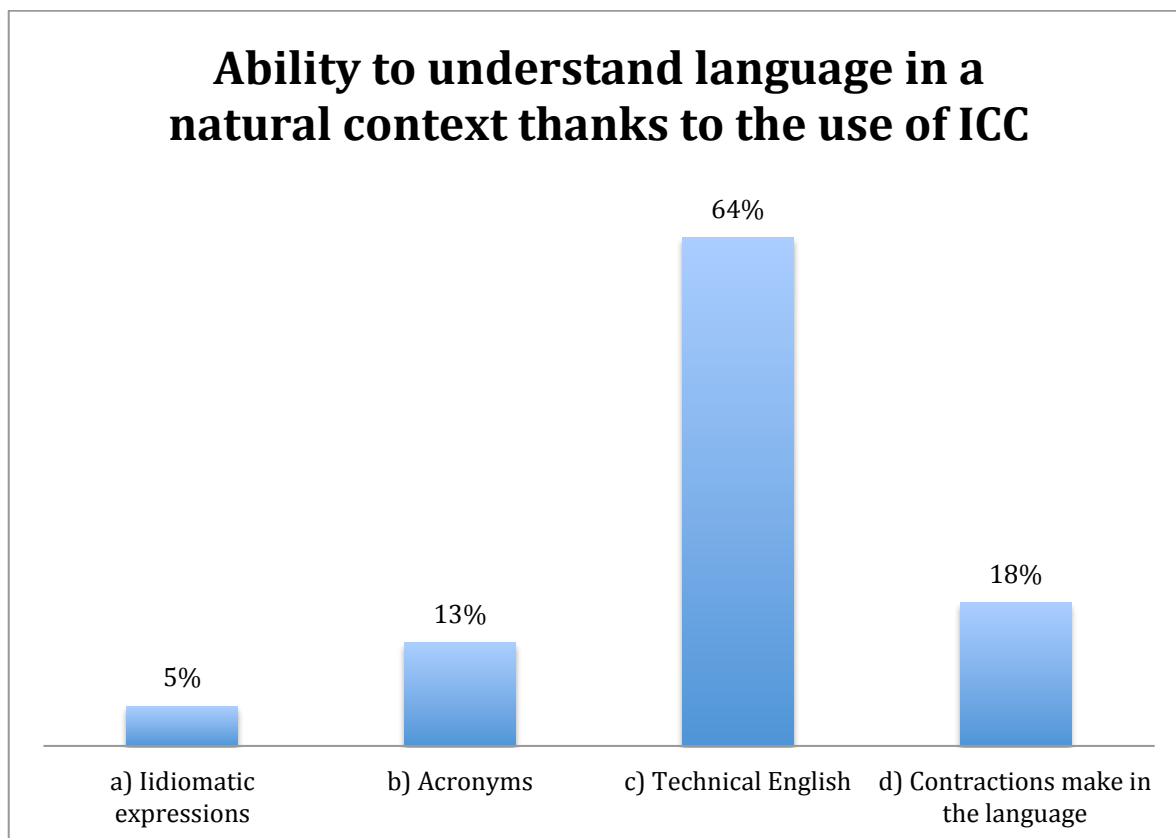


Figure 12. Ability to understand language in a natural context thanks to the use of ICC

Based on the results and thanks to the use of ICC, 64% of the subjects agree to be more familiar with technical English.

Moreover, 18% mention that ICC allows them to understand contractions made in the language, which is a concern because they take part in daily communication. Thus, these results suggest that students may have a poor language level.

As shown, part of the most common problems when talking to a native is the colloquial language, idiomatic expressions, slang, and daily language like contractions and regionalisms that could complicate learners' understanding.

Nevertheless, if intercultural competencies are privileged in a class, they help achieve appropriate language comprehension and keep communication (Garrido & Alvarez, 2006).

Moreover, 13% agree ICC helps them grasp acronyms, and 5% highlight ICC makes them work with idiomatic expressions. At this point, Byram's studies corroborate these results because they state the five key learnings to fulfill in intercultural competence where one of them is learning how to do that involves this colloquial language. Besides, the adoption of this particular learning will emphasize the skills of discovery and interaction or the ability to acquire new knowledge related to cultural practice. All in all, the benefit is to strengthen

students' level up and get used to these language patterns in real-time communication to avoid misunderstandings (Coperías, 2007).

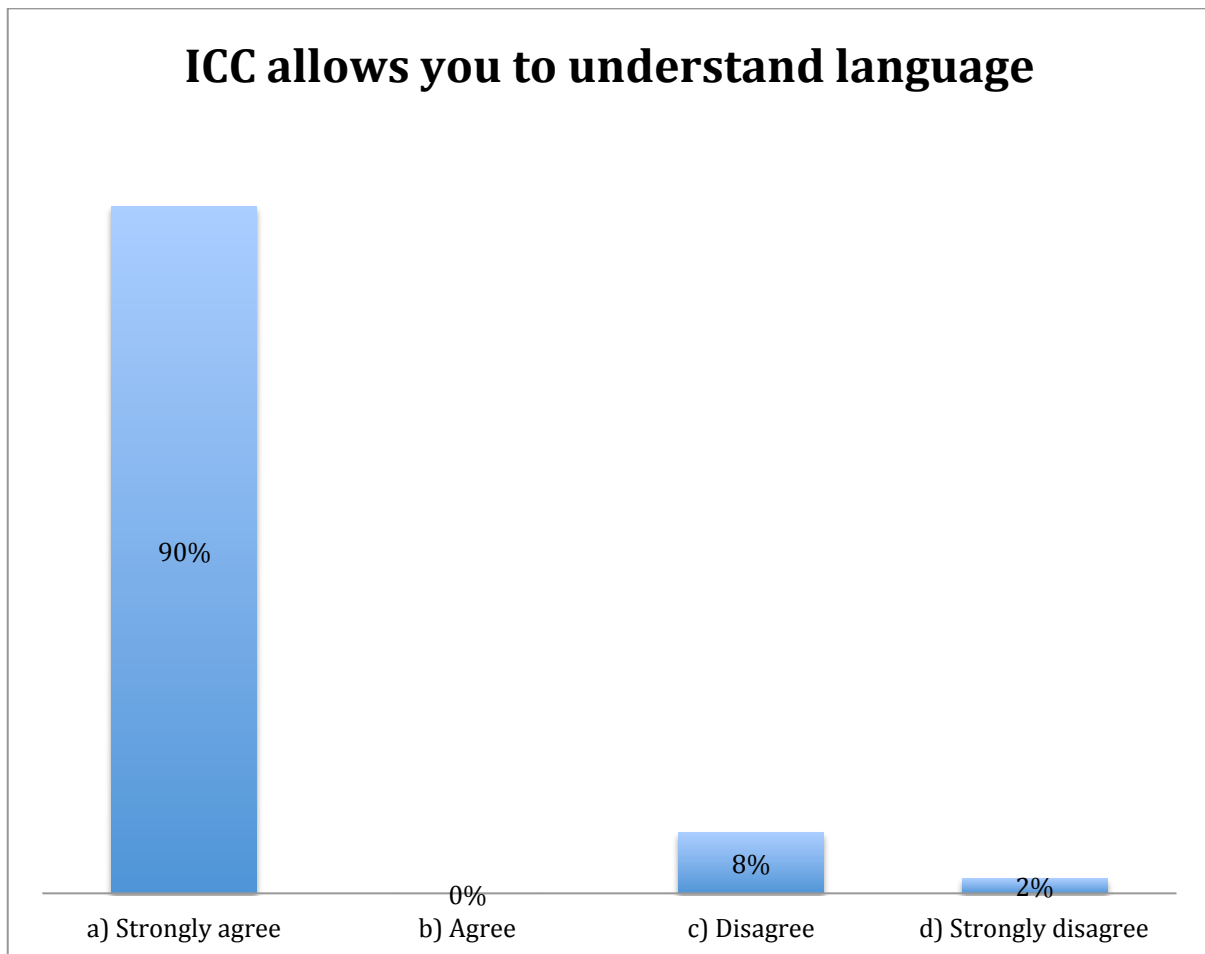


Figure 13. ICC allows you to understand language

90 % of the respondents strongly agree that understanding language and words with different meanings is easy due to the use of ICC. In contrast, 8% disagree because they struggle to comprehend them due to culture.

One of the main advantages of integrating ICC in the classroom is to provide solutions to students' issues. ICC affords to get a grasp of learning how to understand, which is related to interpretation.

This skill or ability fosters the understanding of events happening in another culture or even the interpretation of a document to explain it and associate it to their own (Coperías, 2007).

Finally, 2% strongly disagree with this idea because they only understand different accents when applying the ICC.

A more practical solution for this problem is technology since it ensures teachers provide students with pronunciation.

As been seen, students lack Pragmatic competencies since they face difficulties in spoken language in different situations. At this point, Garrido and Alvarez's research shows that the integration of intercultural competencies facilitates solving a problem when students are communicating with a native speaker because they allow them to understand the main idea of a topic and the unknown lexicon (Garrido & Alvarez, 2006).

As mentioned previously, intercultural competencies improve interaction since it allows learners to practice the real-life language they need.

Besides, technology is helpful for both teachers and students since students might lead their learning using the technology as a source of multiple input; thus, teachers are not the only sources of input (Levis & Zhou, 2018).

Then, the more exposure to multiple inputs and the role of a native speaker, the more understanding since native speakers are suitable input to practice listening and different English accents.

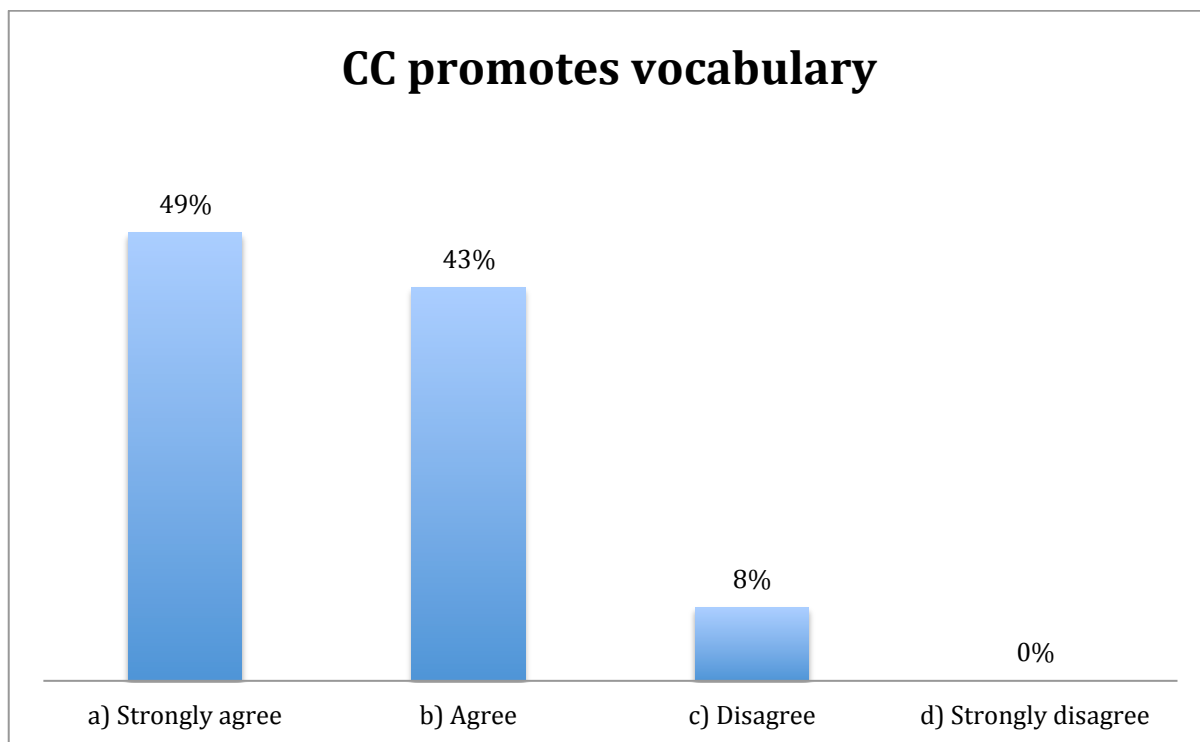


Figure 14. ICC promotes vocabulary

Vocabulary is a fundamental sub-skill to learn English and become a proficient user of the language.

Graphics indicates that only 8% of the respondents disagree that ICC fosters knowing how to use vocabulary like set expressions and idioms. They know there are linguistic units necessary to communicate effectively.

However, 43% of the respondents agree and believe that ICC provides them with the tools to face misunderstandings regarding vocabulary and find a better way to communicate their ideas. It is a favorable scenario for performance since students have already identified their problems and how to overcome them in regular interaction with people.

Finally, 49% strongly agree with the idea that ICC lets them be fluent in a natural speech or situation because they know enough vocabulary and its meaning. It would mean that students' level could improve so that they interact with fluency and spontaneity.

Moreover, English teachers frequently consider culture teaching a secondary goal when it is undeniable that culture and language are inseparable (Brooks, 2001; Cullen, 2000). Then, teachers must look for ways to work with intercultural communicative competencies, and according to these findings, it is with authentic materials.

Besides, teachers must find a way to compensate teaching culture because students with higher levels should not recede, and those with a lower level should have better input. For this reason, the use of authentic material is suitable to cover both culture and grammar teaching. Then, teachers must look for ways to work with intercultural communicative competencies.

Moreover, these findings confirm that using authentic materials in the classroom is a way to make students experience spontaneous language (Berardo, 2006).

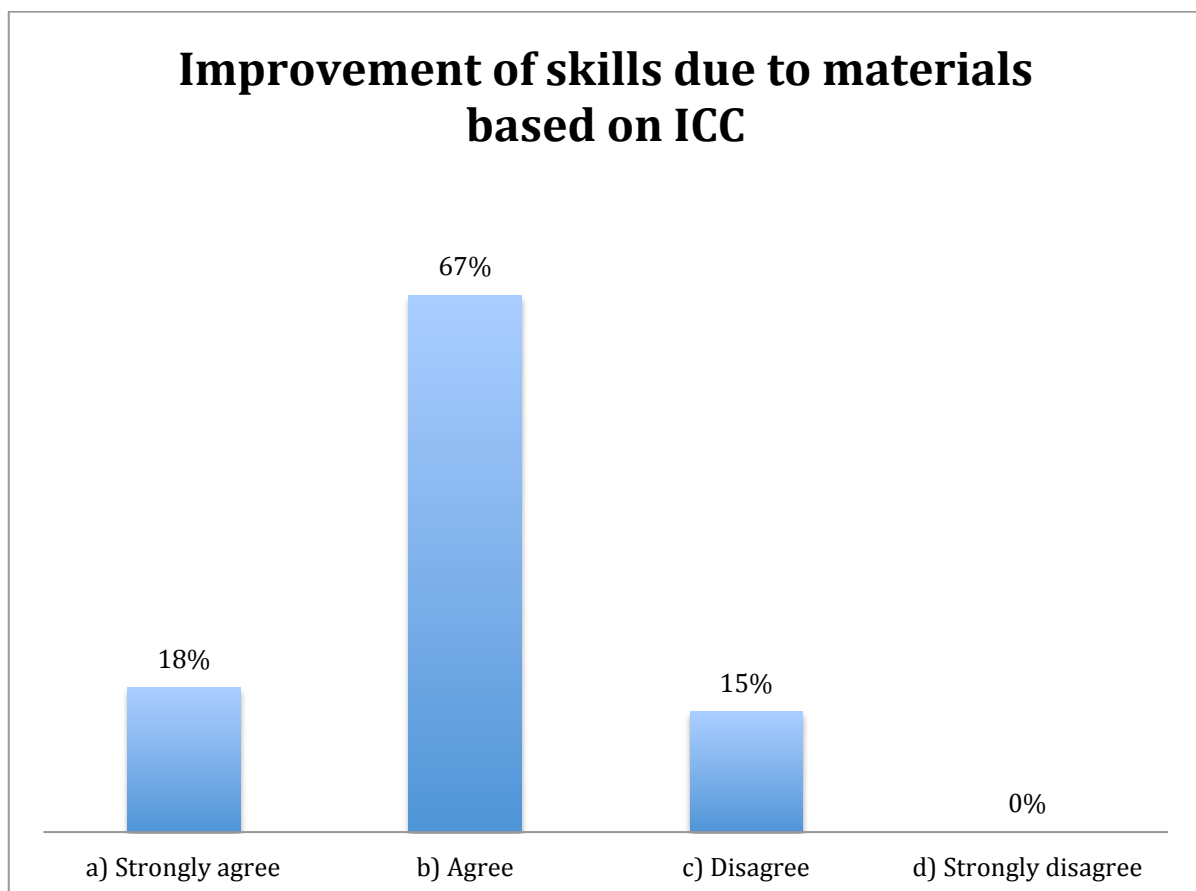


Figure 15. Improvement of skills due to materials based on ICC

Indicated by the results, authentic materials that include ICC improve some language skills like listening and reading.

Answers show that 67% of students agree that ICC helps to develop listening. It may be due to the availability of text types and audio material students find online or on different websites.

Besides, an advantage of using authentic materials is that they can focus on different skills through different uses of the same material, and such material could be updated for teaching formal and informal language in virtual environments or face-to-face sessions (Berardo, 2006).

Moreover, 18% strongly agree that resources based on ICC help read. As Reid indicated in a 2012 study, the selected cultural materials should be discussed by learners and compared to their own culture in a relaxing atmosphere of the language classroom. Then, they could become more familiar with them and, in the future, avoid a cultural shock. Indeed, authentic materials like songs, videos, and movies are appropriate for incorporating and teaching intercultural competencies in classrooms.

In contrast, 15% of subjects disagree with ICC as a means to foster language skills. They mention that even though they make contact with authentic materials, their skills are not sufficiently suitable, and material has not helped to acquire vocabulary and use it in different contexts.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates that native teachers' intercultural competencies interfere and affect students learning process positively, and at the same time, such ICCs promote language skills like reading, listening, speaking, writing, and some sub-skills like vocabulary and pronunciation.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings of this research, an overview of the accomplishments, limitations of the study, further research from different perspectives, and a reflection about intercultural competence and the research.

5.2 Summary of the findings

Conclusions related to the influence of native teachers' intercultural competence in EFL students' learning process hint that some intercultural skills and sub-skills interfere in the process.

Regarding the teacher's IC, the results suggest that even though they practice foreign culture, more opportunities to analyze it in the classroom are necessary. Besides, it is urgent to change the approach to the language by using grammar as the main topic of conversations. Instead, they must integrate cultural aspects.

Furthermore, students are developing linguistic knowledge and nonverbal communication that differ from one culture to culture. That is why such linguistic knowledge competence and nonverbal communication are aspects that integrate intercultural competence.

Therefore, teachers' intercultural competence interferes with the learning process since such an approach is essential for integrating activities to emphasize cultural aspects.

These lead to two relevant findings of follow-up activities. Firstly, teachers integrate intercultural competencies in informal talks, jokes, and discussions about their culture. However, there are no activities in following up the development of reinforcement of intercultural competence.

Second, teachers as native speakers have had experiences applying the language in real life, and sharing such experiences with students helps them have a slight perception about how to solve real-life situations by understanding social aspects.

Concerning abilities that intercultural competence promotes, it is clear that students' perceptions about skills improved on reading, listening, and speaking as the skills practiced in class. Additionally, they also foster some sub-skills like vocabulary and pronunciation. All in all, what is vital is that those results depend on the way activities, materials, and resources are applied in virtual or face-to-face classes.

Moreover, reading articles and listening to traditional music allow students to analyze the cultural phenomena and learn new vocabulary.

Regarding audio material, the majority is authentic and includes ICC to promote culture from different perspectives.

The results also reveal that speaking is the most improved area since students could use set expressions and idioms in communication. Then, intercultural competence does promote abilities or skills by using authentic material in oral interactions and activities.

5.3 Accomplishments of the aims

The research analyzes the influence of native teachers' intercultural competence in the EFL students' learning process to understand such competence and integrate it into classes. In addition, it's now known which competencies an English-speaking teacher has and how they interfere in the students' EFL process.

The results also provide an overview of the intercultural competence dimensions. It links to the way of teaching the language by using activities and authentic material to promote ICC. Therefore, the study accomplished its aims.

5.4 Limitations of the study

This project has some limitations, for example, the sample. It was complicated to find participants that had classes with an English-speaking teacher and took the same subject. Another limitation of this research is the dimensions IC has to analyze in an acceptable questionnaire regarding its length. Besides, the study was quantitative with an objective analysis; however, the qualitative approach could complement it for a broad perspective.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

This study only focuses on how intercultural competence influences the learning process and what abilities such as IC develops. However, from this study, some other research could arise like how ICC adapts to the syllabus, what ICC fosters speaking, reading, listening, or writing, how authentic material impacts students' ICC, and so on.

In addition, this research was from the subjects' perspectives; then, teachers' points of view are missing.

Moreover, it is necessary to investigate how to design material to understand cultural changes without traveling to another country.

Another area is nonnative speakers who have acquired their intercultural competence in different situations through their EFL process.

Finally, the most essential is a follow-up using ICC materials and activities to see the advantages regarding speaking and other language skills.

5.6 Personal reflection

As far I am concerned, integrating intercultural competence in classes would help students become proficient speakers. It's one of the competencies that, through different dimensions, give students several opportunities to avoid cultural shocks and understand how language works in a context.

I believe that native and nonnative teachers could provide enough opportunities to play with the language and help students improve their language skills with the proper use of materials or activities because collocations, idioms, and set phrases are used based on the cultural background of each language.

Moreover, students need those opportunities to adapt their linguistic competence since it is clear that not all the dimensions and competencies are covered. Fortunately, FREPA clarifies fundamental dimensions as a key to improving language and as a reference framework for all languages.

5.7 Final comments

During the process of this research, I have found out how language and intercultural communication work. I think it is essential to highlight the differences from one culture to another because I only started observing the cultural changes when I lived for a short time in another country, which was a cultural shock.

At that moment, I did not understand the reason why the language was in that way. I had classes on grammar and on developing language skills, but the primary purpose was grammar. Indeed, grammar is essential for learning a language, but what happens when it is grammatically correct but in a context that does not fit.

That is why it is time to integrate grammar and intercultural competence as one inseparable element to help students identify the changes in different contexts and situations, and at the same time, become proficient speakers.

REFERENCES

- Alcon, M. (2007) Interactive Statistics. Thousand Oaks: Sage
- Aniro, S. (2007). Authentic materials. [online]. [cit. 8. 5. 2014]. Available on the Internet: [http://www.calpro-online.org/documents/AuthenticMaterials Final.pdf](http://www.calpro-online.org/documents/AuthenticMaterials%20Final.pdf).
- Archana, S. & Rani, U. (2017). Role of a teacher in English language teaching (ELT). International Journal of Educational Science and Research (IJESR). Vol. 7, 1-4. 1-4.
- Berardo, 2006). The IC. Tuken: International conference
- British Council. (2019). ELT. Teaching English. London UK: British Council. Consulted on teachingenglish.org.uk/article/elt
- Brooks, N. (2001). Culture in the Classroom. In: . In: Valdes, M. (ed.) Bridging the Cultural Gap in Language Teaching. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- Bryman, A. (2012). Social research methods. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Byram, M. (1995). Developing the Intercultural Dimension in Language Teaching. Council of Europe: Strasbourg.
- Byram, M. (1997). Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters
- Byram, M. (2009). Intercultural Competence in Foreign Language. In Deardorff, D. K. (Eds). The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence. p.321-331. Oaks, CA: SAGE publications.
- Byram, M., Gribkova, B. & Starkey, H. (2002). Developing the Intercultural Dimension in Language Teaching. Council of Europe; Strasbourg.
- Cambridge University Press. (2019). Cambridge Dictionary. Consultado en <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles/native-speaker>
- Candelier, M., Camillieri-Grima, A., Castellotti, V., de Pietro, J.F., Lorincz, I., Meisner, F.J., Molinié, M. (2012). FREPA. A Framework of Reference for Pluralistics Approaches to Languages and Cultures. Competences and Resources. Graz:ECML.
- Chlopek, Z. (2008). The Intercultural Approach to EFL Teaching and Learning. Intercultural Internet Resources for Teachers. 4:10-27
- Clouet, R. (1997). The Intercultural competence. USA: OUP
- Clouet, R. (2002). Language and interculturality. Spain. OnOmázein 26 (2014/3), 189-204
- Clouet, R. (2012). Studying the role of intercultural competence in language teaching in upper secondary education in the Canary Islands, Spain. OnOmázein 26 (2012/2), 309-334

- Coperías, Aguilar, M.J. (2007). Dealing with Intercultural Communicative Competence in the Foreign Language Classroom. In E. Alcón Soler and M.P. Safont Jorda (Eds.), *Intercultural Language Use and Language Learning*, (pp. 59-78). Springer.
- Cozma, Mihaela. (2015). The Challenge of Teaching English to Adult Learners in Today's World. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 197. 1209-1214.
- Cullen, B. (2000). Practical Techniques for Teaching Culture in the EFL Classroom. *The Internet TESL Journal*. Vol. 6, no. 12. 2000. Available on the internet: <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Cullen-Culture.html>.
- Deardoff, D. K. (2006). Intercultural Competence model in *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Fall 2006, 10, p. 241-266
- Deardoff, D. K. (2009). The identification and Assessment of Intercultural Competence as a Student Outcome of internationalization at institutions of Higher Education in the United States, *Journal of Studies in International Education* 10:241-266
- Deardoff, D. K. (2011). Assessing Intercultural Competence. In Penn, D., J., *Assessing Complex General Education Student Learning Outcomes*, (pp. 65-79). *New directions for institutional research* 49
- Ellis, G. (1989). *The Appropriateness of the Communicative Approach in Vietnam: An Interview Study in Intercultural Communication*. aster's Thesis, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, Australia
- European Union. (2010). *Studies on translations and multilingualism*, [online]. *Lingua Franca: Chimera or Reality*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Recuperado el 11 de Septiembre de 2019 de https://termcoord.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Lingua_franca.pdf
- Fantini, A. E. (2009). Assessing Intercultural Competence. In Deardoff, D. K. (Ed), *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural competence*, (pp. 456-476). Thousands Oaks, CA: SAGE Publishing.
- Garrido, C.; Alvarez. I. (2006). Language teacher education for intercultural understanding. *European Journal of Teacher Education* 29 (2),163-179.
- Gass, S. M. (1997). *Input, interaction, and the second language learner*. Mahwah, NJ: Routledge linguistics classics.
- Gass, S. M. (3ra Ed). (2008). *Second Language Acquisition: An introductory course*. New York:Routledge.
- Genc, G. (2017). Pre-Service EFL Teachers' Social Intelligence and Intercultural Sensitivity in *International Journal of Language & Linguistics (IJLL)*, Inonu University

- Gribkova, S. (2012). *Language and interculturality*. USA: Stia
- Hammer, R. (2012) *The Intercultural Development Inventory Resource guide*. PH.D., IDI, LLC
- Harmer J. (2007). *The practice of English Language Teaching* (4th edition). Essex, England: Longman.
- Hernández, O. & Samacá, Y. (2006). A Study of EFL Students' Interpretations of Cultural Aspects in Foreign Language Learning. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, (8), 38-52. Retrieved February 06, 2021, from http://www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0123-46412006000100003&lng=en&tlng=en.
- Hernández, R., Fernández, C., & Baptista, P. (2014). *Metodología de la investigación: Roberto Hernández Sampieri, Carlos Fernández Collado y Pilar Baptista Lucio* (6a. ed. --.). México D.F.: McGraw-Hill.
- Jackson, J. (2014). *Introducing Language and Intercultural Communication*. USA: Routledge
- Kpurtisin, T. (2000). *Culture in language teaching*. USA: Thrisch
- Kramer A. & Catalano T. (2015). *Foreign Language Teaching and Learning*. Nebraska-Lincoln, USA: Faculty Publications. Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education, 196. Consulted on <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/teachlearnfacpub/196>
- Kudoh, T. & Matsumoto, D. (1985). Cross-cultural examination of the semantic dimensions of body postures. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 48(6), 1440-1446.
- Lee, J. (2005). The native speaker: An achievable model? *Asian EFL Journal*, 7(2).
- Levis, U. & Zhou, Y. (2018). *Interculturalidad y lenguaje*. EU: Ross
- Lussier, D., and Golubina, K., (2007). Guidelines for the assessment of intercultural communicative competence (ICC). In Ildikó L, M., Huber K., Lussier D., Matei G., S. and Peck C. *Developing and assessing intercultural communicative competence. A guide for language teachers and teacher educators*
- Matsumoto, D. & Kudoh, T. (1987). Cultural similarities and differences in the semantic dimensions of body postures. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*, 11(3), 166-179.
- Medina., L., P., A., & Sinnigen., H., J. (2009). Interculturality versus Intercultural Competence in Latin America. In Deardorff, D. K. (Eds). *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. p.254-260. Oaks, CA: SAGE publications.
- Mertler, A., C. (2019). *Introduction to educational Research*. Oaks CA: SAGE publications.

- Michalska, M. (2015). Teaching English to Adults. World Scientific News, (8), 82-96.
<http://www.worldscientificnews.com/>
- Muijs, D. (2004). Doing quantitative research in Education with SPSS. London: SAGE Publications.
- Mustafa., Ulgu S., & Sari I. (2012). The journey of ELT Teachers from Apprenticeship to Mastery. Turkish Air Force Academy: Istanbul.
- Ortega, L. (2009). *Second language acquisition*. New York: Routledge
- Palfreyman, D., Dawn M. (2010). Learning and Teaching Across Cultures in Higher Education, Basingstoke, UK : Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pandey, S. (2012). Learning languages. Kenth: Rasten
- Pappamihel, N. E. (2004). Hugs and smiles: Demonstrating caring in a multicultural early childhood classroom. *Early Child Development & Care*, 174, 539–548
- Penn, D. (2011). Theories in language Acquisition. Manwah N Y: ledge.
- Reid, Eva. (2014). Authentic Materials in Developing Intercultural Communicative Competences. University in nitra.
- Robinson, J.E., & Selman, M.R. (1996). Partnerships in Learning: Teaching ESL to Adults. Candada: Pippin Publishing
- Rod, E. (1997). Second Language Acquisition. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rose, C. (2004). Intercultural learning 1. Italy: British Council. Consulted in <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/intercultural-learning-1>
- Scheu, D. (1996). Integrating Cultural Activities in the Foreign Language Classroom. Murcia: Cuadernos de Filología inglesa
- Sheeraz, A. (2015). The importance of culture in second and foreign language learning. *Culture in Second Language Learning Dinamika Ilmu*. 15 (1), 1411-3031.
- Trujillo, S. F. (2002). Towards interculturality through language teaching: Argumentative discourse. Spain: University of Granada, Spain. *Revista de filosofía y su Didáctica* 103-119
- Tukiainen, K. (2003). A Study on Second Language Learning at an Adult Age -with Focus on Learner Strategies. University of Tampere.
- Usó-Juan, E., Martínez-Flor, A.(2008). “Teaching intercultural communicative competence through the four skills”. *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses*. No. 21 (Nov. 2008). ISSN 0214-4808, pp. 157-170
- Villalobos, S. (2011). La interculturalidad y el aprendizaje. México: Sage.

Yang, Z. (2014). Importance of Cultural Background in English Teaching. China: Atlantis Press. 10.2991/icelaic-14.2014.77.