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Intercultural Communicative Competence:
Reflecting about the stereotypes regarding Venezuelan migrants.

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Abstract

This project report presents the development of a learning guide that intends to explore the Intercultural communicative competence as the means to make the students of tenth grade in a public school reflect on the ideas and assumptions regarding Venezuelan migrants. The activities include the reading of two biographies, one from a Colombian singer and the other from a Venezuelan singer that migrated at a certain point in their lives. While analyzing the biographies and producing their own texts, learners will reflect on the concept of migration, stereotypes and other ideas they have of one another at the same time as they learn more about each other.

Key words: Intercultural communicative competence, Interculturality, English learning guide, Venezuelan Students, Migration, Stereotypes.

Degree Requirement

This action research project is submitted as a requirement of the Bachelor of Education in Teaching Foreign Languages (English-French) at the Escuela de Idiomas, Universidad de Antioquia, in Medellin, Colombia.

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Preface

The present work emerged from my personal concern regarding the Venezuelan population in Colombia. I come from a city that has contact with the border and experiences firsthand the situation of the incoming neighbors. Additionally, I “migrated” myself from Ocaña to Medellín looking for better educational opportunities; however, my circumstances are different from those of my practicum center.

I believe teaching English nowadays should be focused on other aspects than the language itself. Culture, identity and critical thinking are factors that should have a place in our classrooms. That is way I took into account the context of San Benito School and developed this project which seeks to include the intercultural component in the teaching process. I looked for theory that guided my practice regarding the ICC approach and designed activities that might help learners reflect and think critically about the cultural diversity among them so that certain attitudes and misunderstandings are prevented.

Description of the context

The public school San Benito is located in San Benito neighborhood, which belongs to comuna 10, La Candelaria. The institution is near a marketplace in Medellín called La Minorista. This area is characterized by being a commercial zone. There are many businesses related to house furniture as well as informal vendors. The school is an enclosed building with a guard looking after the one entrance it has.

The school facility counts with different areas distributed in three floors. In the first floor, there are the basketball court, the teachers' room, the coordinator's office, the restaurant, a small store, one computer lab and the pre-school classroom. In the second and third floors, there are twelve classrooms, an integrated laboratory, another computer lab, the principal's office and bathrooms. The building features stairs and ramps to reach each floor.

Concerning the school's philosophy, it has as its mission to form citizens with strategies for life to help them face their reality. The vision states that the school intends to be in 2020 a place where people learn to reflect about themselves, to recognize and value themselves in the middle of diversity having happiness as the principal goal. This happiness is possible when each person learns to take a representative place in the universe, thanks to the good use of particular competences that the person puts at service of the context where s/he lives.

Regarding the pedagogical strategy that the institution San Benito follows, it promotes the respect and recognition of diversity in all its forms. Therefore, the school proposes the social pedagogy by Paulo Freire, the ethics of self-care and collaborative learning as the framing for its labor. According to the institution, the first concept refers to an education about teaching how to think and not only to obey; hence, learning consists in assuming new perspectives about the world to reduce inequality and transform societies. The second term relates to the constant

interplay of the social context, political ideas and the personal level in relationships. In consequence, self-care should be considered as a practice where all have equal access to giving and receiving care. Finally, collaborative work concerns not only the involvement of a group of students to fulfill a task but also recognizing each other's abilities and differences where communication, listening and paying attention to others are key to acquire knowledge.

Only one teacher is in charge of teaching the English class in high school. She graduated from Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana from the English Teaching program. She has been teaching English for 12 years in the public sector and has been working in this school for four years. She believes that in order to learn English, teachers should make the topics presented in class meaningful to students. For tenth grade, the workload is four English hours a week, two hours on Mondays, from 12 am to 2 pm, one hour on Wednesdays from 9 am to 10 am; and one on Fridays from 7 am to 8 am. In the classes, the teacher uses translation, vocabulary lists, and dialogues to teach the language. She believes that students need a grade for every assignment so they know it is valued. Moreover, in the classroom, the space is large and well illuminated, there is a large whiteboard, a TV, and internet connection.

Finally, in tenth grade, there are 20 students around fourteen and sixteen years old, five of them are Venezuelan. They are very active and willing to learn English; however, they face difficult situations. Their residences are surrounded by complicated conditions such as prostitution, drugs, domestic violence and child labor. All these conditions affect the learning and teaching process. Some students have different behaviors that hinder their education, such as lack of awareness of the norm, lack of a life project, low self-esteem and lack of affection. This is why students find in drugs, promiscuity, vandalism and acting as an adult at a younger age the only ways to find recognition.

Statement of the problem

According to a newsarticle from Latinoamerica “over one million Venezuelan immigrants are currently living in Colombian soil” (CNN Español, 2019). To receive this coming population, Colombia has been taking measures in different sectors, the educational one included. Thanks to the commitment of principals from public institutions, education secretaries and the Ministry of Education who offered free tuition, in 2018 more than thirty thousand Venezuelan students enrolled in national public institutions from preschool to eleventh grade.

Bogotá, Norte de Santander, La Guajira, Atlántico and Antioquia are the places where the larger amount of Venezuelan immigrants are situated. The latter area has around one hundred thousand Venezuelans and its capital, Medellín, has authorized thirty six schools to make the homologation process for these children and teenagers. In this city, 55% from the Venezuelan students are studying in the elementary school and 25% are in secondary education. The majority of Venezuelan learners are enrolled in the comunas La Candelaria and Robledo (Botero, 2019). The former comuna is the setting where San Benito School -my practicum center- is located.

Since the PEI from San Benito School does not specify the amount of Venezuelan students, I asked some teachers about that information. According to them, near one hundred immigrants from Venezuela are studying in the institution. In tenth grade, where I am doing my practicum, I have observed that five students come from this country. They tend to group together in the same part of the classroom apart from the rest of the learners. Additionally, I have noticed that teachers refer to them as “esos venezolanos” to explain that they are unbearable, terrible or difficult to work with. Moreover, teachers have mentioned they feel those students are behind the rest in terms of the subjects’ content (Personal Journal, August 21, 2019).

Observing the classes, it was difficult for me to know for sure if what teachers said was true, specifically in the English area. The CT insists that all the students have good vocabulary and command of different grammar structures. But during in-class participation it is not that evident. Since all learners are treated the same and they do not produce the language whether written or spoken at any moment of the classes, I do not know if there is a difference between the English level from Colombians and Venezuelans. However, in one of the sessions I taught about food, students were active and made the effort to participate in English which confirms that they have acquired at least some vocabulary. What called my attention from this is that Venezuelan learners adapted my activity including dishes and ingredients from their own country. Besides, one of them wrote in the questionnaire I handed over regarding learners interests “viva Venezuela” which I found intriguing. I did not expect patriotism to emerge in that activity (Personal Journal, September 20, 2019).

Having all of the above in mind, I am concerned about the image student body, teaching and administrative staff have from those Venezuelan learners. Furthermore, I believe there is a sort of isolation of the immigrant students since the teaching practices, content and interaction exclude them from participating in the classroom. I would like to bring relevant topics and activities where all students can “speak” and “have fun” as they stated in the questionnaire; but more importantly, an accurate approach for this particular context, that help Colombians and Venezuelans work together recognizing our differences and similarities, and share the costumes and culture traditions. To do so, I consider it is necessary to bring the teaching of Intercultural Competence to the classroom. According to Byram and Zarate (1997) (as cited in Alonso & Fernández, 2014, p. 192) this competence refers to the speakers’ ability to

interact with others, accept different perspectives and world perceptions, and be aware of difference. Therefore, we can work on modifying stereotypes and integrating students' cultures.

Finally, I consider the challenge is adjusting the conditions where this intercultural competence acquisition can occur through the English language teaching and learning. As stated by Alonso and Fernández (2014) several studies provide orientations and suggestions to develop this competence through concrete activities. They recommend guidelines related to classroom atmosphere, experiential learning, fighting against cultural prejudices and stereotypes, types of activities inside and outside the classroom and critical analysis of materials (p. 196).

Consequently, this project will take into account these suggestions to implement the intercultural approach focused on the image Colombians and Venezuelans have about each other so that students and I can reflect and raise awareness about the differences and similarities between the two cultures.

Theoretical Framework

The English Syllabus from I.E. San Benito intends to foster students' communicative and linguistic abilities in the English language teaching, so that learners can perform in a world that requires interacting with different cultures and social realities (Plan de area, p. 5). This cultural addition is important in current globalized societies where people around the world are constantly moving and being in contact with each other. In Colombia, due to Venezuelan immigration, teaching the intercultural competence becomes essential in schools to integrate all learners in the classroom, recognizing their differences and promoting equal relationships among them. In order to learn and understand better what this task implies, I looked for theory from various recognized authors in literature who have a better knowledge of this competence. Therefore, I was able to

gather the information that could guide my research project and bring this topic properly in the classroom.

Culture

According to Chlopek (2008), teaching culture not only concerns teaching the one from the target language. In EFL contexts, as that of Colombia, students “have little access to the target culture and therefore a limited ability to become culturally competent” (p. 10). The author explains that these learners’ purpose not only consists of speaking with English native speakers, but with non-native English speakers as well. That is, students can be in contact with people from all over the world that have diverse cultures (p. 10). Following this idea, understanding the concept of culture becomes necessary.

Culture can be divided into *Culture* and *culture*. Culture (with big C) is the least difficult to define. It refers to the knowledge of fine arts (literature, music, dance, painting, sculpture, theater, and film) (Chlopek, 2008, p. 11). Culture (with small c) is related to a great selection of aspects that interrelate with one another such as attitudes, assumptions, beliefs, perceptions, norms and values, social relationships, customs, celebrations, rituals, politeness conventions, patterns of interaction and discourse organization, the use of time in communication, and the use of physical space and body language. Besides, those c-culture items can be rooted deeply in the communities’ ways; therefore they can generate misunderstandings and conflict when people from outside encounter them (Chlopek, 2008, p. 11). Here, the intercultural competence can have a role in preventing this type of misconceptions.

Similarly, other authors regard culture from a static or changing point of view. Alonso and Fernández (2013) explain that some studies analyze culture as an ensemble of invariable knowledge about history, geography, and institutions from a determined community. In contrast,

others have addressed this concept in a more dynamic way. That is, they conceive it as a set of rules, values, customs, practices and beliefs that are in constant evolution (p. 186). Witte and Harden (2011) (as cited in Alonso & Fernández, 2014, p. 186) define this vision with the following “Culture is a socially produced and distributed dynamic system of rules, which are both explicit and implicit, involving attitudes, beliefs, norms and behaviors”.

Intercultural communicative competence

For many years, the teaching and learning of the culture competence in the foreign language classroom were seen as comprehending the “life and institutions of the target culture” (Corbett, 2003, p. 31). In this cases, migrant students were pressured to acquire local behaviors so that they could be considered as affiliates of said culture’s community (Corbett, 2003, p. 31). Nowadays, the landscape has changed; other perspectives to teach languages have been developed which promote different skills and abilities, for instance the intercultural communicative competence.

Authors refer to the intercultural communicative competence, or ICC, in different ways. The three most common characterizations they use are “1) the ability to develop and maintain relationships, 2) the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with minimal loss or distortion, and 3) the ability to attain compliance and obtain cooperation with others” (Fantini, 2000, p. 27). Similar to this, Alonso and Fernández (2014) state that this competence is the ability to act in a proper and flexible manner when facing behaviors and expectations from people from other cultures (p. 184).

Following these ideas, the fact that this intercultural capacity demands the interaction with other people acknowledging the differences and similarities of their background, the objectives in the EFL classroom has to be in agreement. Göbel & Helmke (2010) exemplify this idea when they suggest that these goals “can be described as cultural awareness, acceptance of cultural differences,

and interest in the specific culture of the language being taught, as well as in intercultural topics in general” (p. 1572). That is, students can talk about each other’s culture in addition to that of the target language.

Intercultural approach

An intercultural approach has as final goal the intercultural communicative competence instead of the native speaker one (Corbett, 2003, p. 31). According to this author an intercultural approach “trains learners to be diplomats, able to view different cultures from a perspective of informed understanding”. He adds that the process of language acquisition remains one of the teaching purposes but it is as important as the intercultural competence. In addition, Byram (1997b) (As cited in Corbett, 2003, p. 31) has specified in a complete manner the design of the kind of knowledge and skills needed to develop the intercultural competence. They are:

- (1) Knowledge of self and other; of how interaction occurs; of the relationship of the individual to society.
- (2) Knowing how to interpret and relate information.
- (3) Knowing how to engage with the political consequences of education; being critically aware of cultural behaviors.
- (4) Knowing how to discover cultural information.
- (5) Knowing how to be: how to relativize oneself and value the attitudes and beliefs of the other (p. 31-32).

These formulations, as Corbett (2003) refers to them, include both the target culture and learners’ own culture (p. 32). As Alonso and Fernández (2013) remark, the idea is that through the reflection of students’ individual cultures, they can understand the taught one (p. 193). The

“native speaker” model is disregarded and foreign language pupils become “intercultural speakers”. This means that they are able to communicate in the right and adequate manner with a counterpart in an intercultural encounter following the explicit and implicit norms from a determined situation in a concrete social and cultural context (Alonso and Fernández, 2013, p. 193).

To make students intercultural learners, theory suggests different fashions. Wessling (1999) (as cited in Alonso & Fernández, 2013, p. 195) recommend that students work linguistic awareness through intercultural situations, be it real or simulated, with practices such as discourse and conversation analysis. Here, learners can reflect about the communicative intention and the linguistic expressions used when speaking. Göbel & Helmke (2010) add that activities depend on students’ language level, they claim that “For more advanced learners, challenging topics such as discussion of differences in value systems and culture shock are recommended. For less advanced learners, topics might well concentrate on similarities between cultures and differences in cultural products” (p. 1573). This last suggestion will be implemented in the frame of this project since students from ninth grade in San Benito, have low English proficiency.

Critical incidents

As mentioned before, different activities can be carried out to build up the intercultural competence. When reviewing students’ perceptions about each other, they mentioned repeatedly that they could not understand certain expressions and that Venezuelan people personalities were a shock because they are al “rowdy”. Bearing this in mind, implementing activities that can raise awareness about people’s varied personality might be helpful to diffuse the awkward or problematic encounters that happened or would happen when interacting.

As stated in Apelaide and Schill (2008) critical incidents consist of “brief descriptions of situations in which a misunderstanding, problem, or conflict arises as a result of the cultural differences of the interacting parties, or a problem of cross-cultural adaptation and communication” (p.7). They provide a general context of the unexpected situation and then, students analyze and identify the cultural differences that arose for this to happen, therefore, increasing learners’ awareness.

Critical incidents can be defined as “tools for increasing our awareness and understanding of human attitudes, expectations, behaviours, and interactions” (Apelaide and Schill, 2008, p.7). Similarly, Tran, Admiraal and Saab (2019) explain that they serve to promote students skills for checking interactions from different cultural points of view (p.620). They state that they help “highlight the differences and misunderstandings from a cultural perspective, and create chances for learners to think critically and analytically about these critical situations” (p. 620). Therefore, this type of activities can be key to develop students’ communicative intercultural competence.

Since students cannot provide the incidents themselves because the communication between them and the researcher-student is barely possible, I provided an incident in the form of one activity in my learning guide. Here, students will analyze the experience of a Venezuelan immigrant that was accused unjustly of robbery. Thus, pupils will be able to reflect upon assumptions and stereotypes that people have about this population.

Critical Interculturality

Since the purpose of the present project not only relies on improving students’ communication but on a better understanding of each other by breaking stereotypes and prejudices that students’ might have on each other, it is relevant to discuss the concept of Critical

Interculturality. According to Dietz (2018) interculturality can be defined in terms of two perspectives: descriptive or prescriptive. The first one refers the “ensemble of interrelations that structure a given society in terms of culture, ethnicity, language, religious denomination, and/or nationality” (Dietz 2018, p.2). That is, it does not question the imbalances of these relationships. The second perspective “does not emphasize group composition but the kind and quality of intergroup relations within society”. Therefore, power relations are taken into account and processes of inclusion and exclusion are analyzed (Dietz 2018, p.2).

Depending on the perspective of interculturality, the understanding of the concept varies. García León and García León (2014) explain that interculturality can be relational, functional or critical. The first one refers solely to the relations with other cultures; in the case of Latin America, they have always existed. In this view, interculturality is a natural process, separated from power relations (p.58). The second option concerns accepting difference, accomplishing tolerant existence and promotes intercultural dialogue. However, it does not question the neoliberal logic or power relations (p.59). Considering the previous characteristics, these two types of understandings belong to a descriptive perspective. The last view, critical, perceives that any educative practice should make individuals aware of the deformed relationships of reality they are part of. This allows them to create a more just and equitable world where consensus goes first and unequal relations are abandoned (p. 62).

Accordingly, García León and García León (2014) advocate for a bilingual education that does not limit itself to simply perceive and accept the others. They state that it must be intercultural, that is, educate human beings to acknowledge, comprehend and respect the cultural diversity they experience (p.54). This is certainly a critical view of interculturality which is in accordance with the proposal presented in this project.

Research Question

How can the intercultural communicative competence help tenth graders in a public school to reflect critically about the stereotypes regarding Venezuelan migrants?

General Objective

To examine how the intercultural communicative competence can help tenth graders in EFL context reflect critically about the assumptions and stereotypes regarding Venezuelan migrants.

Specific Objectives

- To explore how analyzing representative people, places, traditions and personal stories can promote students' knowledge of each other's' culture.
- To evaluate how pair work and group work foster students' relationships and bring them together in a more unite class environment.
- To determine how readings, videos and images, and topics brought about to the class facilitate their speaking and writing production in a critical manner.

Action Plan

In the learning guide I designed, I will implement certain activities according to the sections of the guide they are in. Firstly, in the area "Basic Activities" I will ask four questions to activate students' knowledge. Additionally, students will work on the stereotypes they have regarding nationality and reflect on issues such as origin and migration. Learners will look at several pictures of people, they will say the nationality and occupation of each person when they look at them and read true facts about these characters. Later, they will think about their assumptions while they answer certain questions. Secondly, in the area "Understanding and Practicing Activities" pupils will expand personal information questions and read general

grammar explanations as well. Thirdly, in the section called “Applying and producing Activities” they will read a famous Colombian singer’s biography and reflect upon the idea that the way people look and where they are from influence or not our expectations of them. Then, students will listen to a second biography regarding a famous Venezuelan singer that had to leave his country. They will answer questions regarding the reasons for migrating and if they believe it is a positive process or not in their opinion. Finally, they will write their own biographies with the help of graphic organizers. Fourthly, in the area “Undertaking Activities” learners will share the biographies previously written in the form of posters and reflect on what they learned throughout the learning guide.

While developing this work, I predicted that students will need support on redacting their own stories. Therefore, I included several graphic organizers to help them determine the structure desired of their biographies. Additionally, I added expressions of opinion that might be useful when giving their answers of the questions that require to reflect. Moreover, since the situation we are currently facing with the coronavirus does not allow us to know when learners will be back at school, I designed the guide taking into account different outcomes. For instance, there is a listening activity: however, I incorporated its transcript as well, so that pupils can continue working with the guide even though they do not have access to the audio. Finally, since the final product is a poster, students might be able to take pictures and share them with their classmates easily. Before, I thought of creating a Big Book with all of the students’ texts; nonetheless, it is not possible to put together the pages when pupils are in their own homes and going out is a risk.

Development of actions

In the learning guide, I included materials that were adapted and created depending on the purposes I had in mind. I made decisions based on the ideas and type of reflection I wanted students to be able to produce while they completed the activities. Moreover, I took into account the current conditions of lockdown, since they indicate how students could work with the guide. Some might be able to listen to the audio I will upload but others will only have access to the physical copy. In this section, I will discuss the main activities of my work and my intentions behind them. The activities are a reading, a listening, and the writing of a text.

Concerning the reading, students will get familiar with the content and structure of the biography I will demand at the end of the leaning guide. I took information from several sources to form this text so that it matched the learners' English level. The structure is simple and short, it has two paragraphs and each one refers to different ideas. The reading is about the life story of a Colombian singer (Karol G). In the first paragraph, I covered facts about her personal information, such as likes and dislikes, hobbies, family, etc. In the second paragraph, I incorporated past events that were important in her life and career adding a migrating component since she traveled to USA. The main objective with this reading is to familiarize students with the organization of the text and its content as they answer comprehension questions and complete graphic organizers. I hint an intercultural idea when I ask the students if success is related to people's nationality.

In the second activity, the listening, I explore more deeply the intercultural component. Since students already know the content and the structure of the biography, I wanted to present another example in a different format in order to develop as many skills as possible. The audio narrates the biography of Danny Ocean, who is a Venezuelan singer that left his country due to

the difficult circumstances there. Thanks to this text, learners will reflect on the concept of migration, they will investigate how in the past the migration in the case of Colombians and Venezuelans was reversed: a few decades ago, Colombian people tended to move to Venezuela seeking better opportunities. Moreover, they will consider the possibility of leaving Colombia and why they would do it. I formulated these questions so that the process of migration becomes accepted as common and a possibility for each one of us. Furthermore, it would be desirable to have Colombian students' insight on how they have received Venezuelan migrants and to have the perspective of Venezuelan learners on how they have been welcomed. As a result, students might gain awareness on their behavior regarding the treatment they give and receive from each other.

Finally, in the writing part, I intend to make students write about their experiences through biographies. I expect Colombian and Venezuelan students to redact texts that contain information about themselves so that they can learn more of one another. Later, pupils will create posters with their texts and show them to their classmates. I expect Venezuelan students to include the migration component as it was presented in the biographies. Besides, I expect Colombian students to be more respectful and open to read those experiences. In both cases, I hope they learn from each other and understand better their neighbor so that misunderstandings and assumptions regarding Venezuelan and Colombians be reduced.

Findings and interpretations

Since I did not have the opportunity to apply the learning guide (LG) and I could not administer surveys, questionnaires or interviews to know students' thoughts before the lockdown, the interpretation of data consists of theorizing the results. Accordingly, I describe how certain parts of my learning guide support the selecting of the categories that are important

for answering the research question and achieving the objectives. The three main categories are: *promoting the intercultural communicative competence, readings for raising cultural awareness, writing for learning about my classmates.*

Promoting the intercultural communicative competence

The ultimate goal of the Intercultural Communicate Approach is acquiring the intercultural communicative competence. As I stated in the theoretical framework, this competence might target different characteristics but the one that exemplifies best my intentions with my project can be illustrated with Alonso and Fernández (2014) ideas. They state that the ICC is the ability to act in a proper and flexible manner when facing behaviors and expectations from people from other cultures (p. 184). Having this in mind, I consider that there is a part of my learning guide that aims at fostering this type of skill.

The area in my LG that exemplifies the present category can be found at the beginning in the “How much do I know?” section. The activity proposed contains six pictures of different people. They had to guess the occupation, mention personality characteristics and tell the nationality. The majority of people in the exercise were Venezuelan, some of them are famous and none of them did anything that affected society negatively in any way. The purpose of the exercise was to work on learners’ assumptions and stereotypes, specifically those towards Venezuelan people. Here, I selected one person, Alejandro, that did an amazing job at protecting Colombian citizens from a robbery and who the police assumed was the theft instead of the hero. I expect students’ to be honest on their thoughts; therefore, when they check the true information about Alejandro, they might realize that they made an assumption or generalization just because of the place they think the person is from and act differently if they face a situation like that again.

Reading and listening for raising cultural awareness

The objectives in English learning following the intercultural communicative approach are various. Göbel & Helmke (2010) manifest that one of the goals can be represented in cultural awareness (p. 1572). Since the majority of students expressed their liking for reggaeton, I designed activities in my learning guide that concern knowing the life of two famous singers, one from Colombia and the other from Venezuela (Karol G and Dany Ocean, respectively). With the Venezuelan artist I intend to show the migration process that happened in Colombia in the past and that is happening in Venezuela nowadays.

The initial activity consisted of reading the biography of the first aforementioned artist. The text about Karol G served to make students familiar with the structure of the text, content, and reflect upon the idea that a cultural item, such as nationality has to do with peoples' success in life. The second activity involves listening Danny Oceans' life story. Here, the Venezuelan migration conditions are evident and they serve to instigate a research task which refers to learn about the past of Colombian people moving to Venezuela to look for better opportunities. Thanks to this, I expect pupils to have a better insight of their own past and be more open to learn and understand the reasons behind the relocation of their neighbors.

Writing for learning about my classmates

Other aim that the present project intends to achieve is the fact of getting to know more about each other. This objective is related to the critical interculturality. As García León and García León (2014) explain, a bilingual education should not limit itself to simply perceive and accept the others. They state that it must be intercultural, that is, educate human beings to acknowledge, comprehend and respect the cultural diversity they experience (p.54). Therefore, learning about one another's life through the sharing of their own life stories and reading those of the others might be key for achieving this purpose.

The activity that evidences this idea is the final one, in the section “Undertaking Activities” where pupils have to share their biographies. After they read some texts they have to answer a question regarding the aspects that called their attention about the content. They might reflect on how similar or not their experiences are, no matter if they are from the same country or from Venezuela. After that, all the students have to present their life stories and I want them to write a deeper reflection on what they have learned from their classmates. Therefore, with this exercise they may gain knowledge on the cultural diversity in their own classroom.

Conclusions

Due to the lockdown that started in March 25, the conditions of my practicum changed drastically. All the schools in Colombia closed their facilities to prevent the virus to spread further. Instead of applying the unit I designed inside the classroom, decisions had to be made regarding how to keep working without leaving aside the thoroughness that this type of project entails. To respect the requirements, it was decided to create a learning guide in which I would include the activities I considered appropriate to give an answer to my research question and to achieve the objectives.

The making of a learning guide was indeed a good option to finish my practicum period. The continuation of the process was possible and it demanded a lot of work from the part of the student-researcher. Besides, it allowed me to work with the problematic I had stated and the unit I had designed even though some adaptations had to be done in order to match the written format a LG requires. I found it difficult to make decisions on the kind of content I wanted to include since not all of the students have access to the same quality of resources. I tried to make it concise enough so that the learners had what they needed in order to move forward. However, I did not want to make it too difficult or too easy.

Finally, I have to say that even though the circumstances of my practicum period were abnormal, the redaction of this paper kept the structure agreed to receive the Bachelor's degree. Thanks to this, I enriched my knowledge on concepts such as culture, the intercultural communicative competence and interculturality. Additionally, I could theorize on the categories that would emerge when implementing the learning guide which helped me confirm my desire of putting into practice what I have learned. Therefore, I would like to continue reading about similar topics so that I could bring them to my practice in the classroom.

Reflection

Due to the circumstances the lockdown produced in the educational system in Colombia, many issues arose that demand a reflection. The difference regarding the quality of education between the public and private sector was more evident; the majority of private institutions started working with the virtual modality without many constraints while the public sector struggled to offer solutions on how teachers should reach students and continue the teaching-learning process when all of the involved have to stay at home. I cannot narrate with accuracy how the private sector faced the resuming of school life; however, I can explain from my point of view what the public side, particularly San Benito School, determined in order to restart, not classes precisely, but an option to continue learning with the resources available.

Soon after the quarantine was established, the National Government sent students to a four week vacation in April. Here, the administrative staff of each institution assessed what should be done. In San Benito School, my CT kept me informed with the possibilities; however, there was uncertainty during all that month. Decisions were made at the very end and at some point I even believed the school was going to work with Microsoft Teams. This affected the time to send the guide I planned for my project because I thought I had the chance to implement it

after the vacations. Unfortunately, I made a simple guide in March to help the CT with her work with the lockdown in April since we did not know about the vacations back then. The school prepared that guide to be distributed among the tenth graders during the vacation time and established they should complete it in May 7 and 8 from 9 am to 3 pm. I hoped I could give pupils the learning guide I designed for my project two weeks later; nonetheless, the CT instructed that the next one would take place in June. Consequently, I could not deliver the LG in the appendix section.

Finally, regarding the English sessions, San Benito decided they would be carried out via a WhatsApp group. In the chat there were 18 students of the course, the school could not contact three of the learners. To this day, I do not know if they received the physical copy of the guide or not. Some of the students inside the WhatsApp group had problems working in such manner. Most of them do not have their own cellphones, thus, they could not be the entire day connected. Others did not have internet to be connected all day. Nonetheless, I had to report attendance to the School staff which I took considering if pupils showed up throughout the day. It saddens me that the National Government was not able to guarantee resources for the students in public schools to learn in better conditions. This landscape demonstrated how unprepared and lacking the State is in order to lessen the difficulties and inequalities that emerged among the population with the lockdown.

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Appendix

ENGLISH

TENTH GRADE

SAN BENITO

	<p>INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA SAN BENITO</p>
<p>SUBJECT</p>	<p>English</p>
<p>GRADE:</p>	<p>10th</p>
<p>UNIT N°</p>	<p>Learning about my classmates</p>
<p>GUIDE N°</p>	<p>What do I know about my classmates in tenth grade of San Benito School?</p>
<p>TEACHER</p>	<p>María Juliana Angarita Navarro</p>

FULL NAME: _____

GRADE: 10th

SUGGESTIONS

Hello, students. I hope you are doing well. With this guide you are going to learn a lot. Use your dictionary, translator and other materials you have to complete your work.

BASIC LEARNING RIGHTS:

BLR 2: Identifico la idea principal de un texto oral cuando tengo conocimiento previo del tema.

Valoro la lectura como un medio para adquirir información de diferentes disciplinas que amplian mi conocimiento.

BLR 1, 2: Planeo, reviso y edito mis escritos con la ayuda de mis compañeros y del profesor.

BLR 2, 2: Expreso valores de mi cultura a través de los textos que escribo.

BLR 2, 3: Opino sobre los estilos de vida de la gente de otras culturas, apoyándome en textos escritos y orales previamente estudiados.

BLR 1: Narro en forma detallada experiencias, hechos o historias de mi interés y del interés de mi audiencia.

BLR 1, 2: Respondo preguntas teniendo en cuenta a mi interlocutor y el contexto

Muestro una actitud tolerante y respetuosa cuando escucho a otros.

Identifico los valores de otras culturas y eso me permite construir mi interpretación de su identidad.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (& COMPETENCES):

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1. Recognizes words and expressions about certain cultural and social practices in readings and oral texts (Knowing).
2. Makes an oral presentation on subjects of academic interest (Doing).
3. Exchanges opinions in a round table on subjects of academic interest (Doing)
4. Values and respects the opinion of others (Being)
5. Appreciates cultural contributions of his community and other communities (Being)

A. BASIC ACTIVITIES

WHERE AM I HEADING FOR?

At the end of this unit, students will share information about their life stories through short biographies. Therefore, students will learn more about each other, particularly, about the diversity regarding their origin inside their classroom.

Al finalizar esta guía, los estudiantes compartirán información sobre su forma de vivir gracias a pequeños escritos que contarán sus propias historias. Asimismo, conocerán un poco a sus compañeros, especialmente la diversidad de origen con la cuenta su salón de clase.

POSING PROBLEM QUESTION



WHAT DO I KNOW ABOUT MY CLASSMATES IN TEN GRADE OF SAN BENITO SCHOOL?

HOW MUCH DO I KNOW?

1. Where are you from? (city and country)



2. What aspects would you mention to answer the question “who are you?” (three aspects or more)



3. What did you like to do when you were a child?



4. Do you think your nationality influences your success in life?



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*Images taken from: shorturl.at/hKQ05, shorturl.at/cfvT3, shorturl.at/dijs2, shorturl.at/qFNQU, shorturl.at/fIPR6

5. Look at the pictures of some people. Answer the questions in the chart guessing the information about the people in the images.

 <p>1)</p>	 <p>2)</p>	 <p>3)</p>
 <p>4)</p>	 <p>5)</p>	 <p>6)</p>

Taken from: <https://www.google.com/imghp?hl=en>

	Where are they from?	What do they do for a living?	What are they like? (personality)
1.			
2.			
3.			

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4.			
5.			
6.			

6. Now, read some real information about the images. Were you correct? In which aspects?

Image 1: She is Gabriela Isler, she is from Valencia Venezuela. She is a model and beauty queen.

Image 2: He is a Chilean Rappitendero.

Image 3. She is Carolina Herrera, she is from Venezuela and she is a fashion designer.

Image 4: She is Sandra, she is from Mexico and works as a housekeeper and handmaid in USA.

Image 5: He is Gustavo Cisneros, he is a Venezuelan billionaire businessman. He also has Spanish and Dominican nationality.

Image 6: He is Alejandro, he is an informal vendor. He lives in Bogotá but he is from Venezuela. He is a national hero because he defended some people from a robbery.

7. Where the characteristics you wrote in the question "What are they like?" influenced by the way the people look? Why? (you can use Spanish)

B. UNDERSTANDING AND PRACTICING ACTIVITIES

I LEARN NEW THINGS

1. Here, you have some questions you can ask to know more about someone.

a) Greetings

Hi, hello, hey, good morning, good afternoon, good evening, good night.

How are you? How you doing? What's up?

b) Name

What is your name?

What is your full name?

What is your middle name?

Do you have a nickname? What is your nickname?

What is your last name?

How do you spell your name?

c) Occupation

What do you do?

Where do you study?

Where do you work?

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d) Contact information

- How old are you?
- When were you born?
- Where are you from?
- What is your nationality?
- Where do you live?
- What is your address?
- What is your email?
- What is your telephone/phone number?

e) Family

- Whom do you live with?
- Do you have any children/kids?

- Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend?
- Are you married?
- Are you single?
- Do you have any pets?
- What is your mother / father's name?
- How many brothers and sisters do you have?

f) Hobbies

- What are your favorite activities?
- What do you like to do in your free time?
- Do you like soccer?
- What is your favorite sport?

2. Read the short explanation about the past tense.

With most verbs, the past tense is formed by adding *-ed*

<i>called</i>	<i>liked</i>	<i>wanted</i>	<i>worked</i>
---------------	--------------	---------------	---------------

But there are a lot of irregular past tense forms in English. Here are the most common irregular verbs in English, with their past tense forms.

Base form	Past tense
<i>be</i>	<i>was/were</i>
<i>begin</i>	<i>began</i>
<i>break</i>	<i>broke</i>
<i>bring</i>	<i>brought</i>
<i>buy</i>	<i>bought</i>
<i>build</i>	<i>built</i>
<i>choose</i>	<i>chose</i>
<i>come</i>	<i>came</i>
<i>cost</i>	<i>cost</i>
<i>cut</i>	<i>cut</i>
<i>do</i>	<i>did</i>
<i>draw</i>	<i>drew</i>
<i>drive</i>	<i>drove</i>
<i>eat</i>	<i>ate</i>

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feel
find
get
give
go
have
hear
hold
keep
know
leave
lead

felt
found
got
gave
went
had
heard
held
kept
knew
left
led

let
lie
lose
make
mean
meet
pay
put
run
say
sell
send
set
sit
speak
spend
stand
take
teach

let
lay
lost
made
meant
met
paid
put
ran
said
sold
sent
set
sat
spoke
spent
stood
took
taught

fell
think
understand
wear
win
write

told
thought
understood
wore
won
wrote

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We use the past tense to talk about:

- something that happened **once in the past**:

*I **met** my wife in 1983.*
*We **went** to Spain for our holidays.*
*They **got** home very late last night.*

- something that happened **several times in the past**:

*When I was a boy, I **walked** a mile to school every day.*
*We **swam** a lot while we were on holiday.*
*They always **enjoyed** visiting their friends.*

- something that was **true for some time in the past**:

*I **lived** abroad for ten years.*
*He **enjoyed** being a student.*
*She **played** a lot of tennis when she was younger.*

- we often use **expressions with ago** with the past simple:

*I met my wife **a long time ago**.*

We use **did** to make **questions** with the past simple:

***Did** she **play** tennis when she was younger?*
***Did** you **live** abroad?*
*When **did** you **meet** your wife?*
*Where **did** you **go** for your holidays?*

But questions with *who* often don't use *did*.

***Who discovered** penicillin?*
***Who wrote** Don Quixote?*

We use **didn't (did not)** to make **negatives** with the past simple:

*They **didn't go** to Spain this year.*
*We **didn't get** home until very late last night.*
*I **didn't see** you yesterday.*

Taken from: <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/past-simple>

3. Complete these sentences using the past tense.

1. Last year I (spend) my vacations in Guatapé.
2. It (be) great.

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3. I (travel) _____ around by car with two friends and we (visit) _____ lots of interesting places.
4. In the evenings we usually (go) _____ to a bar.
5. One night we even (learn) _____ some local dances.
6. We (be) _____ very lucky with the weather.
7. It (not / rain) _____ a lot.
8. But we (see) _____ some beautiful rainbows.
9. Where (spend / you) _____ your last vacations?

Taken from: <https://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar/simple-past/exercises>

4. To give opinions, we can use these expressions.

-I (really) think that ...

-I believe (that) ...

-I'm sure that ...

-In my opinion / my opinion is ...

- Personally, I ...

- What is your opinion about how Colombia is facing COVID-19?

-
- What do you think about the migrants that are leaving Colombia to go back to Venezuela because of the COVID-19? Is it a good decision?
-

I APPLY AND PRACTICE

C. APPLYING AND PRODUCING ACTIVITIES

1. Select one question from each category (a, b, c, d, e, f) about personal information in exercise 1 in the section "B.UNDERSTANDING AND PRACTICING ACTIVITIES". Answer them with your personal information.

a) Question: _____

Answer: _____

b) Question: _____

Answer: _____

c) Question: _____

Answer: _____

d) Question: _____

Answer: _____

e) Question: _____

Answer: _____

f) Question: _____

Answer: _____

READING

2. Read the following biography. Complete the graphic organizers giving each paragraph a title and writing the main idea.

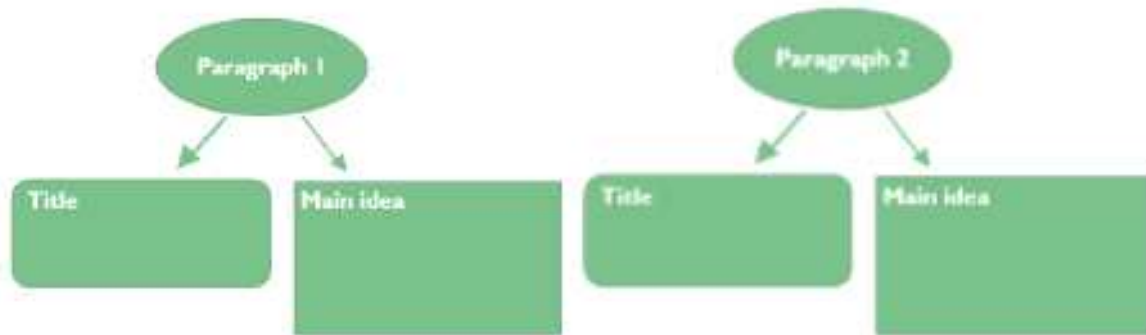
KAROL G is a Colombian singer. She mixes reggaeton, pop and dance-oriented R&B. She was born in Medellin, Colombia on February 14, 1991. Her real name is Carolina Giraldo Navarro. Karol has a sister and studied music in Universidad de Antioquia. Her father is a musician too, that is why she loves music. She practices motocross; she likes to play tennis and loves watching soccer games with her family. She adores singing and dancing. She is very **persevering**, adventurous and **cheerful**. She is opinionated and speaks about the **gender gap** in urban music. She explains that women should have more space in urban music.

During her **childhood**, her parents helped her participate in many music competitions. Karol G participated in the talent show The X Factor but she did not win. She moved to New York after she graduated to **pursue** a musical career. In 2006, she began using the **stage** name Karol G. In 2013, she collaborated with Puerto Rican singer Nicky Jam and **released** the song, "Amor De Dos". This song became very popular in Colombia and has over 100 million views on YouTube. She has 27 million followers on Instagram. Other popular songs she has are *Mi Cama*, *Pineapple* and *Tusa*. Karol G won a Latin Grammy in 2018 in the category best new artist. Recently, she is working with many urban artists.

GLOSSARY:

Persevering=tenacious, cheerful=animated, gender gap= woman and man difference, Childhood= infancy, pursue=follow, stage name= alias, released = freed.

GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS



3. Read the text again and answer the following questions.

- What is her full name?

- What does she do?

- Where is she from?

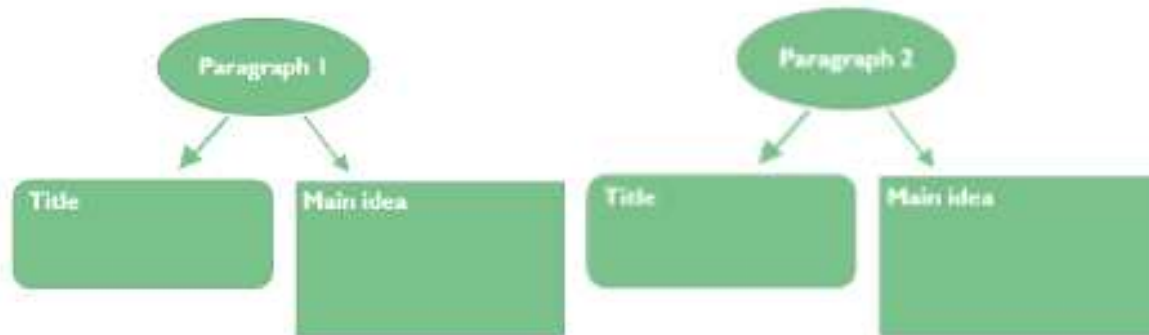
- How many brothers and sisters does she have?

- What does she like to do?

- What is she like?

- Was her nationality important to become famous or successful? Why?

GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS



3. Read the text again and answer the following questions.

- What is her full name?

- What does she do?

- Where is she from?

- How many brothers and sisters does she have?

- What does she like to do?

- What is she like?

- Was her nationality important to become famous or successful? Why?

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LISTENING

4. Before listening to Danny Ocean's biography, answer the following questions (you can use Spanish).

- What is migration for you?

- Ask your parents or search on the internet about the migration that Colombians did to Venezuela many years ago. Why did they travel?

- Are the reasons similar to those of Venezuelan people that travel to Colombia recently? Why?

5. Listen to the audio and answer these questions:

a) When was Danny Ocean born?

b) Where did he move in 2015?

c) In which countries did Danny live?

d) What is the name of his song that became a viral hit?

6. Listen again while you read the transcript. Correct your answers if necessary.

DANNY OCEAN is a singer and producer. His real name is Daniel Alejandro Morales. He was born in Caracas, Venezuela on May 5, 1992. He grew up in a Christian family. He has two sisters. He is the only child of a Venezuelan diplomat and a Venezuelan musician. Danny is **easygoing**, energetic, and **quick** to talk about his transcontinental **background** because he lived in many countries during his **childhood**. He knows English, French, Spanish and a little bit of Japanese. Danny is **chatty** and **optimistic**, but he becomes **taciturn** when he talks about his country. He loves music; he likes Coldplay, Bruno Mars, Daft Punk and Alejandro Sanz. He

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plays the piano and the guitar and he enjoys traveling a lot. He likes summing, drawing and playing **futsal**. He adores watching Games of Thrones and Vikings. (Line 8)

Danny **spent** most of his childhood in different countries because his mother is a writer. He lived in countries **such as** Japan, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Namibia. When he was 10 years old, Danny and his family went back to Caracas, where Danny spent his teen years and early adulthood. He explains that he made the decision to leave Venezuela to escape the desolate political and economic **landscape** of his country. He moved to Miami, Florida around 2015. He worked **low-paying** jobs, felt generally **lonely** and displaced, that is why he wrote the song "Me Rehuso" in 2016. He wrote it thinking of his girlfriend back in Venezuela. He uploaded the song to his YouTube channel, and while it was slow to **become popular**, the song eventually became a viral hit; people listened to it millions of times online. Recently, he returned to his native country permanently. (Line 17)

GLOSSARY:

Easygoing= relaxed, **quick**= fast, **background**= history, **childhood**=infancy, **chatty**=communicative, **taciturn**=uncommunicative, **futsal**=microfútbol, **spent**= pasó, **such as**= for example, **landscape**= panorama, **low-paying**= mal pagado, **lonely**=solitary, **become popular**= get famous

REFLECT

- Why did Danny Ocean migrate? Why? What for?

- Do you want to leave Colombia some day? Why? What for?

- If you came to Colombia looking for new opportunities, answer this questions. How did people receive you? What positive or negative experiences do you have in the country?

- If you are from Colombia, answer these questions. Do you have contact with Venezuelan migrants in your communities? How have you received them? What positive or negative experiences do you have about them?

LANGUAGE FOCUS

7. What verbs are there in the text that indicate present tense and past tense? Write them in the chart. Work in pairs.

Verbs in present tense	Verbs in past tense
Is, has...	Was, grew, ...

8. In pairs, read Danny Ocean’s biography again. Check (✓) the information that you can find in the text and write the number of the lines in which you found it.

Full name	✓ Line 1	Personality characteristics	
Nationality		Likes and dislikes	
Family		Important childhood events	
Favorite places		Plans for the future	
Romantic relationships		Birth date	

9. Complete this graphic organizer with information about yourself.

ME

Personal information

Full name:

Birthdate:

Nationality:

Family:

Hobbies:

Personality characteristics:

Four main events in your childhood/life

1.

2.

3.

4.

10. Using the information in the graphic organizer, write two paragraphs of your biography. Add more information if necessary. Look at Karol G and Danny Ocean’s biography as examples. (Minimum 100 words)

D. UNDERTAKING ACTIVITIES

I MOVE FORWARD AND GO DEEPER

1. Share your biography via our WhatsApp group. Take a picture or send the document. Select the biographies of three of your classmates and read them. Are your lives similar or not? Write the names of the biographies that called your attention and explain. Use expressions to give opinion.

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2. Do you think migration is positive or negative? Why? Use expressions of opinion.

3. Now, write your biography in a large sheet of paper to create a poster. Add images, drawings, decorations, etc. Prepare yourself to present your biography to your classmates. Formulate two questions regarding your biography at the end of your presentation to ensure your public's attention. The students who answer correctly have a positive point in participation.

Questions:

1. _____
2. _____

I UNDERTAKE PROJECTS

1. If possible, paste your posters around the classroom. Walk around and read the biographies. If not, send a video/audio of you presenting your biography, make sure the poster is visible. Ask the questions to the public.

POSING PROBLEM QUESTION SOLVE

What do I know about my classmates in tenth grade of San Benito School?

1. Answer the question with a short reflection on what we learned with this learning guide and the presentations of your classmates. You can use Spanish.

WEBGRAPHY

<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/past-simple>

<https://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar/simple-past/exercises>

<https://www.thesaurus.com/browse/stage?s=t>

<https://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/fl-giving-opinions.htm>