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The Influence of Multimodal Literacies in Contrasting Tasks to Enhance Students' Cross-cultural Awareness

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Master in English Language Teaching – Autonomous Learning Environments

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that my research report entitled:

The Influence of Multimodal Literacies in Contrasting Tasks to Enhance the Students' Cross-cultural awareness

- is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared and specified in the text;
- is neither substantially the same as nor contains substantial portions of any similar work submitted or that is being concurrently submitted for any degree or diploma or other qualification at the Universidad de La Sabana or any other university or similar institution except as declared and specified in the text;
- complies with the word limits and other requirements stipulated by the Research Subcommittee of the Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures;
- has been submitted by or on the required submission date.

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this research study was to expose EFL learners to the cultural aspects of English-speaking countries through the use of multimodal literacies in order to give them opportunities for increasing their cross-cultural awareness. Cross-cultural skills play a significant role in language learning. Previous research has discovered that including cross-cultural aspects in language teaching contributes to enhancing self-identity, citizenship, and respect for diverse lifestyles. Besides, it has been demonstrated that cultural traits that underlie the English language are associated to the way in which individuals construct meaning, but little attention has been given to the effects of semiotic elements in cross-cultural exposure specifically, through the use of multimodal literacies in contrasting tasks. The present qualitative action research study used questionnaires, journals, artifacts, and reflective logs to collect data for determining the effects of implementing multimodal literacies to enhance cross-cultural awareness in students with A1 level of proficiency according to the CEFR. Data were analyzed using the grounded theory, and it demonstrated that the students gained significant awareness of cultural patterns that are embedded in communicative interactions so that they made connections between foreign and own identities. This lends support to the notion those strategies should be more widely adopted by the educational community.

*Key words: Cross-cultural awareness, multimodal literacies, task-based approach.*

### Resumen

El propósito del presente estudio es aproximar a los aprendices de la lengua a los aspectos culturales de los países de habla inglesa mediante el uso de estrategias multimodales con el fin de aumentar su competencia para relacionar entre diversas culturas. Las habilidades interculturales juegan un papel importante en el aprendizaje del idioma, por lo tanto, algunas investigaciones previas han demostrado que incluir este componente en la enseñanza del idioma extranjero contribuye al fortalecimiento de la propia identidad, las competencias ciudadanas y el respeto por la diversidad. Adicionalmente, se ha demostrado que los rasgos culturales que subyacen en el idioma inglés se relacionan con las maneras de construir el significado. Este estudio, pretende demostrar los efectos de los elementos semióticos cuando son utilizados para promover el aprendizaje de contenidos culturales en lengua extranjera. En esta investigación cualitativa se utilizaron cuestionarios, diarios de campo, artefactos producidos por los estudiantes y registros de reflexión como mecanismo de recolección de datos para determinar los efectos de la implementación de las estrategias multimodales en el fortalecimiento de las habilidades de estudiantes para establecer relaciones entre culturas con nivel de proficiencia A1. En el análisis de datos los resultados indicaron que los participantes comprendieron situaciones comunicativas mientras establecieron puntos de convergencia y divergencia entre la identidad propia y la extranjera. Lo anterior sugiere, que esta estrategia podría ser utilizada por la comunidad educativa ya que sus efectos tuvieron un impacto importante en los participantes.

*Palabras claves:* Conciencia cros-cultural - estrategias multimodales; enfoque basado en tareas.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction to the study**

Globalization has impacted the contemporary world by creating the need of interaction among people from various countries and linguistic backgrounds for diverse reasons: business, entertainment, traveling, etc. At this point, language as a system of communication cannot be isolated from culture due to learners' need to know not only about the language structure (grammar, reading, listening and speaking) but also about how these skills are directly related to the context in which the language is being used. As stated by Call and Brown (1988), "A language is a part of a culture, and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language and culture" (p. 177). The author emphasized on the fact that the use of a language might vary depending on the users' exposure to cultures.

For Fiske (2011), adolescents experience major changes in their language due to their constant exposure to popular cultures. Therefore, in a foreign language acquisition learners could be exposed to aspects such as music, fashion, technology, and in general, entertainment, without consciously understanding their meaning. This exposure could cause effects in their worldviews. For this reason, the aim of this research is to enhance students' cross-cultural awareness through their experiences with the target language by using multimodal literacies in order to provide the learners with opportunities for contrasting and expanding their abilities for establishing commonalities and differences between cultures and also to foster their critical thinking.

## 1.2 Rationale of the study

### 1.2.1 Needs analysis and problem statement

The target population to carry out this project were 37 eleventh graders from Institución Educativa Distrital, IED República Dominicana, a school located in Bogotá, Colombia. The students were between sixteen and nineteen years old, they devoted only three weekly hours to the target language instruction so their exposure to it was limited. According to the National Basic Standards of the Ministry Education in Colombia (MEN, 2006), students at this grade level are expected to demonstrate certain knowledge about cultural traits of countries where English is the official language to increase the appreciation of plurality. Unfortunately, the school's curriculum only includes limited cultural aspects to address Foreign Language Teaching.

After having identified the preliminary constraints through constant observation and reflection, the researcher decided to strengthen the needs analysis with field notes in order to retrieve additional information pertaining students' initial state regarding their cross-cultural awareness, additionally, a questionnaire and a test about students' cultural background were also administered (Appendix A), (Appendix B). After gathering and comparing the results to existing theories proposed by Kramsch (1993), and Nostrand (1966), the researcher found that the students had poor cross-cultural awareness, since results revealed that learners were not able to define words that had to do with *culture*. Moreover, they struggled to underline differences between Colombian typical customs and other countries' traditions. According to Kramsch (1993) it could be associated to a superficial and limited view of the small cultures (small c) which enables learners to “acquire the necessary skills to communicate with L2 speakers in a global economy, to travel to other countries as tourists or to seek employment abroad; or to become literary scholars and academics” (Kramsh, 2013 p. 59). Based on Nostrand's (1966) assertions

about abilities that are developed when contrasting cultural patterns of two or more contexts (cross-cultural approach) these learners demonstrated to have limited notions to successfully perform in tasks that require them to compare between their own identities and the foreign ones. The data collected in this process clearly demonstrated that it is convenient to include a cross-cultural component in the lessons because students can benefit from understanding how language works in authentic contexts, as it is shown in the analysis in (Appendix D).

To define the strategy to be used in order to tackle the lack of cross-cultural awareness, the researcher administered a questionnaire that provided insights of the students' interests (Appendix C). The analysis of these results served as a means to validate the idea of using multimodal literacies (the combination of written and paralinguistic elements) as a pedagogical strategy since the learners expressed they felt more comfortable when learning was supported with audio-visual resources.

### **1.2.2 Justification of problem's significance**

According to Ministerio de Educación Nacional (2006), teaching English as a Foreign language in Colombia signifies to introduce the learners into new cultures in order to allow them to discover how communicative and social interactions take place in English speaking countries. This process challenges educators to generate a substantial impact in the students' world view. Therefore, the importance of learning English, not only the formal aspects of the language, but also as a way to exchange cognitive notions, thoughts and ideas that individuals create according to their specific environment (McKay, 2002).

Working on the development of cross-cultural awareness aims to impact the school community, firstly, by increasing students' awareness of self-identity giving them the possibility to characterize behavioral traits from one society to another, and

finally by promoting inclusive abilities. Valdes states that being exposed to new ways of living contributes to removing misconceptions and facilitates acceptance of new cultural patterns. Moreover, the researcher decided to work on this topic because it is evident that there is a mismatch between what the Common European Framework and the National Standards for English teaching (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2006) illustrative descriptors state for cultural demands and the actual facts in the classroom, as those descriptors suggest to connect language and culture (Council of Europe, 2001). In this regard, schools must include cross-cultural elements to redesign the curricular content in order to encourage the students to take part of the current changes (Hall, 2002). “This requires the development of awareness of the nature of language and its impact on the world” (Svalberg, 2007 p. 16).

To achieve the purposes above, it is necessary to guarantee enough exposure to authentic material so that students become more knowledgeable of hidden or explicit existing behavioral patterns from different societies and contrast these traits with their customs. Hence, the virtual exposure to different lifestyles enables a better understanding of the social factors that are behind the fashion trends (Byram & Fleeming, 1998). Besides, the participants rarely have had the chance to be exposed naturally to authentic material, so the English class becomes the only place for offering an ample perspective of the world to them.

### **1.2.3 Strategy selected to address problem**

According to Fiske (2011) and his theory of the effects of popular cultures, adolescents tend to adapt current trends taken from mass media to their context; that is why they need to develop perceptive abilities to perform effectively in different situations that demand the understanding of explicit or implicit traits of communicative exchanges in the target language. In this regard, multimodal literacies could serve as a

tool to foster cross-cultural awareness in the group of learners because multimodality integrates semiotic components to convey information and provides students with the opportunities to access to virtual encounters with foreign cultures without concerning about time and space barriers (Hornberguer & McKay, 2010). Moreover, the audio-visual material might result appealing for students since they use elements of media in everyday interactions. In addition to this, working with this kind of material might help to increase students' interests and stimulate curiosity. In order to implement those tools in the classroom, a task- based approach in culturally contrasting situations might offer students the opportunity to appreciate their own values, enhance self-identity, and acceptance of new ways of living. (Willis & Willis, 2007)

### **1.3 Research question(s) and objective(s)**

In connection to the ideas presented in this study, the general objective of this research is to describe what happens to students' cross-cultural awareness when eleventh graders with an A1 (CEFR) English level are taught by using multimodal literacy tools. The question to be answered throughout the research process is: How does using multimodal literacy to implement contrasting tasks affect the cross-cultural awareness of eleventh graders with an A1 (CEFR) L2 (language 2) English?

### **1.4 Conclusion**

Carrying out research on cross-cultural awareness related to English learning could contribute to innovation in the classroom since language teaching has been traditionally conceived from a more formal perspective that does not include cultural awareness as a relevant part of the learning. Another positive aspect to underline in this research study is the fact that multimodal literacy has been minimally explored in connection to the teaching field, so it could bring new contributions to education,

especially because the strategies involved might be relevant for the students' current and future lifestyles.



## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The literature reviewed in the theoretical framework and the state of the art seeks to illustrate how existing theories and previous studies articulate to the present study. To this purpose, some theories proposed by seminal authors and some researchers' recent studies have been revised and their contributions have been taken into account to provide evidence of the benefits of including intercultural components, multimodal resources and contrasting tasks in educational settings. Although these studies and theories address the concepts separately, they provide this research with sufficient elements to demonstrate the pertinence of combining these three elements. Therefore, the constructs that are defined in the present study are: Cross-cultural awareness, multimodal literacies and task-based lessons.

### **2.2 Theoretical framework**

#### **2.2.1 Cross-cultural awareness**

Cultural aspects have been defined from various perspectives by different authors. Here, there are some of the most relevant theories and approaches that have been considered when making connections between culture and language acquisition.

Hinkel (2014) and Spencer (2012) argue that there have been several definitions of culture. The first attempts to define this term were linked to the idea of transmitting information about different areas of knowledge. Later, in more refined definitions the authors refer to the norms, beliefs, and values that affect human societies. Meanwhile, Spencer (2012), concludes that culture has to do with the features that characterize a community, the experiences learned or created to address the behavior of the members of a society.

Those appreciations of culture have to do with language development since communication has served as means to keep all those traditions, values and social interactions alive (Kramersch, 2003). In his most recent articles, Hinkel (2014) illustrated the role of culture in a target language acquisition emphasizing the differences and similarities between cultures in terms of socio-linguistic and pragmatics. Kramersch, (2003) and Hinkel (2014) coincide in asserting that there are aspects that are not visible when an individual conveys a message, for instance, human beings create experiences, choose written, visual, verbal or non-verbal mediums for interacting with others.

To determine the cultural aspects that are involved in applied linguistics, Firstly, (Kramersch (1993) underlines some differences between the everyday cultural aspects, behaviors and traits from a community and those aspects that have to do with literature and arts. The author defines the first case as *small c* and the second as big C. Later, Holliday (1999) refined the terms of large and small cultures to make a difference between what is perceived as ethnic national and international features of diverse groups and emerging behavior within social groups. In the author's words, "large culture (large C) signifies ethnic nationally and internationally; and small culture (small c) signifies cohesive social grouping" (Holliday, 1999, p. 373). The motivation to define these two concepts separately is to clarify that culture is seen from various perspectives. On the one hand, large C has to do with the cultural knowledge that is well known nationally and internationally; for example, music, literature, arts, etc. On the other hand, small c has to do with customs and behavior of different societies. These concepts are linked but according to the author, one does not necessarily depend on the other. In this study, *small c* plays an important role since it is addressed in the different tasks proposed to develop learners 'cross-cultural awareness.

Despite some theorists have closely associated cross-cultural development to intercultural skills by using this term interchangeably when talking about the cultural exposure that occur when learning a foreign language. Recent theories proposed by Block (2007) have found that a cross-cultural and intercultural represent different types of exposure. Whereas cross-culturalism involve physical contact and interactions, cross-cultural does not necessarily imply to have physical encounters among speakers. According to the author, this term refers to the ability that an individual has to establish connections and differences between his culture and the target culture. The interaction when developing cross-cultural skills might be virtual and does not necessarily imply any interaction between educational systems and more than one culture can be considered to be compared. In this study the intercultural and the cross-cultural principles were considered to illustrate the participants' progress from both perspectives, but the type of interaction that matches better with the context in which this study is being carried out is the cross-cultural.

In the field of language learning, Byram and Fleeming (1998) claim that when students are exposed to a foreign language they cannot avoid observing and learning behavioral traits from the target culture, those insights help the learners to ask themselves why some actions or attitudes assumed by foreigners are not frequent in their contexts. For instance, something that is a compliment in one context could be an offensive act in another one (Kramsch, 2003). Those encounters in which individuals are able to recognize different social identities are defined as intercultural skills (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002).

According to Block (2007), cross-cultural awareness strengthen language skills since communicative interactions are taken into account. In addition, the principles of cross-culturalism promote acceptance and positive behaviors that help learners to shape

attitudes that broaden understanding of different and own culture belonging (Byram, 2002). The basis of this approach includes keywords such as social and national identities which help language teachers to identify how to orient lessons aimed at enhancing Intercultural Communicative Competence. In this regard, Hall (2002) proposed to modify the curricular content to enable the learners to participate in activities that broaden their communicative experiences by expanding their worldview conceptions and promoting self-identity awareness; while Nieto (2010) associates language, literacy, and culture. The author suggests that these ideas cannot be treated in isolation since according to the new perspectives in education, teachers must promote respect for diversity, critical thinking, and abilities for actively participating in society. Those perceptions coincide with Cross (1989) who stated some principles to foster abilities to become more cross-culturally aware, they are:

1. Valuing diversity
2. Having the capacity for cultural self-assessment
3. Being conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact
4. Having institutionalized culture knowledge
5. Having developed adaptations to service delivery reflecting an understanding of cultural diversity. (Cross,1989. p.19)

In more recent studies , authors such as Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002) reformulated the existing principles and focused on describing three main components of the cross-cultural awareness they are; Intercultural attitudes, knowledge, and skills.

Intercultural attitudes are described as the learners' abilities to value different perspectives, beliefs, and behaviors (Byram, Gribkova and Starkey 2002. p. 12)

Knowledge refers to how people are perceived by other people and how well an individual can describe a society. Byram et al. (2002) suggest that teachers can get this information together with the learners. Moreover, they describe some goals to be achieved by teachers and learners jointly, they include helping learners to understand how intercultural interaction takes place, promoting understanding on how social identities are part of all interaction, and how personal perceptions of other people influence the success of communication.

Skills are the most crucial part to be developed when enhancing cross-cultural awareness since an individual has to be able to compare, interpret and relate. Byram et al., (2002) assert that “the role of the language teacher is therefore to develop skills, attitudes and awareness of values just as much as to develop knowledge of a particular culture or country” (p. 13). When developing cross-cultural awareness, teachers can start by choosing themes that are in the textbooks, the key foundation is to make students compare familiar and unfamiliar situations. Another key point the author highlights is the incorporation of vocabulary that helps learners to talk about cultural traits which are usually found in authentic texts, such as, newspapers, audio recordings, maps, photographs, and videos. Besides, the authors insist on the importance of the teacher’s skill to develop meaningful material.

Discussions regarding the relevance of the cultural content to be taught have unfolded. McKay (2002) argues that teachers have to avoid bringing puzzling content that could cause cultural conflicts, and that content needs to be relevant for learners’ contexts. The author suggests that for more effective results the teachers need to encourage reflection on students’ own culture in comparison to the target culture. This assertion contributes to this project because the design of materials is focused on comparing and contrasting cultural issues.

### **2.2.2 Multimodal literacies**

The term multimodality was coined by Kress (2003) as a reflection of the insufficient effects of the written text in the construction of meaning and the growing impact of new technologies in language acquisition . This author has demonstrated that paralinguistic elements involved in communication are valuable for the effective interpretation of communicative exchanges. This concept is supported by the theory of social semiotics ( Leeuwen & Jacob, 2005) whose principles integrate visual, aural and written resources for enhancing understanding in context.

One of the foundations of multimodal literacies has to do with the undeniable dominance of images and digital texts over printed documents (Sewell & Denton, 2015). Therefore, multimodality presents the contents by means of dynamic modes that include images, videos, movies, websites, video games, photographs, and charts among others. Different researchers such as Jewitt (2008), and Kress (2003) coincide in their appreciations about the positive influence of multimodality in meaning making through the combination of written info, gestures, speech and sound in one text, since those audiovisual elements foster logical connections between time and space. Moreover, images address communicative roles, even more accurately than linear texts (Lotherington & Jenson, 2011). According to Nelson (2006), multimodality uses different means and modes to interplay with printed texts. Means are understood as the resources that are disseminated, e.g. CDs, computers, television sets, and videos. And modes are understood as the forms of meaning making; e.g. colors, sounds, and gestures. In this regard, Sewell and Denton (2015) describe some tools that are used when implementing multimodality, they include PowerPoint presentations, videos retrieved from YouTube, online resources for video creation and authentic material

from the media. In the present study the resources mentioned above were used to promote the use of authentic language in tasks-based lessons.

Vaish and Towndrow (2010) defend the idea of using multimodal literacy in education not only for innovating teaching practices but also for developing students' 21<sup>st</sup> -century skills which involve technological and cross-cultural awareness. Due to the new challenges in education, old strategies that used to privilege written formats need to be examined. According to Lotherington and Jenson (2011) Apart from engaging learners, multimodal resources contribute to developing attitudes for social interactions, activating physical coordination and contextualizing knowledge.

To illustrate the relevance of using multimodal literacy in this research, it is necessary to mention the existing points of convergence between multimodality, language, and culture. Jenkins (2006) claims that culture can be transmitted over time and space through mass media. It is observable that media has helped to approach the learners to different lifestyles since those resources integrate cultural identities and modes of interaction. According to Erikson (1968) adolescents tend to imitate behaviors and habits because they want to follow a trend, that is why, schools need to intervene to provide students with the appropriate guidance, to promote self- identity, inclusion and to reduce stereotypes. Kress (2012) asserts that multimodality allows learners to recognize identities and cultural behaviors through language functions.

The effects of multimodality are also visible because they involve the exploration of new technologies with communicative purposes. It means, that technology gives teachers and learners more options to achieve goals by adapting a wide range of available material to design tasks that engage participants in authentic interactions (Stockwell, 2010).

### 2.2.3 Task-based approach

There have been different definitions of the term “task” over the years. The first attempts to define the word had to do with some physical work invested in doing something for a reward (Long, 1985). Later, the term was refined by linguists such as Ellis (2003) and Richards (2005) that coincide in the fact that tasks have a pedagogical impact because they must contain an objective that explicitly presents the expected outcome. Additionally, tasks must develop thinking and communicative skills to process and understand the language. Nunan (2004) and Ellis (2003) give emphasis to the fact that tasks demand the use of authentic language to focus on meaning rather than form. On the one hand, Nunan (2004) claims that when designing a task it is necessary to take into consideration the following elements: Content, materials, activities, goals, student’s needs and social community. On the other hand, some other researchers such as Bygate, Skehan and Swain (2014) mention aspects such as input, routines establishments, roles, settings, monitoring and feedback. The point is that tasks must outline the conditions and the process that learners need to comply. It means that task based learning is relevant to this study because the foundations converge with the aforementioned principles of multimodality and cross-culture.

Some of the techniques that Nunan (2004) underlines for the task-based approach are scaffolding, task dependency, recycling, activating learning, integration, reproduction to creation, and reflection.

Scaffolding refers to supporting frameworks that teachers use to provide students with knowledge, in the author’s words, “It should not be expected to produce language that has not been introduced” (Nunan, 2004. p. 35). Task dependency has to do with the logical sequence of the tasks and the pertinence of designing a chain of tasks that pursuit the same goal. Recycling intends to explain the role of the frequency



to activate prior knowledge and the importance of presenting contents in different contexts so that the students can easily relate old and new concepts. Activating learning explains the use of tasks that provide the students with the opportunity to use their experiences, learning by doing. It implies the design of more learner-centered lessons that at the same time contribute to fostering autonomy. Integration highlights the importance of integrating linguistic features, communicative function, and semantic meaning in every single lesson. Reproduction to creation explains how the input could be transformed into outcomes when students not only reproduce the language but also use models to create their own products. Reflection refers to the opportunities that students have to reflect on their own performances, it suggests that tasks must include some resources for self-assessing.

Willis and Willis' (2007) contributions and theories about real world tasks help to explain the existing connection between the constructs that address this research project and the construction of meaning. In this respect, the authors propose an approach that deals with tasks that require social interaction. One of the most crucial points is to bring everyday English to the classrooms by using different modes such as newspapers, videos, TV series or digital technologies and start generating discussion among the students. One way to bring real language to the classroom is implementing contrasting activities that help learners realize about similarities and differences between the target culture and their own culture.

### *2.2.3.1 Contrasting tasks*

Due to the continuous comparison that students experience when dealing with cultural topics, it is necessary to review the social and cognitive contributions that are triggered when the learner relates his identity to different contexts. For Wallace (1967), the cognitive and personality configuration of an individual can be affected when

interacting with diverse human groups because the learner is given the possibility to critically analyze socio-cultural backgrounds. Besides, the exposure to language exchanges originates contrasting sets of images of both, the target culture and their own culture.

Other authors such as Ellis (2003) and Brown (1994) assert that including contrasting and comparing strategies bring multiple benefits for language learners since in a comparison process the individual is challenged to observe in detail and sort out relevant criteria to produce informed points of view. Brown (1994) makes emphasis in the mental processes that are developed when a person compares two cultures, specifically the author underlines the reasoning skills that are strengthened when identifying variables, categorizing criteria, grouping sets of common characteristics between cultures, establishing organized and logical relationships, and understanding the essential information in different situations.

The present project intended to use the contrasting tasks in order to stimulate knowledge and awareness of foreign and own cultural issues and to develop the aforementioned mental skills.

### **2.3 State of the art**

Different local and international studies have been conducted to explain the relevance of strengthening cross-cultural awareness in language learning. Some other studies have connected technology to achieve this purpose. Nevertheless, there have been only a few studies that integrate the concepts of multimodal literacies, cross-cultural awareness and task-based learning in Colombian contexts. Therefore, this research intends to describe the processes and findings of an unexplored combination of methods aimed to enhance cross-cultural awareness in secondary students.

This is an overview of research studies that have illustrated the improvement that occur in students' skills when implementing multimodal literacies into language learning. Researchers (Farías, Obilinovic, Orrego, 2007; García, García, and Hernandez, 2011; Stockwell, 2010) demonstrated that the use of multimodal literacies has had a significant impact on students. García, García, and Hernandez (2011) showed that the learners felt engaged when interacting with multimodal literacies since they found this material useful and authentic for learning a language. Moreover, the students were able to gain some understanding of cultural aspects of a foreign language. This research contributes to the present study with ideas to enrich the strategy for the implementation phase; such as cartoons, newspaper articles, and videos. In spite of the alleged positive results in Garcia, Garcia & Hernandez, (2011), there are still some limitations; the results were inconsistent and the learners' opinions seemed to be biased.

Another study, conducted by Stockwell (2010) showed the effectiveness of multimodality in computer mediated communications tasks, by exposing advanced university learners to virtual online chat discussions and not online forums. These forums required learners to actively use the target language in order to develop several tasks regarding cultural topics. It was a research aimed at comparing the accuracy and lexical density of learner's work. Stockwell's findings are comparable with the present study because both of them include multimodal texts and task –based lessons. In addition, the author used virtual logs to measure results successfully; for the present study this instrument could help to prove the reliability when collecting data.

Farías et al. (2007) described some of the implications of multimodal learning models in the literacy teaching and learning. The authors demonstrated that teachers can

adapt multimodal resources to various purposes. Although this study was focused on describing the effects of this approach in reading and writing, it has certain commonalities with the present research, especially about the theory and its applicability in public schools.

In order to demonstrate the pertinence of working on cross-cultural awareness in Colombian contexts, researchers (Aldana, 2012; Bedoya, Gordillo, Romero, et al 2015; Gómez Rodríguez, 2013; Taylor, Ardila, Calderón, et al, 2005) have conducted studies that emphasize the importance of broadening university students' cross-cultural knowledge, for better understanding of the target language. Although these studies differ from the current research by the approaches, population and tools used to report the findings, there are certain similarities that could contribute to orienting the researcher to have clearer ideas for collecting data and measuring results. For instance, Gómez Rodríguez (2013) and Taylor et al. (2005) were able to record their students' progress to discover hidden traits that underlined language by means of field notes, journals written by the students and artifacts. The authors designed comparative questionnaires in order to develop critical thinking when connecting foreigner's behaviors to their own cultural appreciation. It demonstrated that adapting those types of questionnaires to be administered in this project, could help the researcher to record valuable information about how self-identity awareness is raised in the group of learners.

A new tendency of analyzing the cultural content in text- books has been recently observed in Colombia. The main purpose of this analysis is to discover how relevant it is to include certain intercultural content in Colombian contexts and how the learners can relate those contents to their own identity. In this regard, Gómez (2015), informed the results of analyzing different textbooks that included intercultural tasks as

main instruction in a classroom. The findings were connected to Holliday's (1999) principles regarding big and small cultures. Deep and surface concepts enrich intercultural studies since researchers need to consider what the author calls “global cultural consciousness” that fosters the sense of criticism in learners. One of the limitations of focusing on textbooks’ analysis is the impact that those results could have in learners that do not use textbooks, as in the case of public education.

Meanwhile, Aldana (2012) proved that the use of ICTs helped the students to gain knowledge about other cultures. The author demonstrated it by using telecollaboration. It consisted in arranging Colombian and American learner’s encounters for sharing cultural information by means of virtual forums. The main limitation found by the author was that low levels of English proficiency hinder understanding of different worldviews. It means, that this aspect requires analysis regarding the material design for the implementation stage in the present project since the students have elementary proficiency level.

One more Colombian study conducted by Bedoya et al. (2015) revealed that secondary students need to be exposed to cultural aspects of the target language to reduce stereotypes or misconceptions. To support this idea, the authors included didactic intercultural units in their syllabus. This point is crucial for the current study because including a new component in the teaching practice demands some adjustments in the syllabus.

Several international researchers have also argued that fostering cross-cultural awareness not only contributes to raising students’ self-identity, but also to develop cognitive and behavioral dimensions in the foreign language classroom. Schaeffer (2011) and Byram and Cain (1998) carried out research projects that incorporated intercultural practices in ESL/EFL classrooms. Both of them were comparative studies.

The authors coincide in asserting that researching this topic allows the participants to assume more reflective positions when interacting in the society. Although the strategies and tools they used for the implementation do not resemble the ones proposed for the current study, there are certain ideas that deserve to be considered, in order to adapt the material to afford a more consistent perception of data. For example, in Schaeffer, (2011) the strategy was to implement role plays and experiential activities to foster intercultural awareness. It is clear that the author did not use technology, but those experiential activities taken to virtual environments could be even more successful. Another key point to underline from Schaeffer' s research was the use of reflective instruments since the author let the students monitor and assess their own performances by means of pre and post- tests.

With regard to Byram and Cains (1998), working with thematic units sounds as a valuable technique since they are adjustable to any learner' s proficiency level. In addition, those thematic units are relatable to the students' contexts and interests, so that they could use simple language to contrast between issues such as family life, customs, school regulations, etc.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

The analysis of the contributions made on the topics of cross-cultural enhancement and multimodality has helped the researcher to determine the effectiveness of the strategies and instruments used by researchers and how these results could benefit or affect the present study. As it can be seen, previous international and local studies (Aldana, 2012; Byram and Cain, 1998; Bedoya, Gordillo, Romero, and Stiglich, 2015; Gómez Rodríguez ,2013a, 2015b; Schaeffer, 2011; Taylor, Ardila, Calderón, and Jiménez, 2005) have found that including cross-cultural components in language learning contributes to fostering aspects such as self- identity, citizenship, critical

thinking, respect for diverse lifestyles. Other studies (Farías, Obilinovic, and Orrego, 2007; García, García, and Hernandez, 2011; Stockwell, 2010) have examined the effects of multimodal literacies to increase the students' understanding of language, finding the pertinence of combining written with audio and visual texts to provide the learners with authentic modes to perceive the target culture traits. However, the specific issue of integrating multimodal literacies and contrasting tasks to enhance intercultural skills in eleventh graders with a basic level of language proficiency has not yet been considered sufficiently in Colombian settings.

## **Chapter 3: Research Design**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter is aimed to define the research approach and the instruments for data collection according to the purposes of this project. Likewise, it presents a detailed description and a rationale to justify the selection of those instruments and the type of study. It also includes a characterization of the context, the participants, ethical considerations, the role of the researcher, and the procedures for piloting and validating.

### **3.2 Type of study**

According to the background and the objectives of this research, the teacher researcher found that the most suitable approach to conducting this study was qualitative action research since this type of research focuses on educational contexts and allows to include various methods that take into account social interactions (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). In addition, the basis of qualitative and action research aims at fostering reflective and analytical stances in the researcher, especially to interpret social identities. In this regard, Merriam (2009) outlines four principles to understand the nature of qualitative research; the first one is focused on understanding and meaning; the second one presents the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection; the third principle emphasizes on the inductive process, and the fourth underlines descriptive final products. In this particular case, those principles are visible since the researcher is required to demonstrate abilities to observe, make decisions, record, and interpret behaviors and attitudes in diverse cultural environments in order to formulate and test research questions and describe results by using words rather than numbers. The aforementioned principles are closely related to the action research foundations proposed by Burns (2010); the author associates this type of research



mainly to educational settings and emphasizes on the teachers' roles as researchers since they are the ones in charge of recording and reflecting on their experiences to transform them into learning opportunities. Additionally, Burns proposes a cycle to carry out the research process; it includes planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. In the present study, the researcher was challenged to find out problematic situations in a group of learners, make decisions on how to proceed to solve these problems, observe results and reflect on them to make the corresponding adjustments. The researcher also needed to understand how and when to move from one stage of the cycle to the other.

### **3.3 Context**

This study was done at Institución Educativa Distrital IED República Dominicana, a public institution located in Bogotá, Colombia. The school has two branches that receive learners from kindergarten to high school. The institution is purely academic and it is widely recognized because it also attends a large population of hearing impaired

The Institutional School Project promotes integral education in order to address the different dimensions of the human being as a way to improve the students' living conditions. The school's principles are aimed at enhancing respect for life and diversity, and developing abilities for the learners to communicate with others efficiently. Students are expected to demonstrate inclusive attitudes that enable them to interact and participate actively in cultural and social transformations by performing diverse roles in society.

The school offers three weekly hours of English language instruction in high-school and one weekly hour in elementary school. The English syllabus is based on topics contained in the Colombian standards for foreign language teaching (MEN, 2006). Those topics are adjusted annually according to these regulations. The school

curriculum does not include any cross-cultural components in English courses. That is why this study intends to integrate those components to improve the students' language understanding and foster abilities to comprehend the world outside the classroom.

### **3.3.1 Participants**

This study was conducted with a group of 36 eleventh graders whose ages ranged between 15 and 19 years old. Students attending this school are likely to belong to the lower-middle and low social classes as per the Colombian stratification system, although no attention to social class was given during this study. They have a basic English level according to the observation and the analysis carried out by the researcher on the descriptors set in the CEFR.

Basically, this group of learners was chosen because they evidenced positive attitudes towards the English class, they were willing to learn, and they found it relevant to acquire cultural knowledge and to make connections between culture and learning. Participants were able to understand simple classroom instructions and basic utterances when referring to their immediate context; they were also able to exchange basic information about their likes and dislikes and personal information. They were able to identify basic verb tenses when reading, but they were not able to differentiate them in oral or written productions. Regarding their cross-cultural awareness, it was found in the needs' analysis that they had little knowledge from international cultures about traditions and behavioral traits regarding people's reactions in diverse situations. The aforementioned description reveals that students needed to be exposed to authentic communicative situations in the target language to gain awareness and understanding of intercultural patterns that are implicit in language interactions.

In terms of the participants' affective needs, it was found through the needs analysis (6.7 Appendix C:) and the teacher's observation that they needed to receive

significant input to increase their motivation for learning a language. Furthermore, they needed to find learning useful and relatable to their everyday contexts. It was also necessary to stimulate their interests for them to become more self-regulated in terms of study habits, responsibility, autonomy, and decision making for knowledge acquisition.

Taking into account students' cognitive skills, they need to start developing higher order thinking skills for predicting, illustrating, problem-solving, decision making, contrasting comparing and inferring (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 2002) . The activities implemented in this study were designed to respond to these specific needs because the students had to build meaning from visual, verbal, and written messages which are frequent in real life situations.

### **3.3.2 Researcher's role**

According to Merriam (2009) in qualitative research, the teacher-researcher is considered as a primary instrument of data collection since the human resource can expand his/her understanding through different means of communication, specifically verbal and nonverbal cues. For Burns (2010) the teacher -researcher must be able to follow up the cycle of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. It implies that the researcher should be able to articulate the theory and practice in order to make appropriate decisions regarding the selection of instruments for the analysis of the data. In addition, the researcher has to take active part not only to observe but also to use logical skills to plan improvements or redirect the focus when it is needed. For the current research, these conditions were met since the teacher-researcher demonstrated abilities to observe and find out a problematic situation that was affecting the learners. Moreover, the researcher used the emerging reflections to make decisions on the methodology, material selection, and instruments to collect data. Finally, the teacher researcher demonstrated commitment by adhering to ethical standards (Hall, 2002).

### 3.3.3 Ethical considerations

**With reference to the ethical considerations, this study considered Burns' (2010) contributions regarding the researcher's responsibilities author emphasize on conducting action research by details and purposes of the research, explaining the principles. In the present research project, the school's their parents were informed about the purpose, Additionally, they were all notified about maintaining parameters. Subsequently, parents and students alike signed consent letters (**

**), (¡Error! No se encuentra el origen de la referencia.)** since the participants were minors. The school principal also signed a consent letter giving explicit permission for the study to be executed. (¡Error! No se encuentra el origen de la referencia.).

### 3.4 Data collection instruments

In order to provide a plan for gathering information that answered the research question, the researcher analyzed instruments that were appropriate for this qualitative research (questionnaires, teacher's journal, participants' artifacts, and reflective logs). Decisions were made in an attempt to afford a clear view of the effectiveness of multimodal literacies when enhancing Cross-cultural awareness according to the participants' profile.

#### 3.4.1 Descriptions and justifications

##### 3.4.1.1 *Questionnaires*

As it was referenced in the state of the art, questionnaires are appropriate instruments for data collection since the questions are set in a systematic way (Wallace, 2008). Moreover, they allow researchers to identify students' points of view or specific

information when they are given in short answers or multiple choices. (Hall, 2002). For this research, structured questionnaires were used to record the learners' progress and perceptions with regards to their intercultural awareness. Therefore, web-based and paper-based questionnaires were available to facilitate access to all learners.

Questionnaires were also selected since they do not mislead the students' answers because there are not verbal cues (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). In this study the questionnaires served as means to identify the students' prior cultural background regarding local and international cultural information, to recognize what stereotypes the students had, to record the students' awareness of their own intercultural progress, and to know their perception of the effectiveness of using multimodal literacies with academic purposes.

#### **3.4.1.2 *Teacher's Journals***

This instrument was chosen because the literature review evidenced they were effective means to record details about students' and researchers' feelings, reflections, and perceptions; they also provide information about variables that help researchers to generate questions (Wallance, 2008). According to Hall (2002), journals report descriptions that are relevant to the research context. Moreover, journals could be kept as written, audio or video ongoing record; and demand certain periodicity. In this study, journals were filled based on a format (Appendix I) this instrument enabled the researcher to reflect on students' reactions right after the sessions ended.

#### **3.4.1.3 *Artifacts***

The artifacts were intended to help the researcher gather rich information about the students' progress in terms of acquisition and reflection of cultural aspects. Merriam (1998) asserts that contrasting worksheets, reports and material produced by the students supports other resources. In this research, the students' artifacts included

different means and modes to connect the multimodal principles to the teaching or learning. The students analyzed contrasting tasks based on videos, cartoons, presentations, TV series and websites that combined written and audio-visual resources. These artifacts allowed the researcher to have a record of the students' progress regarding intercultural awareness, self-identity and the conclusions drawn by the students when relating different lifestyles with their own identity (6.7Appendix J:)

#### **3.4.1.4 Reflective logs**

In connection with the ideas exposed in chapter 2, the use of reflective logs intended to provide the learners with opportunities to assess their own progress. This instrument can be prompted by questions about the things that occurred in a particular lesson. Logs do not require an extensive ability for writing since the researcher can orient the focus of these reflections (Minchew, Deaton, & Leland, 2010). This particular aspect facilitated the researcher to deal with students' level of language since the statements in the logs were formulated by using simple and recycled language in different sessions. In addition, in this study, the reflective logs allowed the students to become conscious of the dynamic of intercultural encounters (6.7Appendix L:) and also enabled the students to confirm or disconfirm their beliefs and stereotypes.

#### **3.4.2 Validation and piloting**

To validate and pilot the instruments for this research, a set of activities were designed to orient students to compare British and Colombian Halloween celebrations. These activities were administered in a different group of learners to identify possible contributions and potential difficulties in terms of pertinence, reliability, practicality, and authenticity of the instruments. Firstly, a cultural questionnaire was administered as a pre-activity in order to assess their knowledge and background on the traditions (Appendix H), then two videos were used to provide the students with a meaningful

input of the situations. Additionally, a worksheet was used as an artifact with some contrasting tasks (Appendix J), and a reflective log (6.7Appendix K:) as a reflecting activity. The researcher asked for professional opinions and on the one hand, it was confirmed that the material was useful and accessible because the students had the possibility to self-assess their progress and the language used was pertinent for the students' level. On the other hand, it was concluded that significant adjustments needed to be considered regarding the design of the questionnaires, especially, in much elaborated questions that took for granted that the students were knowledgeable enough to define notions about cultural behaviors. With regards to the teachers' journal, it was found quite useful to include two more information boxes to allow the teacher-researcher to describe adjustments for future lessons and results for every section.

The conclusions drawn from this process were favorable and support the researcher's idea of working on enhancing Cross-cultural awareness through multimodal literacies. The results also let the researcher understand to what extent those instruments could contribute to recording the students' progress and answering the research question.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has articulated instruments design and action research in educational settings. In addition, it has served as means to reflect on the researcher's role as an active participant in the process and to revise the pertinence of using several instruments to collect specific data.

## **Chapter 4: Pedagogical Intervention and Implementation**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter is aimed at outlining a detailed description of the steps, materials, timeline, objectives, resources, and in general, the procedures that were considered to answer the research question during the pedagogical intervention. This chapter also correlates the language, learning, and curriculum visions with the actual context in which the research is being carried out.

### **4.2 Visions of language, learning, and curriculum**

#### **4.2.1 Vision of language**

Cross-cultural dimension addresses language from a communicative perspective that places the EFL learners as individuals capable of grasping meaning from social interactions and contrast foreign and own identities (Byram et al., 2002). In this project, the learners are performing the role of mediators between language and context since they have been given the possibility to comprehend the language in terms of appropriacy rather than under grammatical or formal aspects. In addition, the present research privileges semiotic and paralinguistic components which are intended to support and contextualize written messages. Therefore, subject matters, cultural aspects, and language are combined to build understanding through the use of multimodal literacies. Brown (1994) also points out the importance of integrating culture, language, and thought. In this study, language is linked to the social identities in context; this means that it has been used as a vehicle to promote this integration.



#### **4.2.2 Vision of learning**

The vision of learning in this project considers the learner's cognitive, social, and affective domains since mental processes, interactions and behaviors are essential to promote Cross-cultural awareness. In this respect, the researcher took into account Vygotsky's (1978) assertions about learning as a product of social interaction. Consequently, the emphasis of this research is on the development of the participants' social skills as they have been in contact with different cultural contents and identities. These skills are strengthened as the students gain awareness of the importance of valuing own and foreign cultures.

Regarding mental processes, this project has considered challenging the learners to use higher order thinking skills proposed by Bloom (1956) and which later were revised and refined by Krathwohl (2002) in order to develop tasks that demand abilities for contrasting, comparing, using critical thinking, grasping general and specific information from videos, and using this new knowledge for creating products. According to Huber (2014) using pedagogical approaches that encourage learners to have open minds to explore other places, discovery, analyze, compare, reflect, and cooperate tend to be very effective as they promote emotional and intellectual skills.

It is important to note that multimodal literacies have served as means to prepare the students to cope with 21<sup>st</sup>- century skills since the tasks demand students to deal with technologies, solving real life situations, taking part in collaborative projects. In addition, activities like watching videos, films or short video clips help the learners "raise awareness of different visions of the world and to develop learners' skills of observation, interpretation and decentering, as well as their openness and non-judgmental thinking." (Huber, 2014. p. 44).

### **4.2.3 Vision of curriculum**

The inclusion of the cross-cultural components in the classroom requires instructional planning, adapting time, space, contents and learning outcomes to define the procedures in which the learners are going to access to cultural knowledge. Therefore, the curriculum was adapted for the pedagogical intervention according to the principles of cross-cultural awareness in connection with the current standards for English Teaching as a Foreign language. To explain the assertions above, it is necessary to make reference to three important variables that were taken into account for the curriculum design, they are content-based instruction, contrasting tasks, and the social and cognitive pedagogical approach in combination with the school's philosophy.

In this research, the task-based approach has been essential to help the learners understand the language in context and to negotiate meaning for them to arrive at the complete understanding of contents (Richards, 2006). For this reason, the contents were adapted to introduce the participants to the most relevant aspects of English speaking countries. For the selection of the topics and the material, the teacher researcher considered the students' language level and the pertinence of bringing certain cross-cultural content to their context. For instance, teenagers' ways of living, places to spend time, and family traditions. Regarding the contrastive tasks, they were used as a way to challenge the students to compare, analyze, and reflect on the differences and commonalities between foreign and own identities (Huber, 2014).

An important condition to keep in mind when carrying out projects in cross-culturalism is to consider the pedagogical approach that best fits with its principles. In this case, the social and cognitive foundations are appropriate to describe the expected outcomes from the learners since this approach places them as individuals capable of

learning from others' knowledge and from the experiences within their culture (Vygotsky, 1978). The existing theories on this subject support learning as a product of interaction in which the development of the abilities to solve real life situations is associated with the influence of the society. This vision not only matches with the specific purposes of intercultural teaching and learning but also respects the school's philosophy which is aimed at promoting inclusive attitudes that enable the learners to interact and participate actively in cultural and social transformations.

### **4.3 Instructional design**

#### **4.3.1 Lesson planning**

Lesson planning was distributed in six different content modules that included the module's name, main and subsidiary aims for each lesson, the learners' profile, the assumed knowledge, and a description of how communication, cognition, and culture were going to be achieved in each lesson. The lesson plan format also had a layout with the stages of the class, the procedures (teachers and students activities), the type of interaction, and the estimated time for each activity. In addition, each lesson plan included the appendixes, worksheet, questionnaires, and reflective logs. (Appendix M)

Each module featured scaffolding activities that were intended to help learners gradually interact with the contents. Firstly, they had to answer a pre- questionnaire to record the information about their prior knowledge; this activity was followed by the input sessions in which the participants received the information by means of videos that were supported with closed captions. While observing the videos, students filled in worksheets. After that, they were guided to contrast the new information with their identity and reflected on the positive or negative aspects by expressing opinions and creating products such as Venn diagrams, comparative charts, Power point

presentations, and freezos. Finally, they filled in the reflective logs to understand how the prior knowledge had been transformed.

**4.3.2 Implementation**

The pedagogical intervention was carried out during the first semester 2016, starting in April and finishing in June according to the timeline.

The implementation was divided into six modules, each one took four hours and two additional hours were devoted to completing in questionnaires that were administered in the middle and at the end of the intervention in order to record the students’ perception of the strategies used. It means 26 total hours of implementation. In Table 1 it can be observed the topic for each module, the resources needed (which are available at school, except for a high quality internet service that was provided by the teacher- researcher), the objectives set for each module, the existing relationship between the school’s principles, syllabus and the research project, the specific tasks per module, and the time devoted to carry out all the activities.

Table 1. *Implementation Timeline*

Module’s topic/ resources needed	Date	Objective	How to fit the course syllabus and the school’s objectives	Tasks and data collection instruments	Time/ Hours
<b>Getting to know about English-speaking countries</b> -Video beam -Set of copies - Internet service - Computer - Speakers - Some materials brought by the students.	April 7 <sup>th</sup> to 14 <sup>th</sup>	Students will be able to mention and describe general aspects from the most well-known countries in which English is the official language and use this information to express with solid ideas the importance of learning the target language in Colombian context.	By contextualizing knowledge and making concepts relevant for students’ lives.	- Questionnaire (pre-activities) - Video - Worksheet - Students’ artifact (Presentation) - Reflective log - Teachers’ journal	4 Hours
<b>2 Celebrating life</b> - Video beam - Set of copies	April 15 <sup>th</sup> to 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Students will be able to describe how English-speaking countries celebrate festivities and contrast this information with celebrations	- By generating learning environments in which authentic contexts are	- Questionnaire (pre-activities) - Video-	4 hours

- Internet service - Computer - Speakers		in Colombian contexts.	brought to introduce the content.	- By raising awareness of their own identity, sense of belonging, and by giving learners the possibility to use contrasting skills to express how they perceive their own traditions.	- Worksheet - Students' artifact (Collaborative blog ) - Reflective log - Teachers' journal	
<b>3 Family life</b> -Video beam -Set of copies - Internet service - Computer - Speakers - Some materials brought by the Students.	April 29th to May 6 <sup>th</sup>	Students will be able to describe family traditions and typical homes of English-speaking countries and contrast this information with their own family traditions.	• By allowing learners to access and create virtual interactions in the target language and express their opinions under a critical perspective.	- By including innovative and pertinent strategies for students' current and future lives.	- Questionnaire (pre-activities) - Video-Worksheet - Students' artifact (freezo) - Reflective log - Teachers' journal	4 hours
<b>Mid questionnaire</b> Set of copies	May 11 <sup>th</sup>	Students' perception of the strategy			- Filling in a questionnaire	1 hour
<b>4 Eating and manners</b> -Video beam -Set of copies - Internet service - Computer - Speakers	May 12 <sup>th</sup> to 18 <sup>th</sup>	The students will be able to describe most popular eating traditions from English-speaking countries and will contrast this information with their own traditions.	- By developing students' understanding of the existing variations between local and international behaviors		- Quiz to evaluate prior knowledge - Video-Worksheet - Students' artifact (Collaborative padlet) - Reflective log	4 hours
<b>5 Hanging out</b> -Video beam -Set of copies - Internet service - Computer - Speakers	May 19 <sup>th</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup>	The students will be able to mention the most well-known places of the English-speaking countries and contrast this information with the places in their own Country.	- By Facilitating learners to relate cultural content with different areas of knowledge (location of countries and cities)		- Questionnaire (pre-activities) - Video-Worksheet - Reflective log. - Teachers' journal	4 hours

<p><b>6</b>  <b>Teenagers life: sports and leisure activities</b>                  -Video beam                  -Set of copies                  - Internet service                  - Computer                  - Speakers</p>	<p>May 27<sup>th</sup>                  June 7<sup>th</sup></p>	<p>The students will be able to describe the activities in which foreign teenagers are involved and they will contrast this information with their own perspectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- By fostering tolerant attitudes towards plurality and diversity.</li> <li>- By showing respect for other ways of living</li> <li>- By visualizing life projects taking into account other people's experiences.</li> </ul>	<p>Personality test.                  - Video-Contrastive task                  - Students' artifact (video)                  - Reflective log.                  - Teachers' journal</p>	<p>4 hours</p>
<p><b>Closing</b>                  -Set of copies</p>	<p>June 15<sup>th</sup></p>	<p>The students will express their points of view regarding the strategies and their progress during the pedagogical intervention.</p>	<p>By allowing them to be participants in their assessment process.</p>	<p>Closing questionnaire about the students 'increasing performance regarding Cross-cultural awareness and the use of multimodal literacies.</p>	<p>1 hour</p>

Each module was designed to be worked during four hours of class, it means that there were several sessions for the students to complete different tasks which specifically set the objectives and procedures as it was referenced by Nunan (1994) when describing the characteristics of the task-based approach. During the first section in each module they filled in pre-questionnaires that were intended to record the information about their prior knowledge on the topics. The next section was devoted to receive input through a selection of videos that included closed captions for better understanding, while the participants watched the videos they had to interact with the new knowledge by completing in worksheets. The third section in each module was aimed at enabling the students to critically compare between different cultural identities and their own identity. To achieve that, the students reflected on their own ways of living and carried out contrasting tasks that included graphic organizers such as Venn

diagrams and comparative charts. In the same session the learners started working on collaborative tasks to produce their artifacts, they received the instruction for the design of these instruments. In the last session, the artifacts were presented and the learners evaluated their performance and recorded the improvements that occurred in their Cross-cultural awareness by means of the reflective logs which included some descriptors which specifically evaluated students' understanding, the use of new vocabulary, and their abilities to grasp oral and written messages from the videos.

The process was similar for all the modules. Additionally, in the middle and by the end of the intervention, two questionnaires with open- ended questions were administered to evaluate the participants' perception of their own progress.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

This stage of the research project allowed the researcher to make connections between theory and practice by making concepts tangible in the actual classroom. Moreover, describing the different visions also helped to go beyond the learners' cognitive dimension for a better appreciation of their attitudes and values. Besides, this chapter included a precise description of the elements that were taken into account to fulfill the objectives of this research.

## **Chapter 5: Results and Data Analysis**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter is aimed at illustrating the methods that were used to treat the collected data in this study for a deep analysis. It describes in detail the considered techniques for management, reduction, and triangulation of data. Hence, the principles of grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss, 2008) and the bases of Creswell's (2012) theory about conducting and evaluating qualitative studies by using a step by step methodology were taken into account since these approaches emphasize in laying out the necessary parameters to encode and categorize data in qualitative research. Consequently, this chapter outlines the procedures to transform raw data obtained during the pedagogical intervention into emerging patterns, codes, categories, and subcategories in order to validate this information to answer the research question.

### **5.2 Data management procedures**

To proceed with the gathered data analysis it was necessary to organize, and store the data in an MS Excel <sup>TM</sup> matrix (Appendix N). The researcher transcribed, distributed, and labeled data from the participants' general information, the teacher's journal notes, the questionnaires that were administered to record the students' performance before, while, and after each module, and the students' artifacts in spreadsheets. The researcher also assigned each participant a number to guarantee their anonymity and confidentiality. This process allowed the researcher to convert raw into meaningful data by moving from specific information to general codes and categories.

#### **5.2.1 Validation**

For this study, the samples of 37 participants were collected, but only 16 of them were analyzed since these participants were the only ones who went through all the stages of the research process. Despite having discarded some participants'



contributions, the amount of data was adequate to provide a clear view of the findings and to have a sufficient breath and width of the data collected.

The trustworthiness of the data in this study was evidenced through a triangulation process which consisted in cross-validating different sources of data by stating convergence points (Creswell, 2012). Specifically, the data obtained from the pre, while, and post open-ended questionnaires, and the reflective logs as means to record the students' cross-cultural background; the process to remove the existing misconceptions; and the impact of the strategy on the learner's perception. In addition, the information in the teacher's journal provided evidence of the students' progress and the strategy effectiveness under the researcher's critical eye. The students' artifacts were used as a way to demonstrate the cross-cultural improvements and the skills development that occurred during the input sections.

### **5.2.2 Data analysis methodology**

The data in this study was analyzed through the grounded theory which aims at generating theory from data (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Additionally, authors such as Creswell (2012); McMillan and Schumacher (2010), and Burns (1999) coincide in associating this theory to an inductive and systematic process that occurs in qualitative research as a product of the exhaustive data interpretation for subsequent formation of codes and categories in order to present accurate and concrete findings on one subject.

In this study, the subject that is being described is the impact of multimodal literacies in the students' cross-cultural awareness development, and the aforementioned inductive perspective is visible because on the one hand, the step by step methodology proposed by Creswell (2012) and the coding stages (open, axial, and selective) proposed by Corbin and Strauss (2008) were considered to carry out the process of transforming raw data into meaningful themes or categories. Initially, open coding allowed the

researcher to concentrate on key concepts by reading and comparing the information obtained from the different sources of data (questionnaires, teacher's journal, students' artifacts, and reflective logs) to form segments and patterns. Secondly, in the axial coding stage these patterns were narrowed to codes and categories by interrelating data to reduce overlap and redundancy. Finally, in the selective coding stage, the major categories were integrated to originate the core category and the theory. On the other hand, the principles of McMillan & Schumacher (2010) were examined to establish a methodology for a visual representation of the data, specifically, the development of the hierarchical diagrams to display how the findings were interrelated and a color coding strategy to illustrate the major categories and subcategories.

### **5.3 Categories**

The three systematic coding stages (open, axial and selective) proposed by Corbin & Strauss (2008) were the basis to identify three categories, six subcategories, and one core category.

#### **5.3.1 Overall category mapping**

The analysis of the data in the open stage served as means to make an extensive exploration of all the information gathered throughout the instruments. In this stage, initial codes and labels were assigned to different blocks of texts in order to classify them according to their meaning by using the color coding technique. After that, the codes were revised again and reduced to concepts. In the axial coding stage, the codes were interrelated, reduced and grouped in broader categories, specifically: cross-cultural awareness, skills development, and multimodality effects. The categories describe major ideas after comparing similar codes (Figure 1).

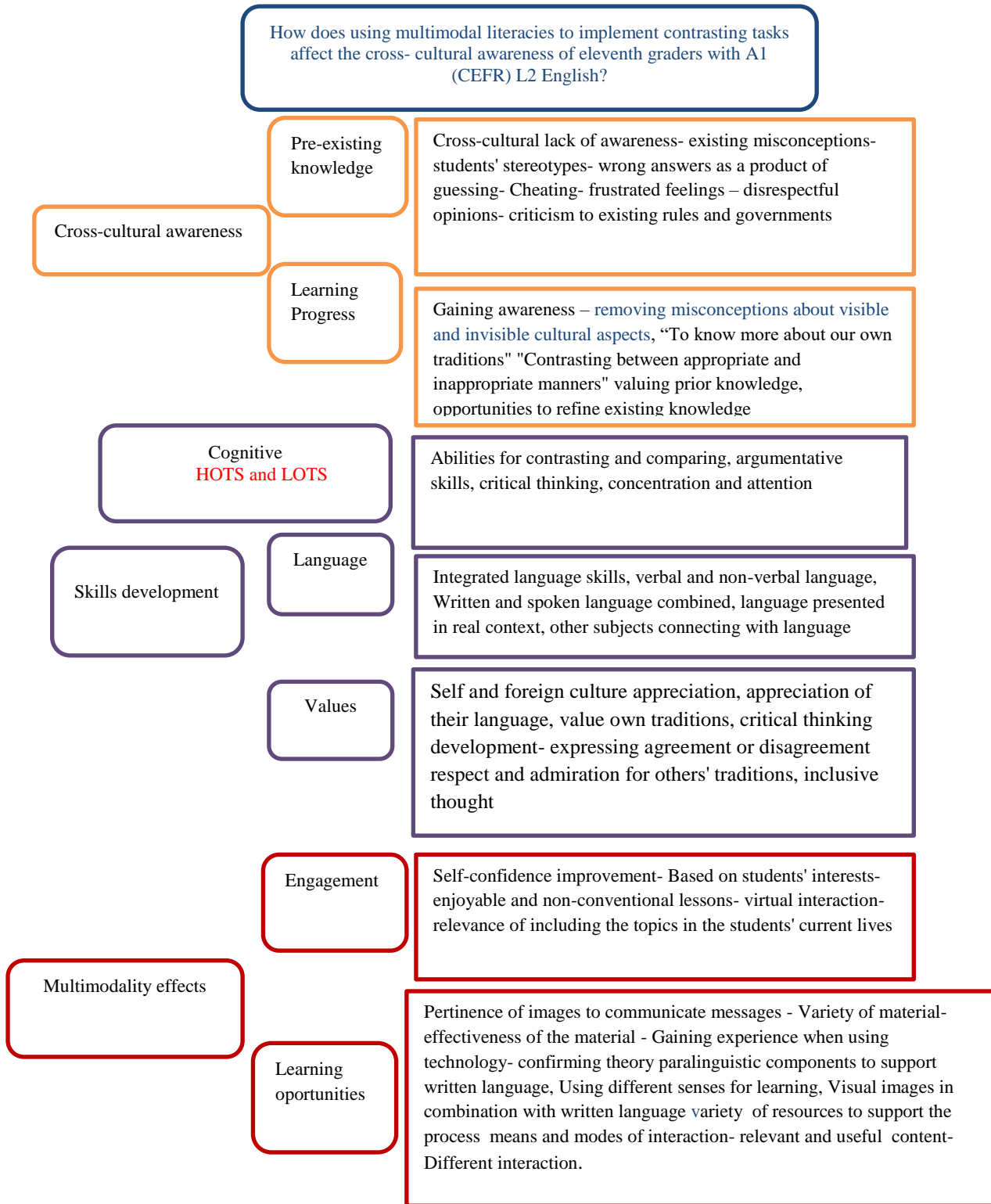


Figure 1. Reduction of concepts to broader categories

In the selective coding stage, the emerging categories and subcategories were presented in a more reduced and self-explanatory diagram in which the information is interwoven to originate the core category and consequently to answer the research question (Figure 2).

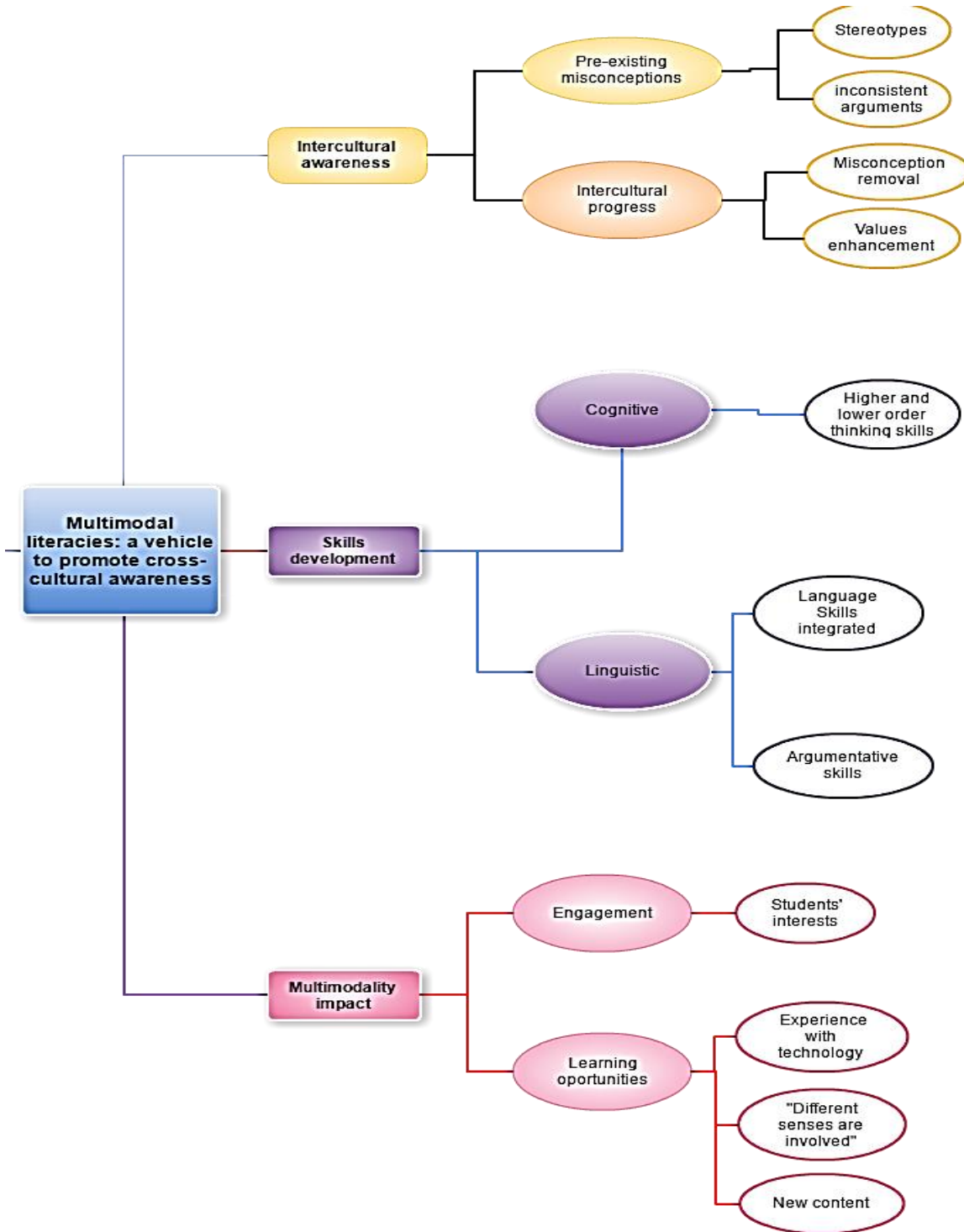


Figure 2. Core category, categories and subcategories

### **5.3.2 Discussion of categories**

The data obtained from the triangulation process and the coding done in the open, axial, and selective stages provided the formation of three mid-level categories and six subcategories. Cross-cultural awareness (pre-existing misconceptions and cross-cultural progress), skills development (cognitive and linguistic), and multimodality impact (engagement and learning opportunities) emerged from the data were to provide consistent information in order to answer the research question. It means that in this section, excerpts of the collected information are brought into context and contrasted with theoretical concepts in order to extend the existing theory in accordance to what has been suggested by Corbin and Strauss (2008).

#### **5.3.2.1 *Cross-cultural awareness***

In this study, a significant improvement on the participants' cross-cultural awareness was expected to occur; specifically, on their own cultural awareness as the basis for addressing other cultures (Byram et al., 2002). The collected data provides concrete evidence that these changes took place, especially if the initial results on pre-questionnaires are compared to the final responses on the artifacts or reflective logs. The samples presented below illustrate in detail the process that participants carried out during the initial and final stages of the pedagogical intervention.

##### **5.3.2.1.1 *Pre-existing misconceptions***

Initially, the participants demonstrated to have misconceptions of own and foreign cultural aspects. In some cases, they did not identify their own traditions and assumed other borrowed traditions as own. According to Byram (2002), It occurs due to the lack of intercultural interaction. Excerpt 1, Pre- questionnaire, demonstrates the

misconceptions that one of the participants had when he was asked to explain some celebrations background. The response was mainly based on inconsistent assertions, the student associated the Veterans' day celebration to old people. It could have occurred due to his lack of exposure to the target language culture and to the L1 interference since in his first language the word "veteran" has to do with old people.

*"The veterans day is to celebrate old people lives"* (Participant 6)

Excerpt 1. Pre- questionnaire. April 15th, 2016

In this initial stage, the participants also evidenced to have several stereotypes that originated disrespectful and aggressive opinions that were diminishing as they received the input in the following sessions. In excerpts 2 and 3, two students expressed their initial ideas about American teenagers. These two samples show students' judgmental attitudes towards other cultures, especially when they were asked to give spontaneous opinions about cultural subjects. Excerpt 4, supports this finding with an observation recorded by the teacher-researcher in the teachers' journal.

*"They follow stupid trends"* (Participant7)

Excerpt 2. Pre- questionnaire. May 24,2016

*"They live in an unreal world because the government gives them everything"* (Participant 10)

Excerpt 3. Pre- questionnaire. May 24, 2016

*"Pre -test: This questionnaire provided a clear view of the students' poor prior knowledge. This instrument allowed me to record information about the stereotypes that students had when talking about teenagers' life"*

Excerpt 4. Teacher's journal. May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016

This subcategory served as the starting point to provide evidence of the existing need of refining students' prior knowledge. The information that emerged from the instruments allowed the researcher to demonstrate that students' initial responses needed to be transformed into better informed and more respectful responses, specially,

in situations in which they were asked to describe own and foreign ways of living. In this introductory stage of the process, some learners experienced frustrated feelings due to their lack of knowledge to respond some cultural questions.

#### *5.3.2.1.2 Cross-cultural progress*

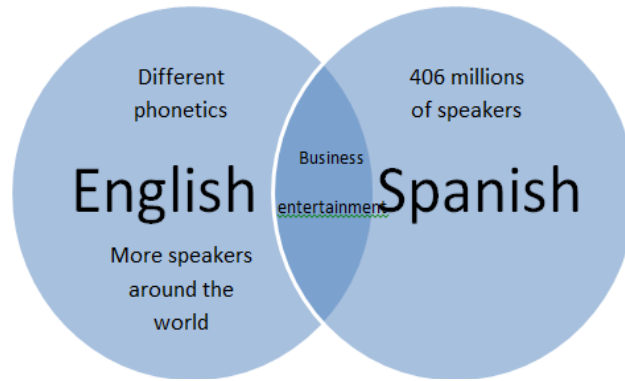
The analysis in the cross-cultural progress is based on McKay's (2002) and Valdes' (1986) assertions, who emphasize the strategies to present contents to encourage reflection on students 'own culture in relation to the target culture. In this stage of the process, the participants grasped and processed the content of the input sessions. As a result of this exposure, they transformed their initial inconsistent and disrespectful points of view into well-informed and more elaborated opinions. Byram et al (2002) and Block (2007) connect these changes to the cross-cultural attitudes which is one of the components that is expected students develop when working with culture. The evidence of the aforementioned process is shown in excerpt 5 in which the teacher researcher described her perception of the students' progress.

*“They reflected on the importance of their own language in the world, they were able to produce short statements to identify the importance of both languages (English and Spanish). The students could find some of the differences and commonalities between their native and the target language. They presented more elaborated ideas”*

Excerpt 5. Teacher's Journal. April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

In order to illustrate the students' cross- cultural progress the initial and final responses in participant 5 were compared. Initially, he demonstrated little knowledge of English Speaking countries. As the implementation progressed and more instruction about different cultures was provided, student 5's awareness of different cultures increased and by the implementation of the third instrument, the reflective log, student 5 had already understood the dynamics of the course and could locate his new knowledge

easily. In Figure 3 the student was asked to watch a video in order to identify commonalities and differences between Spanish and English language by filling in a Venn diagram, in this activity the student made use of consistent ideas retrieved from the video.



Fill in the chart based on the ideas retrieved from the videos.

- Why learning English?	- Why learning Spanish?
Gives us the possibility to be understood all around the world.	Culture
Many business	There are many important books written in Spanish
	The second language of the United Nation

Figure 3. Student's artifact. Venn Diagram based on a video activity. Provided by student 5

In Figure 4 the participant evaluated his own progress in the reflective log. The results revealed a factual improvement in his prior knowledge since the student used the information obtained in the input sessions to produce better informed responses. In addition, when grading his intercultural perception, the opinion showed that the methodology substantially contributed to the achievement of the objectives proposed for the lesson.








Criteria	 5	 4	 3	 2	 1
I could learn something new in the English-speaking countries module.	✓				
I can mention most of the English-speaking countries	✓				
I could understand the content of the videos	✓				
I liked the videos	✓				
I learnt general facts of the English- speaking countries		✓			
I found commonalities and differences between English and Spanish.	✓				
I have more consistent ideas to describe the importance of speaking English and Spanish.	✓				

Figure 4. Reflective log # 1

Provided by student 2.

According to Holliday (1999), the strengthening of cross-cultural awareness is not only based on generating knowledge of nationally well-known information of a country, but also deals with aspects that have to do with the recognition and appreciation of one's own identity and acceptance of diversity. As stated by Cross (1989), it occurs because when addressing cross-cultural subjects, an individual implicitly develops skills for valuing and reflecting on own and foreign identities. These authors' assertions are evidenced in this study through some of students' comments and reflections as illustrated in Figure 5 and Excerpt 6. The Figure below shows how a participant emphasized on demonstrating the importance of his country before other places in the world and expressed his desire to know different places and the disagreement regarding some foreign traditions.

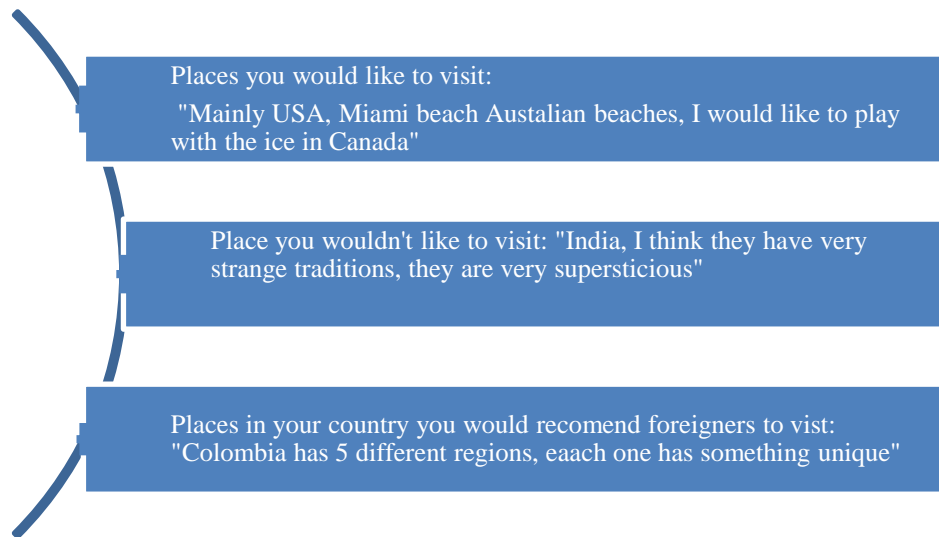


Figure 5. Student's artifact about places in the world.

#### Participant 5.

Excerpt 6 illustrates a participant's reflection about his lack of intercultural awareness before the pedagogical intervention and his understanding of his initial misconceptions. In this instrument students were asked about the perception of the usefulness of the lessons to enhance their cross-cultural awareness. Thus, the student's reflection evidences recognition of his own identity through the lens of the foreign culture.

*"...me dí cuenta de que la procedencia de algunas tradiciones nuestras es internacional".*

*"I realized that some of our traditions are original from foreign countries "*

Excerpt 6. Post questionnaire. Student 8. July 15th 201

#### 5.3.2.2 *Skills development*

The results of this study revealed that the students gained significant improvements in diverse dimensions, including cognitive and linguistic skills. Therefore, these two sub-categories are addressed in a more detailed way. It means that some existing theories regarding the development of lower and higher order thinking

skills in contrasting task- based approach and linguistic implications in cross-cultural exposure were revised and contrasted with the excerpts provided by the students.

#### 5.3.2.2.1 *Cognitive skills*

The findings obtained in the data analysis are connected to McKay's (2002) and Nunan's (2004) theories that have described the mental processes that are fostered when choosing the task- based approach as a teaching strategy. Nunan (2004) indicates that the learners are allowed to activate their knowledge gradually, connect their prior experiences to the new knowledge, and at the same time develop abilities for critical thinking. McKay (2002) asserts that contrastive tasks enable the learners to acquire abilities to find convergent points, differences, and comparing. In this case, the combination of this approach with the exposure to cross-cultural content enabled the participants to strengthen the aforementioned skills. Throughout the process, the learners followed a scaffolding process that consisted in discovering existing differences and commonalities between foreign cultures and their own cultures by demonstrating abilities to sort relevant information, to make informed observations, and to establish logical relationships in order to enable the participants to be well informed to evaluate and criticize certain foreign and own ways of living.

Figure 6 illustrates the modifications that occurred in the participant 16's prior knowledge since she was asked to critically appreciate different home traditions and express her personal opinions about them taking into consideration the new information. In this case, the student expressed her agreement with Canadian customs and her disagreement with some Hindu customs; she also gained insights about the importance of being well informed before giving opinions.

Arrange a special dinner together once a week where each family member rotates being the guest of honor. <u>Australia</u>	Saturday Football. There's something incredibly relaxing and comforting about watching college football with your family on a Saturday afternoon in the fall. Pass down your alma mater pride as you cheer on your team together. <u>USA</u>
Evening Walks. Not only walking can help solve problems, but it can also strengthen families. Evening walks are a great time to get some fresh air and digest the day's events along with your dinner. <u>Canada</u>	Honor momentous events such as graduations, getting a driver's license, or getting married by planting a tree. <u>Canada</u>
They drink about eight cups of tea everyday <u>England</u>	They do not wear footwear at holy places or inside homes. <u>India</u>
Choose a day each year to go through family photo albums or watch old home videos together. <u>Canada</u>	women and girls wear dresses that would cover all their bodies <u>India</u>
You would find an altar in every house which contains miniature idols that are cleaned every day <u>India</u>	8th/ 18th Birthday Time Capsule. On your child's 8th birthday have him fill a time capsule with some of the things he likes and a note to himself. Open it a decade later on his 18th birthday. <u>Australia</u>
They celebrate 16 <sup>th</sup> birthday parties for ladies <u>America</u>	
They do not eat cow meat there. It is forbidden, the cows are sacred <u>India</u>	They tie a black doll over the front door of the house to stop bad powers from entering the house. <u>India</u>

**What traditions would you like to have in our country?**

**I would like to have the tradition of celebrating 16<sup>th</sup> birthday parties for ladies, I would like to watch football together**

**What wouldn't you like to have?**

**I wouldn't like to have the tradition of the black doll, and I wouldn't like to cover my body with a long dress**

**If you were given the possibility to live in a one of these countries where would you live?**

**I would like to live in Canada because I like Canadian traditions**

Figure 6. Student's artifact

Provided by student 16

5.3.2.2.2 *Linguistic skills*

In this study, the combination of three components; multimodality, cross-cultural, and task-based approach have addressed language as a whole. It means that language skills were integrated throughout lessons. As a result of this integration, the students' language skills have also been modified in terms of productivity. Authors such as Nieto's (2010), Hinkel (2014), and Kramsch (2003) coincide in asserting that

language skills development occurs implicitly when teaching cultural aspects of the target language. They also suggest that contextualized lessons that include verbal and nonverbal language contribute to the vocabulary enhancement, language accuracy, and as a consequence to the construction of more elaborate productions. In the present study, the participants' production of language was modified through the implemented strategies. In the initial stage of the implementation the learners' responses were based on simple language and messages were incompletely delivered. As the learners received the input, a notorious improvement occurred in their control of language. Their productions were not only more grammatically and syntactically accurate but also they made use of more extensive vocabulary to communicate their ideas as it is illustrated in Figures 7 and 8 which are used to compare their improvements before and after receiving the input sessions.

#### Before

**This questionnaire intends to collect information of your intercultural knowledge about celebrations and traditions in countries in English speaking countries**

**Underline the celebrations that are familiar to you**

Easter week

Anzac day

Ganesh Nimajjan

Saint Patrick's Day

Labors' day

Veterans Day

Thanks giving

April Fools' Day

If you underlined one of the options above, please provide some information about the celebration.

In Saint Patrick's day people drink beer, in thanks giving people eat turkey

Figure 7. Prequestionnaire.

Provided by the student 2.

After

International festivities	Local festivities
<b>Christmas:</b> It's a day when people wake up in the morning and open presents. It's celebrated in December 25 <sup>th</sup> .	We pray <u>novenas</u> , we celebrate every day in December. We open presents in December 24 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Easter week:</b> The Easter bunny is important, people give eggs of chocolate.	This week all people pray a lot and visit the church on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.
<b>Independence day:</b> The date of celebration is different in all. People have BBQ this day.	We celebrate it on July 20 <sup>th</sup> . The independence of Spain. There is a parade with soldiers in the street. People put the flags.
<b>April fool's day:</b> It is a day when people make fun of other people.	In Colombia a similar celebration is on December 28 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Thanks giving:</b> It is celebrated to thank for the good harvest.	In Colombia we don't have this festivity, but we have a big dinner on December 24 <sup>th</sup>
<b>New year:</b> The countries celebrate with a party at night.	In Colombia people drink and dance
<b>Anzac day:</b> It is a day when Australians celebrate their independence.	We don't have this in Colombia
<b>St Patrick's day or Saint days:</b> Known in Ireland and everything goes green. It's in honor of the Saint of Ireland.	In Colombia we don't have this. But I would like to have it.
<b>St Valentine's day:</b> It is a day when the people celebrate the love. Celebrated on February 14 <sup>th</sup>	In Colombia it is the love and friendship and we celebrate it in September.
<b>Labor's day:</b> This is the commemoration of retired workers	In Colombia people don't work this day.

Figure 8. Student's artifact.

Provided by the student 2.

The language development previously mentioned is also supported by the participants' and the teacher researcher's perception. In excerpts 7 and 8 the participants explicitly make reference to the improvements that occurred in their language during the implementation. In excerpt 9, the teacher researcher confirmed the previous assertions with a comment in the teacher's journal

*“Considero que he mejorado la comprensión del lenguaje escrito, oral, la parte gramatical y a la vez aprendemos sobre la cultura de otros países”.*

*“ I consider that I have improved my abilities to understand oral and written language, the grammar has also been better, and we can learn from other countries' culture at the same time”*

Excerpt 7. Mid- questionnaire. Question 4. Student 10

*“He aprendido vocabulario, habilidades para la lectura con los subtítulos, me fue fácil entender el contenido, y sobretodo aprendí el uso real del idioma y al escuchar pude enterarme también de las culturas.”*

*“ I have learnt more vocabulary, I have improved my skills to read through the close captions, It has been esasy for me to understand the content of the lessons and the most important is that I learnt by being exposed to the real language. When listening I could also understand different cultures”*

Excerpt 8. Mid- questionnaire. Question 7. Student 14.

*“The students understood the activities and were able to cope with the vocabulary in the questionnaire. They revealed some improvements in their language level. They had more problems to understand instructions during the first two modules”.*

Excerpt 9. Teachers’ journal. Module 3

Finally, learners’ assessment in language performance is illustrated in the reflective log, Figure 9. Although, it does not make explicit reference to language improvements, it included some descriptors to evaluate new vocabulary and the interpretation of the ideas retrieved from the videos.

Reflective log # 4






Criteria	 5	 4	 3	 2	 1
I could learn something new in the food and manners module.	✓				
I can mention most of the representative food of the English-speaking countries	✓				
I could understand the content of the videos	✓				
I liked the videos	✓				
I was able to participate in all the activities	✓				
I played the domino in Kubbu.	✓				
I did the online test.	✓				

Figure 9. Reflective log.

Provided by student 6.

5.3.2.3 *Multimodality impact*

As it was referenced in the theoretical framework, Kress (2003) defines multimodal literacies as the strategy that intends to support written text with audio-visual resources. The implementation of this strategy in this specific context brought authentic changes in the teaching practice and in the ways of learning. To explain those effects two sub-categories (engagement and learning opportunities) were considered.

5.3.2.3.1 *Engagement*

The different means and modes available in multimodal literacies (Nelson, 2006) had contributed to generating high levels of engagement in the participants. They attributed this to the wide variety of activities that they had to complete and to the connection of these tasks to their current lives. An evidence of this is provided by the 100% of the participants who rate this aspect with four or five points in the reflective log as it can be seen in Figure 10. (Retrieved from the matrix) and in excerpts 11, 12, and 13 that illustrate their perception of the strategies implemented during the pedagogical intervention.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	Description of the process: At the end of each module the students were given a format to grade their performance in each module by using the scale from 1 to 5												
2	Reflective log module 1				Reflective log module 2				Reflective log module 3				
3	Student	Student's perception of intercultural awareness	Student's engagement	Students' perception of the strategies	lesson's goal achievement	Student's perception of intercultural awareness	Student's engagement	Students' perception of the strategies	Lesson's goal achievement	Student's perception of intercultural awareness	Student's engagement	Students' perception of the strategies	Lesson's goal achievement
4	S1	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4
5	S2	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	3	4
6	S3	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	4
7	S4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	3	4	4	4
8	S5	4	5	5	5	4	5	3	3	3	4	5	4
9	S6	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	4
10	S7	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	3
11	S8	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4
12	S9	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	4
13	S10	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	3	5	5	5	4
14	S11	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4
15	S12	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	5
16	S13	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
17	S14	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5
18	S15	5	4	5	4	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	4
19	S16	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	5

Figure 10. Matrix results. Reflective logs

Provided by the teacher researcher.



*“Estás estrategias se pueden aplicar a muchos trabajos de otras materias.”*

*“This strategies can be used in different areas of knowledge.”*

Excerpt 11. Post- questionnaire. Provided by the student 4

*“Las estrategias son relevantes para mi vida porque en esta época ahora todo se maneja con plataformas y videos, es bueno aprender a usarlos”*

*“ I find the strategies relevant for my life because nowadays everything has to do with the use of virtual platforms and videos and it is necessary to learn how to use them”.*

Excerpt 12. Post- questionnaire. Provided by the Student 9

*“Estas estrategias son muy interesantes, se puede decir que los videos apoyan el aprendizaje y los juegos online también”*

*“ This strategies are very interesting, it can be said that the videos and the online games support the learning processes.”*

Excerpt 13. Post- questionnaire. Provided by the student 8.

Another characteristic of the use of multimodal literacies is that there is a domination of images over written text (Sewell & Denton, 2015). This aspect caused that learners were more focused on content than on language structure, allowing them to have longer periods of concentration since they did not have time to get distracted. Moreover, the constant variation of activities involved the learners into different types of interaction. To illustrate this, an annotation on the teacher’s journal and a participant’s perception of the lesson’s goal achievement are shown in excerpts 14 and 15.

*Positive aspects: “The activities allowed me to demonstrate the relevance of including cultural aspects in language teaching. The students enjoyed watching the videos, they loved the ones with the Simpsons and Mr. Been characters, and they did not find time to get dispersed.”*

Excerpt 14. Teacher’s journal. Module 2.

*“Creo que permanecemos más concentrados y focalizados, nunca hay tiempo para dispersarnos”*

*“ I think we keep focused on the activities because there is no time to get dispersed”*

Excerpt 15. Mid- questionnaire. Question 5. Student 3

#### 5.3.2.3.2 *Learning opportunities*

The learning that is generated through multimodal strategies lies in the construction of meaning that is generated through the understanding of paralinguistic elements in diverse communicative situations (Jewitt, 2008). In this study, experiences related to the use of videos and other surrounding technologies that are mainly based on images or non- verbal language have been promoted for the acquisition of knowledge related to the cultural aspects of the English- speaking countries. In this sense, it was possible to observe that all the aids used were the basis to eliminate the barriers to facilitate referential knowledge of some English-speaking cultures to students. The images, videos, and web tools used by the students fostered these learning opportunities. First of all, the participants gained some experience regarding technology, as it is shown in excerpt 16 in which a participant expresses his perception of the abilities acquired through the use of the strategies.

*“Las habilidades que he adquirido me han servido para comunicarme más fácil en idioma extranjero y hasta en mi idioma, utilizando la tecnología”*

*“The abilities that I have acquired have served as means to have a better communication not only in the target language but also in my native language by using the technology”*

Excerpt 16. Mid-questionnaire. Question 8.Student 5

In Figure 14, an illustration of the virtual interaction that the participants had with some peers from other schools is shown. The participants also had the possibility to involve their different senses, since the activities were not only focused on one aspect of the language.



Figure 11. Colaborative Padlet. Students' artifact.

Provided by the students 1, 2, and 3

Excerpts 17 and 18 show two participant's responses regarding the effectiveness of multimodal literacies in language learning.

*"Creo que aprendo más leyendo, viendo y escuchando a la vez"*

*"I think I learn better when I have to read, watch and listen at the same time"*

Excerpt 17. Mid-questionnaire. Student 14.

*"Considero que hay muchas cosas que no se entienden en textos y los videos hacen que entendamos sin necesidad de saber mucho inglés"*

*"I consider that there are many things that are difficult to understand in written texts, the videos make contents clearer without being sufficiently skilled in English"*

Excerpt 18. Mid-questionnaire. Question 5. Student 9

In conclusion, multimodal strategies have contributed to the construction of content learning since nowadays, there is a wide variety of resources available and adaptable to different language levels. Participants perceived an increase in content learning and its benefits for their overall learning process. Excerpts 19 and 20 illustrate these perceptions from the point of view of students and the teacher-researcher.

*"Creo que hemos empleado más contenidos como saber la ubicación en el mapa de algunos países, esto quiere decir que se enseña inglés junto con otras materias."*

*"I think that we have used more content-based learning, we have learnt how to locate countries in the map. It means that we have been taught English through different subjects"*

Excerpt 19. Post-questionnaire. Question 7. Student 13

*"The students had opportunities to connect different kind of contents to their current lives while enhancing relevant skills"*

Excerpt 20. Retrieved from the teachers' journal

### 5.3.3 Core category

After completing the data reduction process, the main category that frames the findings was defined as *Multimodal literacies: a vehicle to promote cross-cultural awareness*, This statement involved the three major emerging categories: cross-cultural

awareness, skills development and multimodality impact to demonstrate that in a process of a language learning, it is necessary to reflect upon self and foreign cultural aspects, since identity, traditions and ways of living are closely related to the communicative interaction between the members of a society. In the specific context in which this study was carried out, the cross- cultural awareness took place by means of the incorporation of a wide variety of authentic material (multimodal literacies) so that the learners were able to transcend the space, time, and language barriers. Besides, it was also demonstrated that multimodality is an effective strategy to be taken to the educational context, since apart from exposing the learners to real-life uses of language it also contributed to enhancing skills in diverse areas of knowledge such as the use of technology, abilities for contrasting and criticizing by using language and thought in a better-informed way.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

The analysis of the results through the inductive process provided concrete evidence of the effectiveness of the implemented strategies in the participants. This stage of the research considered the referenced theories in order to determine the relationship between those contributions and the findings. Likewise, it was concluded that the integration of the three constructs (multimodal literacies, cross- cultural awareness, and task-based approach) in this specific context allowed an extension of the existing theory. Hence, it was demonstrated that multimodal literacies in contrasting tasks contribute to enhancing the development of students' cross-cultural awareness.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter illustrates in detail the reflections that arose regarding the benefits of including multimodal literacies to promote cross-cultural enhancement, these considerations are based on experiences, findings, and theoretical contributions that were taken into account to answer the research question. Therefore, they are contrasted with previous studies in order to demonstrate the relevance of this study in the specific context in which it was developed. Furthermore, the limitations, pedagogical challenges, implications in the education field, and the ideas for further research on similar subjects are exposed.

### **6.2 Comparison of results with previous studies' results**

This study aimed at describing what happened when a group of eleventh graders with A1 English level are exposed to cross-cultural referential knowledge by means of multimodal literacies. The findings revealed that this study is relatable to previous studies in similar Colombian contexts since the students have developed abilities for connecting foreigner's behaviors to their own cultural appreciation. Rodríguez (2015) called this process "global and local cultural consciousness". There was also a tendency towards better attitudes in the participants. Misconceptions, stereotyping removal and self-identity awareness also occurred in Rodríguez (2013), Aldana (2012), Bedoya, Gordillo, Romero, and Stiglich (2015), Taylor, Ardila, Calderón, and Jiménez (2005) studies.

The present study supports the ideas of Aldana's study (2012) that found that the main limitation of her research was caused by the students' low language level because it hindered the participants' world view. For the present study, students' low proficiency

was also a challenge, but not a limitation, since the paralinguistic components provided by the videos and the images prevented this situation from occurring (Kress, 2003).

The present study has a connection with some international research as well. In this respect, researchers such as Schaeffer (2011) and Byram and Cain (1998) asserted that different dimensions of an individual are addressed when including intercultural components in the language learning, it has also occurred in this case, one of the main categories that emerged in this research was *skills development*. It describes how mental processes, language skills, and even values were fostered during the pedagogical intervention.

Regarding the impact of multimodality, this study could be compared to the studies conducted by García , García, and Hernandez (2011), Stockwell, (2010), Farías, Obilinovic, and Orrego (2007). These researchers coincide in pointing out the applicability of multimodal resources to various purposes. In this study it was found that different learning opportunities triggered from this aspect, those opportunities have to do with the technological experience that the participants gained when interacting with cultural content in virtual or online environments, the possibilities to involve different senses that support particular learning styles and the probability of accessing to different types of contents. Finally, these studies emphasize the authenticity of the contents that are presented through multimodal literacies. In this study, the approximation to real context also generates the participants' engagement because they were interacting in different environments, their interests and needs were considered to design the lessons and they found the activities varied and enjoyable.

### **6.3 Significance of the results**

The implications of this study at the school context demonstrated the relevance of incorporating and developing cross-cultural topics in the curriculum not only to allow

the learners of diverse levels of education to become more culturally knowledgeable but also to help them become more aware of their own surrounding real situation. The utilized strategies should be applicable in the educational settings since apart from conceiving the individuals as members of a society with particular traditions, customs, and sense of belonging, these strategies also place them as individuals capable of grasping and discovering the origin of foreign ways of living in order to relate those traditions to their context through the contrasting task-based methodology. Thus, the language learners would use the new knowledge to give more informed and respectful opinions and above all, avoiding the use of judgmental misconceptions or stereotypes when referring to others (Valdes, 1986) .

Another contribution of this study for the local EFL community is the incorporation of different audio-visual means as a method for promoting cross-cultural awareness. Regarding this subject, it was demonstrated that the language learning implicitly integrates cross-cultural components which are better conveyed when they are accompanied by paralinguistic elements. According to Holliday (2011), visible cultural aspects could be shown by means of verbal and written language, but there are also invisible aspects such as gestures, behaviors, worldview, moral values, etc., that require certain levels of interaction. In the case of this study, this interaction was fostered by means of the video activities that were designed for each module. It should be noted that the main impact of these multimodal strategies had to do with the recent increase of the iconic texts that use; non-verbal language combined with verbal texts in the current context of the learners.

In the Colombian teaching context, this study fills the existing gap in literature since it considers the policies that regulate foreign language teaching in the country proposed by the MEN 2006 in which the importance of the development of a national



identity to “diminish the ethnocentrism and to achieve the respect for other cultures, in local and globalized contexts” is underlined (p. 8). It was met by incorporating a wide variety of contents that promote understanding between diverse nations. Moreover, the emphasis goes beyond focusing on formal aspects of the language and also integrates other areas of knowledge for the construction of meaning in context. The contents allow the learners to become familiar with the origin, location, importance and real uses of the target language in the contemporary world.

#### **6.4 Pedagogical challenges and recommendations**

Throughout the implementation of this study, some pedagogical challenges arose. First of all, there were several constraints with the learners’ language level, specifically at the beginning of the implementation. In some cases, the language exceeded students’ specific needs and capabilities. In addition to this, in most of the stages of the intervention, the students’ low level caused delays in the accomplishment of the timeline. To overcome these difficulties, the teacher-researcher needed to modify materials found so that they met the language level students could access. The strategies that were utilized to achieve this purpose were; including simpler close captions in the videos, modeling techniques, allowing the students to use different resources, devoting some time for vocabulary input sections and homework. It is important to point out that those difficulties were diminishing as a product of the participants’ exposure to these type of activities because they were gaining confidence and got used to using the target language in their productions.

Another challenging aspect to keep in mind when bringing cross-cultural content to language learning by means of multimodal literacies is to find affordable material that helps teachers to comply with the module’s objectives and the learners to enjoy the lessons without being dispersed. This challenge was tackled by devoting long hours to

the exploration of different resources on the web, adapting and creating topic-based lessons with a sufficient amount of varied activities per module, making decisions based on the students' interests. The material design could also cause trouble because some learners might not have received the sufficient training to access to all the activities, especially, if they are required to develop some online autonomous work. In the case of this study, it was necessary to use tutorials to help learners complete some tasks. In this regard, it is evident that teachers that want to adopt this methodology need to be updated and have abilities to interact with new technologies. Another aspect that deserves attention when designing tasks by using multimodal resources is that some students might not have access to the new technologies. In this case, it is necessary to help them access to this work by using the available school's resources. Fortunately, In the context in which this project was carried out, there were several means to access to contents, each classroom is equipped with a computer, there are also specialized rooms with internet service and students are free to use this service during the break time, and teachers can also make use of these resources by requesting for them in advance.

### **6.5 Research limitations on the present study**

The implementation of the strategies proposed in this study originated different limitations for the researcher. Firstly, the time management caused trouble and some modifications in the initial timeline were needed, in fact, each session took much more than expected. One of the reasons for this delay was that students had to attend other school activities. Another reason was the students' language level, at the beginning they experienced frustration feelings and started using resources like the internet to answer the pre-questionnaires which was not allowed. It was evident that they had difficulties to accept their lack of cultural knowledge.

In regards to the data analysis process, something that definitely caused difficulties was the great amount of instruments administered per module, since the codification of these data was an exhausting task. In this sense, for future iterations of the course, it would be advisable to reduce one of the instruments since the information provided was excessively repetitive.

The research was also affected by the availability of resources in the school, on some occasions; the equipment was unavailable or damaged causing the need for modifications in the programming schedules. When using multimodal literacies in the classroom, it is also advisable to be sure that the resources are ready before any class session since written resources depend on the use of audio-visual aids; and one without the other might hinder the execution of the project.

### **6.6 Further research**

According to the evident effects of multimodality to contribute to the enhancement of secondary students' cross-cultural awareness, it is highly recommended to continue advancing in the exploration of this field, since the emerging theory of this study could be extended if new modules, thematic units, and participants of different levels are included. In relation to this, it was also observable that multimodal literacies mixed with content-based lessons could have an important impact when helping the students to strengthen their vocabulary. Even though the results revealed that students had notorious improvements in their use of vocabulary in the target language; this aspect was not covered in the present study.

Another important finding that emerged from this study is the great impact of multimodal literacies for the language teaching field. It was observed that the used strategies caused favorable impressions in the participants. They described them as relevant to their daily lives. If this topic is addressed from a deeper perspective new

studies could arise in order to associate multimodality and encouragement for autonomous learning.

### **6.7 Conclusion**

Cross-culturalism is one of the skills that are linked to L2 learning. Therefore, it should be recognized in the educational context. In this study, some secondary school students demonstrated to have very poor cross-cultural competences; at the initial stage of the process they could not explain the reasons to learn English in their context, they expressed disrespectful opinions when referring to foreigners' traditions or customs, and they were confused about their own cultural traits. To tackle this difficulty, learners were exposed to different cultures of English-speaking countries. Multimodal literacies were used in order to overcome the time and space barriers and approximate the participants to the real context in which the target language is used. During the exposure, the students developed contrastive tasks and created products that enabled them to compare visible and invisible aspects of their culture with some foreign traditions. As a result of this exposure, students removed some misconceptions and stereotypes regarding this topic from their belief system, they also became more aware of their own identity and more culturally informed to express respectful and elaborate opinions. Additionally, this study allowed demonstrating the pertinence of using multimodal literacies to promote cross-cultural interactions since all the audio-visual aids contribute to helping the participants to make meaning even in learners with Basic English level.

In brief, this study provides sufficient evidence of the benefits of using multimodality to enhance cross-cultural awareness in Colombian contexts as a way to transform the traditional teaching into a more relevant teaching practice which takes

into account contextualized concepts and strategies that are relatable to the learners' current lives.

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**Appendix A:****Cuestionario sobre cultura.**

Este cuestionario tiene como fin indagar lo que usted entiende por el concepto de Cultura y sobre sus nociones acerca de aspectos culturales de los países de habla inglesa. Responda las preguntas teniendo en cuenta lo que sabe y conoce, recuerde que la idea es saber sobre sus conocimientos previos no evaluarlos.

1. ¿Qué entiende usted por el concepto de Cultura?

---

2. ¿Sabe usted qué significa la palabra “*estereotipo*”? Procure definirla utilizando sus propias palabras.

---

---

3. ¿Cómo definiría a un inglés?

---

4. ¿Cómo definiría a un americano?

---

5. ¿Considera importante saber ciertos aspectos relacionados con la cultura de otros países, en especial, de los países de habla inglesa? Justifique su respuesta. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

6. ¿Qué conoce sobre los países de habla inglesa? (Por ejemplo, deportes, personajes famosos, lugares, artistas, etc)

---

---

---

7. ¿Ve usted canales internacionales?

Si \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ ¿Cuáles?

---

---

---

8. ¿Qué programas o series internacionales ve usualmente?

---

---

9. ¿Los programas que ve son subtítulos o doblados al español?

---

10. ¿Cree usted que a través de esos programas o series se pueden ver aspectos culturales de un país o región?

1. Si \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ ¿Por qué? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Aparte de los Estados Unidos y el Reino Unido, ¿Conoce usted otros países cuya lengua oficial sea el inglés? Escriba sus nombres

---

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12. ¿Tiene usted conocimiento sobre celebraciones típicas de países de habla inglesa? Si su respuesta es sí, enumere cuáles conoce.

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**Appendix B: Questionnaire**

I.E.D. República Dominicana Test. Instrument # 2

Needs analysis . 10th Grade

¿Qué tanto sabes de las culturas de los países de habla inglesa?

Este cuestionario tiene como propósito fundamental identificar sus conocimientos relacionados con la cultura de los países de habla inglesa. Responda a los interrogantes de manera objetiva, teniendo en cuenta su realidad. Recuerde que este cuestionario no representa calificación alguna.

How much do you know about English spoken countries culture?

1. From the following countries underline the ones in which English is the official language

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| - France       | - England       |
| - South Africa | - New Zealand   |
| - Jamaica      | - Canada        |
| - Germany      | - Cameroon      |
| - Switzerland  | - Colombia      |
| - India        | - Australia     |
| - Ireland      | - United States |

2. According the information you have received from the media how can you classify the following culture features? write **US** for American, **E** for English and **I** for Indian.

- 1.They like drinking tea at five P.M. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Single women have a special mark \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.They celebrate their independence day on 4<sup>th</sup> July\_\_\_\_\_
4. They do not eat meat \_\_\_\_\_
5. They play mainly baseball and football \_\_\_\_\_
6. They play rugby and cricket \_\_\_\_\_

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7. They are elegant and have good manners \_\_\_\_
8. They are very punctual \_\_\_\_
9. The queen chooses the Prime Minister \_\_\_\_
10. They are ruled by a president \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_
11. They celebrate Saint Patrick's Day \_\_\_\_
12. They celebrate the Teej \_\_\_\_
13. They celebrate Thanks giving day \_\_\_\_
14. They are mainly Protestant \_\_\_\_
15. They are mainly catholic \_\_\_\_
15. One of their most well-known religions is the Buddhism \_\_\_\_

Choose from the countries in the box the following characters' nationalities.

English, American, Indian, Australian
---------------------------------------

Apu \_\_\_\_\_

Crocodile hunter \_\_\_\_\_

Elizabeth Qeen \_\_\_\_\_

Abraham Lincoln \_\_\_\_\_

Nelson Mandela \_\_\_\_\_

Abert Eistein \_\_\_\_\_

Gandhi \_\_\_\_\_

Mel Gibson \_\_\_\_\_

Bart Simpson \_\_\_\_\_

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## Appendix C:

Test – Students' interests

The main purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain information to enable the analysis of the students' interests related to television preferences.

Do you like watching television?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what is your favorite TV program?

---

Please tick (✓) an answer

### How often do you watch TV?

Every day	
On weekends	
Frequently, twice or three times a week	
Never	

### Ranking

Please rank your interests in the following kinds of TV programs

(1= most interesting, 12 =least interesting)

\_\_\_ Soup operas

\_\_\_ Game shows

\_\_\_ Sports

\_\_\_ Reality show

\_\_\_ Documentaries

\_\_\_ Action series

\_\_\_ TV series

\_\_\_ Current affairs program

\_\_\_ Cartoons

\_\_\_ News

\_\_\_ Music

\_\_\_ Talk shows



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**From the following TV programs tick (✓) the ones you like the most, more than one answer is possible.**

The Simpsons	
Two and a half men	
The big band Theory	
Naruto	
Dragon Ball Z	
Glee	
Small Ville	
Doctor House	
Modern family	
Cold cases	
Backyardigans	
What not to wear	
Friends	

**From the following TV series topics, please rank (1= most interesting, 11 =least interesting)**

\_\_\_ Aliens

\_\_\_ Health care

\_\_\_ Emergencies

\_\_\_ Teenagers issues

\_\_\_ History

\_\_\_ Recipes

\_\_\_ Funny

\_\_\_ Animals

\_\_\_ New discoveries

\_\_\_ Love stories

\_\_\_ Vampires series

\_\_\_ Fashion

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## Appendix D:

Needs analysis  
Questionnaire Number 1- qualitative and quantitative results  
Opened questions – Related to culture  
República Dominicana School - 1003

The Figure 1.1 revealed the percentage of the students that provided a well-informed definition of culture.

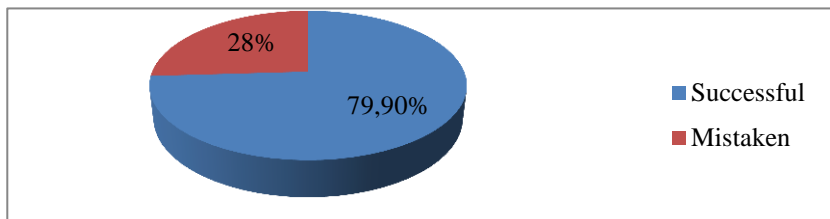


Figure 1. 1.

The Figure 1.2 is the evidence of the students' lack of awareness and hesitating ideas when defining stereotypes.

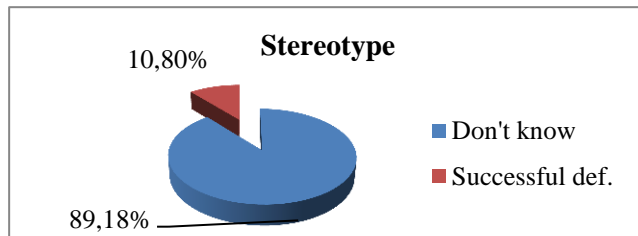


Figure 1. 2.

The Figure 1.3 revealed the difficulties that the students had when establishing commonalities and differences between British and American people.

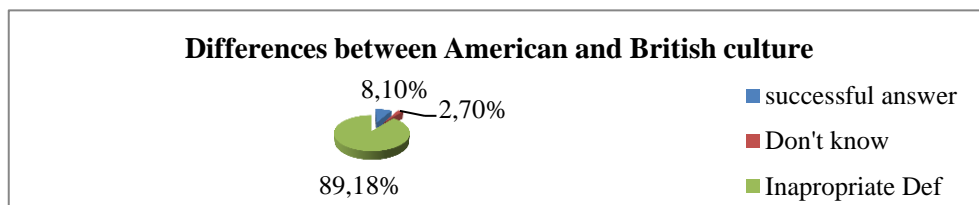


Fig 1.3

## MULTIMODALITY AND INTERCULTURALITY

In Figure 1.4 are illustrated the students' main ideas when justifying the target language learning.

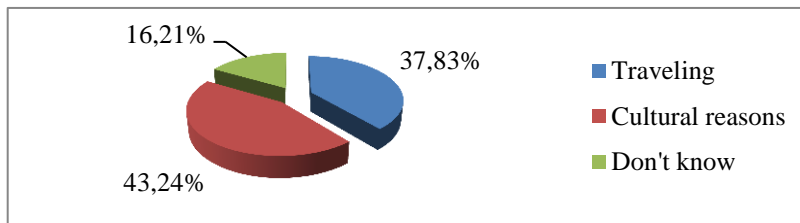


Fig 1.4

Figure 1.5 serves as means to illustrate the students' prior knowledge regarding English speaking countries culture.

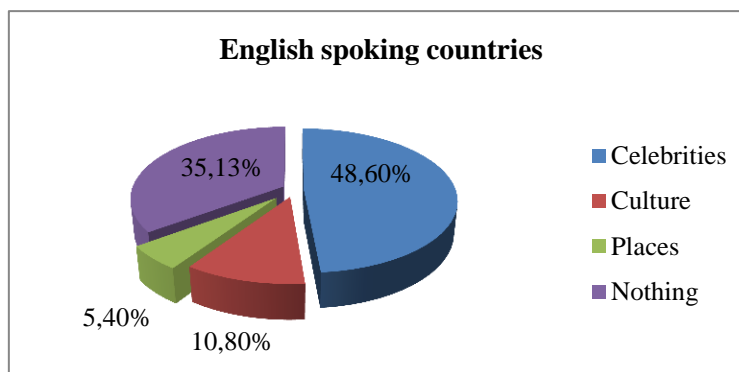


Fig 1.5

In figure 1.6 it is possible to appreciate the students' contact with the international cultures by means of the TV series.

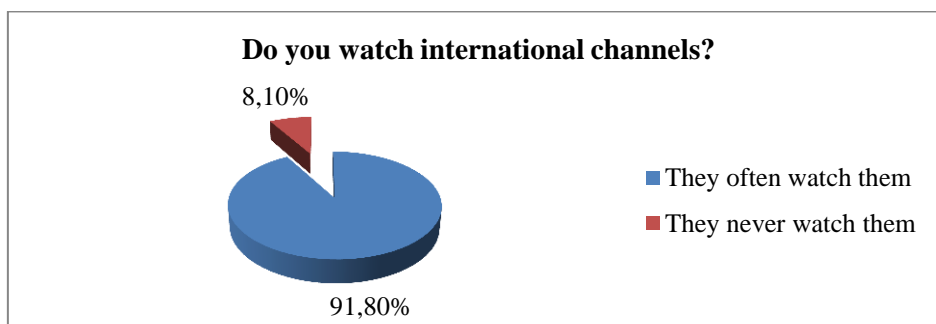


Fig 1.6

In Figure 1.7 It can be observed the students' responses regarding their preferences when watching international TV channels. This information was taken into consideration when defining the strategies to enhance their Cross-cultural awareness.

## MULTIMODALITY AND INTERCULTURALITY

TV Channels	TV Programs
Fox, TNT, Warner, Home and Health, Discovery and Cartoon Network. 91% Of responses	The Simpsons, the Big band Theory, Mr. Been, horror series, vampires series, and sports. 99% of responses
Don't know 5.4%	Don't like watching TV 0%

Fig. 1.7

Figure 1.8 illustrates the students' perceptions of the cultural aspects that are visible when they are exposed to TV series in English. The 35% of the students coincide in the ideas about customs, dances, believes, food and places are shown in TV.

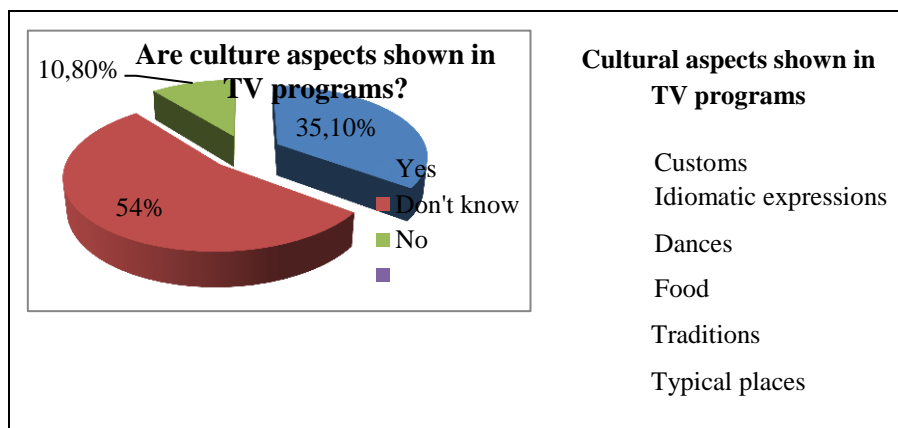


Fig. 1.8

Figure 1.9 illustrates the students' responses when they were asked to mention English speaking countries apart from USA or England. Only the 20 % of them were successful.

## MULTIMODALITY AND INTERCULTURALITY

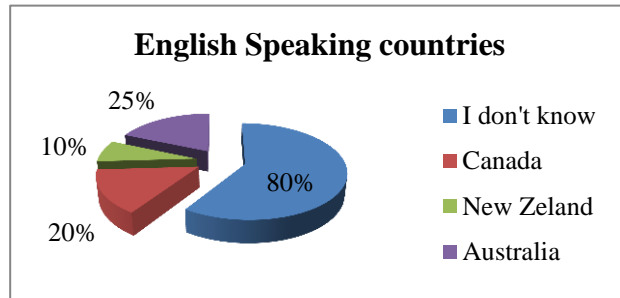


Fig. 1.9.

### Qualitative analysis

- ✓ Students' lack of cultural issues is evident
- ✓ It's worth enough to strengthen cultural and Cross-cultural awareness in the classroom.
- ✓ It is necessary to provide channels for students to expand their general knowledge
- ✓ The data obtained in the questionnaire, demonstrated the need to conduct research in the intercultural field.

Some TV series can be included in the research project

- ✓ Students are not get to using subtitles, that's why using subtitles in English would help to strengthen different skills including culture and everyday expressions.

The following graphics illustrate how the students' interests can be considered when designing instruments.

In Figure 2.1 it can be observed the types of TV series that are more appealing for the students.

## MULTIMODALITY AND INTERCULTURALITY

What kind of TV programs do you prefer?

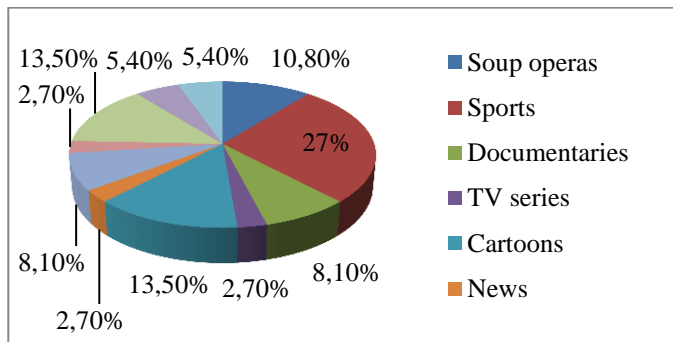


Fig. 2.1

It can be said that students enjoy a variety of topics when watching TV, especially cartoons, action series and sports, the least popular kind of TV programs is soup opera.

### **Ranking TV programs- favorite ones**

The simpsons: 97.2%

Dragon Ball Z: 24.88%

Naruto: 53.3%

Friends: 27%

The big band theory: 27%

Glee: 18.9%

Conclusions

The students's interests are opportunities to improve the teaching practice.

Television is definitely something that could become into a valuable tool to strengthen competences and skills when teaching culture.

To change student's minds and attitudes through educational systems, we have to use different techniques which result appealing for learners.

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**Needs analysis  
Test number 3**

Figure 2.2 illustrates how well the students identified important people from diverse countries in which English is spoken.

Character	Succeed Answers	Failure answers	No answer	Total
Apu	15	20	2	37
Crocodile Hunter	10	24	3	37
Mr.Been	11	24	2	37
Queen of England	28	8	1	37
Albert Einstein	4	32	1	37
Nelson Mandela	5	27	5	37
Gandhi	24	8	5	37
Mel Gibson	4	25	8	37
Abraham Lincoln	13	17	7	37
Bart Simpson	29	6	2	37

**Appendix E: C  
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Bog

otá, septiembre de 2014

**Consentimiento Informado para Participantes de Investigación**

El propósito de esta ficha de consentimiento es proveer a los participantes en esta investigación con una clara explicación de la naturaleza de la misma, así como de su rol en ella como participantes.

## MULTIMODALITY AND INTERCULTURALITY

La presente investigación es conducida por Laura Liliana Roncancio Merchán de la Universidad de la Sabana, programa Maestría en didáctica del inglés con énfasis en aprendizaje autónomo. La meta de este estudio es: demostrar la pertinencia del componente inter-cultural en el proceso para afianzar los conceptos en lengua extranjera mediante el uso de estrategias multimodales.

Si usted accede a participar en este estudio, se le pedirá responder preguntas en encuestas, entrevistas, cuestionarios y rúbricas. Lo que conversemos durante estas sesiones se grabará, en audio o video de modo que el investigador pueda transcribir después las ideas que usted haya expresado, Por otra parte se tomarán fotografías para su posterior interpretación.

La participación en este estudio es estrictamente voluntaria. La información que se recoja será confidencial y no se usará para ningún otro propósito fuera de los de esta investigación. Sus respuestas serán codificadas usando un seudónimo y por lo tanto, serán anónimas.

Si tiene alguna duda sobre este proyecto, puede hacer preguntas en cualquier momento durante su participación en él. Igualmente, puede retirarse del proyecto en cualquier momento sin que eso lo perjudique en ninguna forma. Si alguna de las preguntas durante la entrevista le parecen incómodas, tiene usted el derecho de hacérselo saber al investigador o de no responderlas.

Desde ya le agradezco su participación.

---

Acepto participar voluntariamente en esta investigación, conducida por \_\_\_\_\_ . He sido informado (a) de que la meta de este estudio es \_\_\_\_\_

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## MULTIMODALITY AND INTERCULTURALITY

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Me han indicado también que tendré que responder algunos cuestionarios y preguntas mediante técnicas de recolección de datos.

Reconozco que la información que yo provea en el curso de esta investigación es estrictamente confidencial y no será usada para ningún otro propósito fuera de los de este estudio sin mi consentimiento. He sido informado de que puedo hacer preguntas sobre el proyecto en cualquier momento y que puedo retirarme del mismo cuando así lo decida, sin que esto acarree perjuicio alguno para mi persona. De tener preguntas sobre mi participación en este estudio, puedo contactar a \_\_\_\_\_ al correo electrónico laurome726@gmail.com.

Entiendo que una copia de esta ficha de consentimiento me será entregada, y que puedo pedir información sobre los resultados de este estudio cuando éste haya concluido.

-----  
Nombre del Participante

Firma del Participante

Fecha

### **Appendix F: Consent letter (parents)**

Bogotá, septiembre de 2014

#### **Consentimiento Informado para padres de participantes de participantes de Investigación**

El propósito de esta ficha de consentimiento es proveer a los padres de los participantes en esta investigación con una clara explicación de la naturaleza de la misma, así como de su rol en ella como acudientes de los participantes.

## MULTIMODALITY AND INTERCULTURALITY

La presente investigación es conducida por **Laura Liliana Roncancio** de la **Universidad de la Sabana, programa Maestría en didáctica del inglés con énfasis en aprendizaje autónomo**. La meta de este estudio es: **demostrar la pertinencia del componente inter-cultural en el proceso para afianzar los conceptos en lengua extranjera mediante el uso de estrategias multimodales**.

Si usted accede a que su hijo /a pueda participar en este estudio, se le pedirá que le autorice a responder preguntas en encuestas, entrevistas, cuestionarios y rúbricas y a emplear grabaciones de audio o video de modo que el investigador pueda transcribir después las ideas que su hijo haya expresado, Por otra parte se tomarán fotografías para su posterior interpretación.

Se aclara que la investigación será llevada a cabo únicamente en los espacios de la institución y en ningún momento se les solicitará traer dinero o desplazarse a otros lugares para este fin.

La participación en este estudio es estrictamente voluntaria. La información que se recoja será confidencial y no se usará para ningún otro propósito fuera de los de esta investigación. Las respuestas de sus hijos serán codificadas usando un seudónimo y por lo tanto, serán anónimas.

Si tiene alguna duda sobre este proyecto, puede hacer preguntas en cualquier momento durante la participación de su hijo/a en él. Igualmente, el estudiante puede retirarse del proyecto en cualquier momento sin que eso lo perjudique en ninguna forma. Si alguna de las preguntas durante la entrevista le parecen incómodas, el estudiante tiene el derecho de hacérselo saber al investigador o de no responderlas.

Desde ya le agradecemos su aval para la participación de su hijo/a.

Acepto voluntariamente que mi hijo/a

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## MULTIMODALITY AND INTERCULTURALITY

### **Appendix G: Consent letter (School principal)**

Señora Rectora:

Edilma Torrijos

Ref: Solicitud autorización para implementar trabajo de investigación

Respetada señora:

Yo, Laura Liliana Roncancio C.C 52349247 de Bogotá, y docente de humanidades, me dispongo a realizar una solicitud formal de permiso para implementar mi trabajo de investigación “The Influence of Multimodal Literacies in Contrasting Tasks to Enhance the Students’ Intercultural Skills en la institución con el grupo 903. A continuación expongo de manera detallada los aspectos a considerar durante este proceso.

Actualmente me encuentro matriculada en la Universidad de la Sabana en el programa Maestría en didáctica del inglés con énfasis en ambientes de aprendizaje autónomo, con aval del Ministerio de Educación Nacional, para dar cumplimiento a los requerimientos de permanencia en el programa es necesario llevar a cabo una investigación en un área que determinemos conveniente, que a su vez enriquezca el ejercicio docente y aporte de manera significativa a la comunidad escolar.

Para ejecutar este proyecto es necesario contar con el consentimiento, primeramente, de las directivas de la institución, de los estudiantes y de los padres de familia, igualmente es fundamental garantizar la permanencia del docente con el grupo seleccionado durante los próximos 2 años para efectos de verificación de resultados; por otra parte se debe autorizar la toma de muestras que conduzcan hacia la consecución de los objetivos planteados; dentro de los instrumentos a emplear se incluyen grabación de videos y voces,

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transcripción de los mismos, fotografías, encuestas, cuestionarios, rubricas, entre otras estrategias de recolección de datos para la investigación cualitativa.

En cumplimiento con el protocolo ético de investigación, se aclara que la información encontrada, será empleada exclusivamente para los fines del proyecto, se mantendrá la confidencialidad de los estudiantes bajo el anonimato, los participantes podrán desistir de hacer parte del proyecto en el momento en que así lo consideren y los resultados obtenidos no afectarán las notas del proceso indicado en la malla curricular.

La investigación pretende demostrar la pertinencia del componente inter-cultural en el proceso para afianzar los conceptos en lengua extranjera mediante el uso de series de estrategias multimodales. Cabe anotar que el objeto de investigación se encuentra estrechamente ligado con el Marco Común Europeo de referencia y los estándares planteados por el Ministerio de educación Nacional.

Agradezco de antemano su colaboración y respuesta oportuna a mi solicitud.

Laura Liliana Roncancio

C.C. 52349247 de Bogotá

Aprobación : \_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix H: Questionnaire for piloting**

**Questionnaire (Pre-task)**

**República Dominicana School**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**This questionnaire intends to collect information about your intercultural knowledge about Halloween celebrations and traditions in England and in Colombia**

**What do you know about Halloween celebration in England? Check or answer**

1. Do people in England celebrate Halloween?

Yes \_\_\_\_ Not \_\_\_\_

2. Do people in England wear costumes?

Yes \_\_\_\_ Not \_\_\_\_

Other option \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do people in England play special any games in Halloween?

Yes \_\_\_\_ Not \_\_\_\_

Which? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do people in England have special food in Halloween?

Yes \_\_\_\_ Not \_\_\_\_

Which? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do people in England go to Halloween parties?

Yes \_\_\_\_ Not \_\_\_\_

Other option \_\_\_\_\_

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**Circle the answer that best answer the questions according to your context. Use some extra words to inform the reader if necessary.**

6. Do you celebrate Halloween in your country?

Yes \_\_\_\_ Not \_\_\_\_

7. Do people in your country wear costumes?

Yes \_\_\_\_ Not \_\_\_\_

Other option \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do people in your country play any games in Halloween?

Yes \_\_\_\_ Not \_\_\_\_

Which? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do people in your country have special food in Halloween?

Yes \_\_\_\_ Not \_\_\_\_

Which? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do people in your country go to Halloween parties?

Yes \_\_\_\_ Not \_\_\_\_

Other option \_\_\_\_\_





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## Appendix J: Piloting lesson plan

### Halloween worksheet

Work collaboratively in three people groups and watch the following

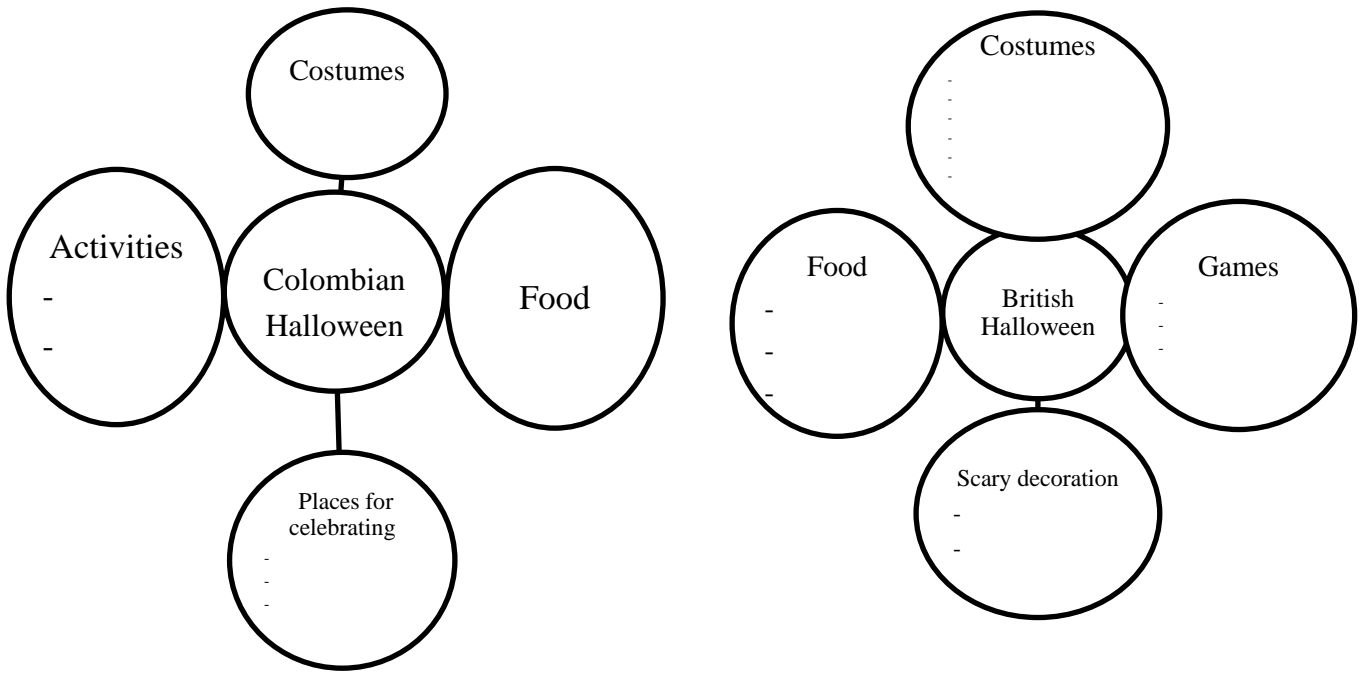
videos <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSsPTSMWoJE> and

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O6JB0duuSYc> and while watching use the words from the boxes to fill in the mind maps.

Candies	Traditional, scary, superheroes. And fairy stories	Shopping centers	School Costume shows
Halloween parties	No special games	Streets	Singing tricky – tricky Halloween

Scary Sandwiches	Pumpkin Jack o lantern	Candles	wizard	Apples on the strings	Ghost	Black cat
Trick or treaters	Mask	Scary pizza	Devil	Vampire	Orange juice	Apple bobbing

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2 . After watching the videos use the new information to fill in the Venn diagram.



1. Use the previous information to write a paragraph that makes a contrast between both cultures when celebrating Halloween.

**Appendix K: Piloting reflective log**

**Reflective log**

República Dominicana School

Reflective log (after- task)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in the following form by numbering your performance to **1 to 3** in which **1** in the **lowest** and **3** is the **highest**.

**How much I learnt?**

The goals of the lesson were clear to me \_\_\_\_\_

I enjoyed the class \_\_\_\_\_

The videos were easy to understand for me \_\_\_\_\_

The activities helped me to achieve the goals of the lesson \_\_\_\_\_

I can mention popular games that people play in Halloween in England \_\_\_\_\_

I was able to observe what people eat in England when celebrating Halloween parties \_\_\_\_\_

I used the right answers to complete the mind map with the main characteristics of Halloween English celebrations \_\_\_\_\_

I used the right answers to complete the mind map with the main characteristics of Halloween Colombian celebrations \_\_\_\_\_

I was able to find the similar and different aspects regarding both ways to celebrate Halloween by filling in the Venn diagram. \_\_\_\_\_

I was able to produce a contrasting paragraph which explains similarities and differences of both ways to celebrate Halloween. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix L: Reflective logs model**

Criteria	5	4	3	2	1
I could learn something new in the celebrations module.					
I can mention the most representative celebrations of the English speaking countries					
I was could understand the content of the videos					
I liked the videos					
I was able to participate in the collaborative activity in blogger					
I learnt how to create a blog					
I understood the content of the module.					
I achieved the objective of the module					

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Appendix M: Lesson plan

LESSON PLAN – Introductory unit – Module 1 getting to know the English spoken countries

<b>Name of teacher:</b> Laura Liliana Roncancio				
<b>Institution :</b> I.E.D. República Dominicana				
<b>Length of classes</b>		180 minutes		
<b>Clas s/grade</b>	Eleventh		<b>Room: D</b>	
<b>Number of students</b>	37		<b>Average age of Students</b>	15-19
<b>Number of years of English study</b>	11		<b>Level of students</b> <i>(Use CEFR conventions)</i>	A1
<p><b>Main Aim(s):</b> By the end of the lesson the students will be able to mention and describe general aspects from the most well-known countries in which English is the official language and use this information to express with solid ideas the importance of learning the target language in Colombian context.</p> <p><b>Subsidiary Aims:</b>                      The students will connect and expand their prior knowledge related to English language around the world by means of association strategies.                      The students will identify and mention cultural traits of foreign and local contexts through the use of multimodal resources.                      The students will observe semiotic components in communicative exchanges for a better understanding of the language.</p> <p><b>Personal aims:</b>                      To provide the students with authentic material in order to enhance their Cross-cultural awareness                      To adapt and design scaffolding material that enables the students to develop mental processes                      To adequate enjoyable learning environments by considering the students’ interests                      To encourage the learners to participate actively in their learning process</p>				
<p><b>Assumed knowledge:</b>                      The students are able to answer basic open and close ended questions in basic communicative exchanges;                      They are also able to retrieve main ideas from short texts and videos; They are acquainted with the use basic verb tenses. They are able to use short utterances to elaborate basic descriptions. Regarding their Cross-cultural awareness the learners identify the most representative English speaking</p>				

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countries, but they do not have much information about them.

### A. For CLIL based lessons

**Content:** Getting to know English spoken countries

**Communication:** The language will be used to communicate general facts form English spoken countries. Moreover, the lesson will include activities to develop the four skills with certain level of emphasis in reading and listening. Specifically, the students will have to answer questions, read and match, read and listen to video clips, and recycle the words to produce short texts. Additionally, the semiotic component will be involved to help the students to build meaning through the interpretation of gestures and body language.

**Cognition:** On the one hand, to attend learning styles and students' particular needs, this lesson will consider a set of individual activities and some collaborative work. On the other hand, to enable the learners to use higher order thinking skills and find the way to the content of the lesson in terms of organization, various techniques such as graphic organizers, diagrams and tasks based worksheets will be used. In addition, those strategies involve students' abilities to process, contrast, and use visual markers when analysing the content.


**Culture:** The students will identify some cultural facts of foreign English speakers for a further analysis of their own customs. They will be able to discover how this language relates to their own cultural reality. The use of multimodal tools enables the students to comprehend interactional patterns because not only the language form is grasped by the learners but also the cultural aspects that underlie the language (Kress, 2010).

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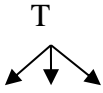
Stage	Aim	Procedure Teacher and student activity	Time and interaction
<u>Warm up</u>	The students will become familiar with the main topic of the module and activate their prior knowledge	<p>Web based quiz:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students will answer an online quiz (Kahoot- Appendix A) about cultural facts of some countries where English is the official language. They will have to use their mobile phones and internet service. They will work in groups.</li> <li>The students will receive immediate feedback and will identify wrong right answers.</li> </ul>	<p>30 minutes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">T Sss      Sss  Sss</p>
<u>Presentation</u>	To introduce the students to cultural facts of foreign countries where English is spoken.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students will observe two videos, about the how English language has been spread all over the world.</li> <li>While observing the video, they will receive a map and</li> </ul>	<p>30 minutes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">T Sss      Sss  Sss</p>



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		<p>locate the countries in it and some pictures to match with the countries (Appendix B). They have to keep the same groups for this activity.</p>	
<p><u>Main activity</u></p>	<p>To enhance the learners' awareness of cultural facts of foreign countries where English is spoken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After watching the videos the students will receive a small flag. (Appendix C)</li> <li>• They will have to look for the people with the same flag and form a group.</li> <li>• The group will receive a copy with general information of the country. They will have to read and understand the information. (Appendix D)</li> <li>• The students will receive some material to design a presentation of their corresponding country. They will be allowed to use</li> </ul>	<p>60 minutes</p> <p>S</p> <p>S  S</p>

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		<p>their tablets or mobile phones to create the presentations.</p> <p>Finally, they will have to socialize the information in front of the groups</p>	
<u>Contrasting</u>	To contrast between foreign cultures and student's identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students will observe two videos about Spanish language</li> <li>While watching the videos the students will take notes of the main differences they can identify between the two languages in a Venn diagram. (Appendix E)</li> </ul> <p>The students will classify reasons for learning English and Spanish</p>	<p>30 minutes</p> <p>T</p>  <p>SSSSSSS</p>
<u>Reflecting and closing</u>	To assess the students' progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They will apply the online test again and compare their previous and new scores.</li> <li>The students will fill in a Reflective log with the insights they gained.</li> </ul>	<p>30 minutes</p> <p>T</p> <p>SSSSSSS</p> <p>SSSSSSS</p>

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## Appendix N: Matrix sample

2	República Dominicana School			
3	Title: Multimodal Literacies to Enhance the Students' Intercultural Skills			
4	Research question: How does using multimodal literacy to implement contrasting based- tasks affect the intercultural competence of eleventh graders with A1 (CEFR) L2 English?			
5	Objective: to describe what happens to intercultural competence when eleventh graders with A1 (CEFR) English are taught by using multimodal literacy tools			
6				
7	Number	Name	Male: 9 - Female: 7	
8	Student Number	Participants		
9	S1	Mara Ferrer		
10	S2	Brayan Muñoz	Color coding	
11	S3	Paola Pinto		
12	S4	Luis Velásquez	Intercultural awareness	Skills development
13	S5	John Guerrero		Multimodal literacies effects
14	S6	Ruben Guayacán	Misconceptions	Language skills
15	S7	Laura Diaz		
16	S8	Juan Tabares		
17	S9	Sebastian Acuña		
18	S10	Angie Natalia Cortés		
19	S11	Huber Amaya		
20	S12	Esteban Barón		
21	S13	Loreine Hernández		
22	S14	Angie Suarez		
23	S15	Yadir Ballén		
24	S16	Venessa Abello		
General Data / Teacher's journal / Pre- questionnaires / Mid Questionnaire / Post questionnaire / Atifacts / Reflective				

Figure 0-1. The matrix was used to transcribe data. There were several spread sheets that included the analysis of the instruments.

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1 Description of the process: At the end of each module the students were given a format to grade their performance in each module by using the scale from 1 to 5												
2	Reflective log module 1				Reflective log module 2				Reflective log module 3			
3 Student	Student's perception of intercultural awareness	Student's engagement	Students' perception of the strategies	Lesson's goal achievement	Student's perception of intercultural awareness	Student's engagement	Students' perception of the strategies	Lesson's goal achievement	Student's perception of intercultural awareness	Student's engagement	Students' perception of the strategies	
4 S1	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	
5 S2	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	3	
6 S3	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	
7 S4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	3	4	4	
8 S5	4	5	5	5	4	5	3	3	3	4	5	
9 S6	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	
10 S7	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	
11 S8	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	
12 S9	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	
13 S10	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	3	5	5	5	
14 S11	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	
15 S12	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	
16 S13	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
17 S14	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	
18 S15	5	4	5	4	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	
19 S16	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	
23 Comments: As is shown in the fig. 1 most of the students evaluated their performances mainly with good results. The data collected provides evidence of the students' intercultural awareness.												

Figure 0-2. It is a sample of the data collected by using the reflective logs.