Review

A critical review of the role of texts in fostering Intercultural Communicative competence in the English Language classroom

Sissil Lea Heggernes

Department of Primary and Secondary Teacher Education, Oslo Metropolitan University, Pb. 4 St. Olavs Plass 0130, Oslo, Norway

ABSTRACT

This review maps and critically evaluates 36 empirical studies from English language teaching (ELT), focusing on the role of texts and activities in intercultural learning. The rationale for this review is the call for theoretically-based recommendations for English language (EL) teachers and researchers on the selection of texts and the design of activities for intercultural learning. It draws on principles from Critical Interpretive Synthesis (CIS), and the studies were gathered from systematic searches of databases, supplemented by manual searches of relevant journals. The results show that fiction texts are more widely used and more strongly rationalized for use than nonfiction texts. There is also a strong focus on dialogic and student-centred activities, and less focus on experiential teaching. It argues that an awareness of the affordances of different text types can assist teachers in mediating EL students' intercultural learning and recommends a greater variety of research and teaching approaches to identify intercultural learning processes. Furthermore, the review calls for more research on intercultural learning in primary and secondary ELT.

1. Introduction

Theoretical research has posited a strong link between reading fiction in a foreign language and developing intercultural communicative competence (ICC) (e.g. Bredella, 2000; Delanoy, 2008; Hoff, 2017; Matos, 2011). However, research is still called for to investigate how theory is translated into practice (Byram, Holmes, & Savvides, 2013; Duncan & Paran, 2018). Consequently, the focus of this review is on empirical research on reading for intercultural learning in English language teaching (ELT). Due to the increasing focus on ICC in ELT, it is pertinent to map and critically analyse empirical studies to detect what they reveal about the processes of intercultural learning through students' engagement with texts, both fictional and nonfictional. Furthermore, the review aims to discuss how the selection of texts is justified, to what extent rationales are theoretically grounded and what activities are connected to the reading of texts. The rationale of this review is the call for theoretically-based recommendations for English Language (EL) educators and researchers on the selection of texts and activities for intercultural learning (Moeller, 2018). This review draws on the principles of Critical Interpretive Synthesis (CIS) (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006; Harden & Thomas, 2010). CIS allows the inclusion of methodologically diverse studies, while being "sensitised to the processes of conventional systematic review[s]" (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006, p. 1).

One criterion for selecting ELT texts is text type, and the suitability of fiction versus nonfiction in second language teaching is a frequent debate. One argument is that nonfiction texts represent more relevant models for students' future reading and writing skills

---

(Morgan & Vandrick, 2009, p. 521). Other voices advocate the role of fiction in developing traits and skills related to ICC (Bredella, 2000; Hoff, 2017; Kramsch, 1993; Matos, 2011; Nikolajeva, 2013, 2018). In this case, it is pertinent to consider what type of texts are represented in ELT and why. Consequently, this is the focus of the first part of this article.

The second part addresses the types of activities used with the texts. Research on intercultural education advocates a focus on dialogic, experiential and student-centred approaches (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002; Deardorff, 2019; Fenner, 2001; Kohonen, Jaatinen, Kaikkonen, & Lehtovaara, 2017; Li et al., 2016; Sercu, Bandura, & Castro, 2005). These approaches are addressed in section 3, which defines relevant terminology, and outlines the principles of intercultural education. The section further discusses the affordances of different types of texts for intercultural learning, which can be defined as their potential for action, interaction and meaning-making (van Lier, 2004). In conclusion, this article argues that an awareness of the affordances of different text types can be a tool when selecting suitable texts for intercultural language learning.

2. Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this review is to map and critically analyse studies on texts, as well as teaching approaches related to these texts as a means to enhance English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) students' ICC. Its overarching aim is to learn if the available literature may illuminate the processes of intercultural learning and how these may be facilitated. With this objective in mind, the following research questions were generated:

1. What types of text are represented in EFL/ESL classroom studies concerning students' intercultural learning?
2. How is the selection of texts justified?
3. To what extent are text-based activities student-centred, experiential or dialogic?
4. To what extent do the research designs of the studies serve to illuminate the students' intercultural learning processes?

3. Conceptual framework

This section includes an overview of the principles of intercultural education, a definition of text and a discussion of the dialogic opportunities in using fiction and nonfiction texts.

3.1. Intercultural education

Definitions of intercultural competence or intercultural communicative competence typically include the attitudes, skills and knowledge required in appropriate communication "when interacting across difference" (Deardorff, 2019, p. 5). The process of developing these attitudes, skills and knowledge is understood in this review as intercultural learning (Heggernes, 2019, p. 38). Furthermore, intercultural education aims to provide learners with the competences required to "operate effectively as citizens" in diverse societies (Council of Europe, 2020, para. 2).

This review does not discuss the theoretical distinctions between overlapping, albeit non-identical, fields such as multi-, trans- and intercultural competence or the different EFL and ESL contexts. Rather, it presumes that teaching approaches from each can be mutually beneficial to developing traits related to ICC, such as curiosity, openness, knowledge, skills of mediation and perspective-taking, critical skills and empathy (e.g. Byram, 1997, 2009; Deardorff, 2006; Imahori & Lanigan, 1989).

Intercultural education may involve dialogic, experiential and student-centred approaches (e.g. Byram et al., 2002). A dialogic activity is one where students engage in a dialogue, not only with physical texts or people, but with the multiple voices represented in texts (Bakhtin, 1981). Students co-construct meaning by exploring, extending and constructively challenging one another's ideas (Alexander, 2008; Littleton & Mercer, 2013). Dialogue requires a respectful atmosphere and sincere interest in others' perspectives, something which can foster ICC (Byram et al., 2002; Delanoy, 2008; Matos, 2011; Vrikki, Wheatley, Howe, Hennessy, & Mercer, 2019).

Experiential activities allow students to draw on their own experiences (Kohonen et al., 2017; Kolb, 1984), for example through kinaesthetic experiences, such as drama and game-like activities. Further, this activity type stresses learning through textual, real-life or virtual meetings with others (Sercu et al., 2005). However, meeting other cultures is no guarantee for ICC development, but the ensuing reflection can lead to learning (Kohonen et al., 2017). Advocates of critical pedagogy highlight the transformative potential of reflecting on "lived experience" through a critical but also empathic lens, which may lead to intercultural learning (Arizpe, Bagelman, Devlin, Farrell, & McAdam, 2014, p. 315). Finally, student-centred activities aim to transform students from passive recipients of knowledge to active constructors of their own and others' knowledge (Kohonen et al., 2017). Both dialogic and experiential activities meet this criterion.

3.2. Text

This study employed an open definition of *text* as a semiotic entity which carries meaning, open to interpretation. Hence, studies relating to printed texts, digital texts and visual texts, such as film and images, were included. Texts communicate through a range of modes, for example verbal text, pictures and sound. When these are combined, texts are called multimodal (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). The modes, and by extension texts, have differing opportunities and constraints for meaning-making and interaction, also known as affordances (van Lier, 2004), which may vary in differing cultural and social contexts (Kress, 2010).

ICC consists of both cognitive and affective facets. Research from different fields, such as experimental psychology, neuroscience,

linguistics and literature, indicates that fiction plays an important role in stimulating readers' cognitive and affective faculties. For example, based on longitudinal data from 45,160 students reading different types of texts, Jerrim, Lopez-Agudo and Marcenaro-Gutierrez (2020) found that the students' literacy skills increased more by frequently reading challenging fiction than any other type of text, including nonfiction. Studies from neuroscience and experimental psychology have also shown that areas of the brain related to empathy are stimulated by reading literature, something which may reduce prejudice (Berns, Blaine, Prietula, & Pye, 2013; Kidd & Castano, 2013; Vezzali, Stathi, Giovannini, Capozza, & Trifiletti, 2015). These findings support the studies from literature and language learning, positing the role of fiction in fostering ICC (e.g. Bredella, 2000; Hoff, 2017; Matos, 2011; Nikolajeva, 2013). Fiction can serve as a "means of self-affirmation" by mirroring readers' cultural perspectives (Bishop, 1990, p. ix). Moreover, exploring one's own cultural perspectives through literature can enable readers to relate to those of others' (Matos, 2011), as the mind is "tricked" into seeing the world through the eyes of the protagonist. This "enables readers to live other lives – by proxy" (Kramsch, 1995, p. 85), fostering empathy and perspective-taking skills (Berns et al., 2013; Nikolajeva, 2013; Vezzali et al., 2015). As a multitude of perspectives may be represented in a work of fiction, these texts offer "opportunities for […] dialogic negotiation of meaning" (Kramsch, 1993, p. 131).

Another point for consideration is the combination of modes in texts. Eitel and Scheiter (2015, p. 153) hold that learning is more effective through texts that include both pictures and verbal text. One explanation is related to the Picture Superiority Effect (Hockley & Bancroft, 2011), which stipulates that the brain processes pictures more rapidly than verbal text. Whereas verbal text leaves a semantic imprint on the brain, pictures leave both a verbal and a semantic imprint (Hockley & Bancroft, 2011), indicating that they have other affordances than texts relying on one mode alone. In picturebooks, for example, pictures and text can overlap, expand or even contradict one another (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006). The picture-text interaction provides both a cognitive and an aesthetic experience, and multiple opportunities for meaning-making and interaction. However, this work necessitates the ability to see other perspectives and critically engage with the text (see, for example, Kramsch, 2011).

With respect to nonfiction texts, their affordances can be linked to the conveyance of clear and thematically relevant information. They are considered to be univocal and convey meaning rather than generating meaning dialogically (Lotman, 1988). Iser (1978) concurred that there are fewer ways of interpreting a factual text than a fictional one, leaving fewer possibilities for dialogic interaction. Nevertheless, considering the differing affordances of texts and modes presented in this section, engagement with a range of fiction and nonfiction texts, media and modes may facilitate students' dialogue with multiple perspectives. Furthermore, personal, social and cultural factors may determine engagement with text types (Aamotsbakken & Knudsen, 2008). For example, there are different preferences for accessing information, through physical newspapers, online or orally. This, too, should be taken into account when selecting texts for intercultural education for the inclusion of all learners.

4. Methodology

This review scrutinized peer-reviewed articles reporting on empirical research on classroom practice from English-language journals. The selected articles examined the development of EFL/ESL students' ICC upon using text as a stimulus.

4.1. Critical Interpretive Synthesis

This review corresponds with CIS in that "the aim is to develop a *synthesizing argument* [emphasis added]" from the sampled qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods studies (Harden & Thomas, 2010, p. 755). CIS is an approach rather than a rigid procedure, but shares some traits with systematic reviews (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006). CIS can start out with systematic searches, but other relevant studies may later be added. Some assessment of the quality of the studies is normally included, but relevance to the synthesizing argument is prioritized over scoping the field for all relevant studies (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006). Initial research questions may also develop as a result of the review process, as opposed to conventional systematic reviews, where research questions should be clearly defined in advance (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006).

Systematic reviews also utilize integrative constructs derived from theory to frame the analysis to "minimize […] any interpretation on the part of the reviewer" (Harden & Thomas, 2010, p. 749). This review used an integrative approach to summarize, compare and contrast the types of texts and activities represented in the studies.

Unlike systematic reviews, CIS allows the researcher to interpret how salient aspects of the studies under review can illustrate the synthesizing argument, consisting of synthetic constructs and their relations (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006). Synthetic constructs are developed as a result of the way the literature is constructed: for example, by questioning how a phenomenon under research is conceptualized and constructed (Harden & Thomas, 2010), rather than as a criticism of approaches. This review took a critical interpretive approach to question how the rationale for the selection of texts is or is not "conceptualized and constructed [and] develop [ed] [the] argument' of the review" (Harden & Thomas, 2010, p. 752). Finally, the review aimed to "map out and categorize" studies to detect present research gaps that future research can fill (Grant & Booth, 2009, p. 94).

The Council of Europe's work informs the development of curricula across Europe. Their *Guide for the Development and Implementation of Curricula for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education* states that students require awareness of a diversity of text types (Beacco et al., 2016, pp. 59–60). Consequently, an awareness of the affordances of text types may aid the selection of texts for intercultural learning and form a part of a rationale. Rationales matter, as they specify in what way certain "texts and tasks would be suitable to achieve a particular purpose" (Schrijvers, Janssen, Fialho, & Rijlaarsdam, 2019, p. 19). Information about the affordances of text types and the rationale for selection can accordingly assist both teachers and researchers in designing studies and activities that foster intercultural learning. Consequently, the two synthetic constructs (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006) a*ffordance* and *rationale* were

generated to guide the analysis of this review.

4.2. Data collection, search and selection

Systematic database searches were combined with manual searches of two reputable journals: *Language and Intercultural Communication* (LAIC) and *Language, Culture and Curriculum* (LCC). These two journals were chosen because they hold the highest ranking in linguistics (Journal Impact Factor, 2016) among journals focusing on both language and intercultural learning, to ensure the scientific and academic quality of the journals.

A search string of keywords was constructed based on the thesaurus of ERIC, a comprehensive database of education research, SocINDEX, Scopus and Oria. SocINDEX is the authoritative bibliographic database for sociology research and was chosen due to the interdisciplinary nature of ICC. The searches in ERIC were complemented by searches in SocINDEX, Scopus and Oria. As neither of these searches produced new results beyond the ones retrieved in ERIC, they are left out of the overview in Table 3.

The search consisted of three constructs and their synonyms (see Table 1). The searches aimed to identify peer-reviewed articles published prior to August 2020, at the intersection of the three core elements of the review:

1. Fostering ICC
2. Working with different types of texts
3. EFL/ESL teaching

The search also focused on capturing teaching approaches from ELT which might foster ICC. Furthermore, general terms and frequently used text types in teaching were included.

The search results were checked against the selection criteria revealed in Table 2.

A systematic search of the ERIC database yielded 898 results, of which 200 were screened. Details about this search and manual searches are provided in Table 3.

In the first stage, the titles and abstracts of the first 100 results from the search in ERIC were screened. Following a close reading using the criteria featured in Table 2, 16 of these articles were included in the review and analysed.

In the second stage, 14 volumes, dated from 2007 to August 2020, from the journals LAIC and LCC were scanned. First, the journals' tables of contents were scanned to identify titles referring to intercultural competence and EFL/ESL. Second, the abstracts of potentially relevant studies were read, which led to the inclusion of 9 articles from LAIC and 5 from LCC. Third, the selected articles were read carefully and checked against the selection criteria.

In the third stage, the same procedure was repeated with the next 100 results from the search in ERIC, leading to the inclusion of 6 more articles. CIS allows the use of "the principles of theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation" guiding qualitative research (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006, p. 3). As the analysis of the second group of 100 articles corroborated the analysis results from stages one and two (16 articles from the first screening of the database results, in addition to the 9 articles from LAIC and the 5 from LCC), it was decided that the saturation point had been reached at 36 articles (Grant & Booth, 2009). The inclusion of representative studies was prioritized over the inclusion of all relevant literature, providing a sampling frame which allowed the researcher to work with a manageable sample (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006). The results are accounted for and the data from these 36 articles is discussed in sections 5 and 6 (see Appendix 1 for an overview of the articles).

4.3. Data analysis

In alignment with a critical interpretive approach, the analysis was an ongoing process (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006). This review started by reviewing the text types and main findings of the studies on the development of EFL students' ICC. The striking difference in rationale for the selection of texts led to a revision of the second research question and the development of rationale and affordance as synthetic constructs to guide the analysis, and the consideration of how texts were utilized led to the inclusion of the third research question.

Feature maps (Hart, 2001) were used to record the aims, theoretical frameworks, methods, results and texts used in the studies. In the analysis, several detailed rubrics were created to analyse the types of texts described (fiction/nonfiction), the authors' rationales for their choice of text and the types of activities. In alignment with intercultural language teaching theory (Byram et al., 2002;

Table 1
Search string.

Constructs	Concepts
#1 Intercultural and competence	((intercultural OR 'inter-cultural' OR transcultural OR 'trans-cultural' OR crosscultural OR 'cross-cultural' OR multicultural OR 'multi-cultural' OR cultural) AND (competence* OR awareness OR skill* OR communication OR training OR literac* OR education OR program*))
#2 Text	(literature OR fiction OR nonfiction OR 'non fiction' OR 'non-fiction' OR stories OR story OR novel* OR article* OR 'fairy tale*' OR (('multi-modal' OR 'multi modal' OR multimodal) AND (text*)) OR 'picture book*' OR picturebook* OR film* OR movie* OR video)
#3 EFL/ESL teaching	'English as a second language' OR 'English as a foreign language' OR esl OR efl OR eal
Search	#1 AND #2 AND #3

Table 2

Selection criteria.

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria	Rationale
Peer-reviewed studies	Editorials, duplicate texts, chapters in edited volumes, conference proceedings	Ensure scientific quality Accessibility
English language	Other languages	Published for an international audience
Empirical studies	Theoretical/conceptual studies, recommendations for classroom activities	Contribution to the research and practice field
EFL/ESL context	Other contexts (e.g. general education)	Relevance to the article's guiding questions
Texts used as stimuli to foster ICC	**Other foci (e.g. developing linguistic skills, teachers'/ students' perceptions of ICC)**	**Relevance to the focus on the affordances of fiction/ nonfiction texts to foster ICC**

Table 3

Search results from ERIC, LAIC and LCC.

	Results	Potentially relevant	Included in the review
Screening of the first 100 results from ERIC	100	29	16
LAIC	348	17	9
LCC	256	11	5
Screening of the next 100 results from ERIC	100	10	6
Total	804	67	36

Deardorff, 2019; Fenner, 2001; Kohonen et al., 2017; Li et al., 2016; Sercu et al., 2005), the integrative constructs *dialogic*, *experiential* and *student-centred* served as the analytical tools for the activities in the present review study.

5. Results

This section presents an overview of the theoretical frameworks, education levels, research designs and methods of the studies reviewed, in addition to the types of texts, rationales and activities represented. While all the studies form a part of the quantitative analysis, those illustrating salient points elucidating the aims of the review are emphasized (Harden & Thomas, 2010).

5.1. Theoretical framework and educational level

The first step in the literature analysis was to consider the fields and theoretical frameworks of the studies. The results of this preliminary analysis are shown in Appendix 2, which shows that 26 articles draw on intercultural theory, four on multicultural theory, four on critical literacy or pedagogy and two articles employ transcultural theory.

18 out of the 26 articles that fall within the field of interculturalism rely on Byram's (1997) model explicitly or implicitly. Thus, these articles all form part of a discourse drawing on Byram's (1997) theory of ICC. Another common denominator is the focus on dialogic approaches to develop ICC, as in Forsman (2010) and Penz (2001). Dialogic approaches are also highly relevant to reader-response theory, on which Arizpe et al. (2014), DeStigter, Aranda, & Eddy, 1997, Muthusamy, Marimuthu, and Sabapthy (2011), Lee and Gilles (2012) and Shin and Riazantseva (2015) rely. Additionally, Hayik's (2011) article on critical literacy draws on readers' responses to texts. All the articles show results from intercultural education through student-centred, socio-constructivist and dialogic approaches, though their focus, theory and methods differ. The majority of the studies (21) are from higher education. Primary and secondary schools are represented by four and 11 studies, respectively (see Appendix 3).

5.2. Research design and methods

Only one quantitative study is found in the sample (Muthusamy et al., 2011), whereas Akiyama (2017), Hellerstein-Yehezkel (2017), Juan-Garau and Jacob (2015), Prieto-Arranz, Juan-Garau, and Jacobs (2013), Liaw and Bunn-Le Master (2010), Shie (2013) and Tseng (2017) use mixed methods. The remaining 29 studies are qualitative. Whereas some state a specific approach, such as case study (Hellerstein-Yehezkel, 2017; Shin & Riazantseva, 2015; Stewart & Santiago, 2006; Truong & Tran, 2014), action research (Forsman, 2010; Hellerstein-Yehezkel, 2017; Moya, Ortiz, & Díaz, 2016; Porto, 2014) or both, most studies leave their approach undefined.

The vast majority of the studies collected documents, mostly verbal texts in the form of logbooks, summaries, essays and online forum entries, but also visual representations (Arizpe et al., 2014; Hayik, 2011; Porto, 2013; Porto & Zembylas, 2020). One study used only interviews to collect data (Yang & Fleming, 2013), but the general tendency involves a combination of data collection methods. Other methods of data collection are semi-structured interviews (16 studies), structured interviews (Oakley, Pegrum, Xiong, Lim, & Yan, 2018), video-recorded classroom observations (Akpinar & Öztürk, 2009; Truong & Tran, 2014), classroom observation (5[1]) and

---

[1] Most of the studies include classroom observations, but only 5 studies specify this as one of their data collection methods.

questionnaires (5). Three studies include some form of pre- and post-test, -interview or -survey (Akiyama, 2017; Lee & Gilles, 2012; Muthusamy et al., 2011). As for analysis, varieties of qualitative analysis to search for themes are the most frequent (e.g. Dasli, 2012; Forsman, 2010; Moya, Ortiz, & Díaz, 2016; Porto, 2014; Ruiz-Cecilia, 2012; Shin & Riazantseva, 2015; Su, 2011; Truong & Tran, 2014). However, the theoretical approach varies (e.g. grounded theory and phenomenography) and is not always specified. There are also examples of discourse analysis (Akiyama, 2017), visual discourse analysis (Hayik, 2011), content analysis (7), assessment according to specific standards (Akpinar & Öztürk, 2009; Zoreda & Vivaldo-Lima, 2008) and statistical analysis (Hellerstein-Yehezkel, 2017; Muthusamy, Marimuthu, & Sabapathy, 2011; Tseng, 2017). Other studies specify analytic tools, such as the Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes taxonomy (Moya et al., 2016) and Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (Liaw & Bunn-Le Master, 2010). However, there are few common denominators in this regard, making comparison based on analytic approach difficult. Additionally, some studies include very brief descriptions of their data collection or analysis methods. These were nevertheless included due to their relevance to the research questions of the review (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006).

5.3. Text types and rationales

Most of the articles describe the type of text that was studied. However, the extent to which the text type and related activities are mentioned varies. Appendix 3 provides an overview of the studies on fiction and nonfiction texts, respectively. Only one study does not define the type of texts the students read (Hellerstein-Yehezkel, 2017). All but two studies involving fiction provide a rationale for their choice of text, these exceptions being Forsman (2010) and Tseng (2017). This contrasts with 80% of the studies on the use of nonfiction texts that do not comment on the choice of text (see Table 4). The cultural content of the texts is the most frequently mentioned reason for choosing factual texts (Dasli, 2012; Liaw & Bunn-Le Master, 2010; Penz, 2001), though another common reason is developing critical literacy (Morgan & Vandrick, 2009).

The studies related to fiction present a rationale for text selection in the following manner: The majority of these articles first introduce the text type (e.g. fairy tales, picturebooks, films or short stories) rather thoroughly. Secondly, they present theoretically founded rationales for how exploring the particular text type, or fiction in general, is conducive to skill development, such as writing skills (Akpinar & Öztürk, 2009; Stewart, 2015), in addition to fostering ICC, multicultural awareness and critical literacy (Arizpe et al., 2014; Hayik, 2011; Morgan & Vandrick, 2009; Muthusamy et al., 2011; Porto, 2013; Ruiz-Cecilia, 2012; Stewart, 2015; Truong & Tran, 2014; Zoreda & Vivaldo-Lima, 2008).

Reader-response approaches are also prevalent in several of the studies with the most thorough theoretically founded rationale for their choice of text (Arizpe et al., 2014; Lee & Gilles, 2012; Muthusamy et al., 2011; Porto, 2013; Shin & Riazantseva, 2015). The dialogue between reader and text is additionally supported in the case of multimodal texts through pictures and sound (Chao, 2013; Yang & Fleming, 2013). Both Arizpe et al. (2014) and Hayik (2011) viewed the potential of visual texts and approaches to foster students' intercultural or critical literacy. Drawing on a reader-response methodology, they exposed their students to cognitively, emotionally or visually challenging picturebooks, focusing on intercultural encounters.

A third reason, to some extent also apparent in the studies on nonfiction, is that texts are considered culturally relevant. Culturally relevant texts can serve either to increase the ability to see others' perspectives or explore one's own cultural identities (Bishop, 1990; Gopalakrishnan, 2011). Both aspects are central to intercultural education, which highlights awareness of one's own cultural perspectives to understand those of others (e.g. Byram, 1997). This awareness might influence the selection of texts for intercultural learning activities. Recognizing one's own cultures in texts can increase both students' motivation and appreciation of their own cultural background (Gopalakrishnan, 2011). In addition, it can enhance their overall cultural understanding (Muthusamy et al., 2011; Oakley et al., 2018). Leaving out discussions of students' motivation, Muthusamy et al. (2011) still showed significant results from using a reader-response approach related to a story rooted in the students' local culture. In Oakley et al. (2018), students rewrote traditional tales to mirror modern day life, which helped them learn about their own cultures and relate to that of past generations. Stewart and Santiago (2006) also deliberately chose a story to which their bilingual students could relate. Films were additional media used to help students "engage […] with the 'other' culture' and become 'aware […] of their own cultural biases' (Truong & Tran, 2014, p. 208), in addition to focusing on authentic linguistic input, motivation and stimulated discussion (Yang & Fleming, 2013). Arizpe et al. (2014) relied on Freire's *generative theme*, defined as a theme that reflects students' own experiences to support the development of intercultural awareness, similar to Hayik (2011) and Stewart (2015). Porto and Zembylas (2020), meanwhile, focused on texts that challenge students and stimulate engagement with other perspectives. Porto and Zembylas (2020) also advocated a pedagogy of discomfort to foster "action-oriented empathy and solidarity" through students' artistic responses to texts from other contexts (p. 368).

5.4. Type of activities

There are great differences in what the reports of activities reveal about the processes of intercultural learning. Whereas descriptions of classroom procedures are detailed in some studies, others do not include this type of information.

5.4.1. Dialogic and student-centred activities

Discussion, potentially a dialogic and student-centred activity, is the most frequently reported activity, featured in 25 studies. However, few of them report details or use methods that show the nature of the discussions. One exception is Liaw and Bunn-Le Master (2010), who employed tools to explore the linguistic features of the discourse, patterns and types of interaction, such as linguistic interaction patterns analysis and word frequency software. In this way, the researchers demonstrated how intercultural learning transpired (2010, p. 21).

Table 4
Text type and presence of a rationale for selection of texts.

Text type	Number of studies	Rationale for text selection
Fiction	17	17
Nonfiction	11	2
Both	5	3
Not mentioned	1	0
Total	**34**[a]	**22**

[a] Juan-Garau and Jacob (2015) and Prieto-Arranz, Juan-Garau, and Jacob (2013) reported results from the same study and are thus counted as one study, as are Porto (2014) and Porto (2019). For this reason, the total number of studies in this table is 34, rather than 36 (the total number of studies in the review).

All the studies report activities which can be categorized as student-centred, except Dasli (2012), where students were not given the means to personally relate to the course, which largely involved the transmission of "fact-based knowledge" (p. 186). Su (2011) studied the effect of the cultural portfolio. She described how students take charge of their own learning and seek knowledge by consulting different nonfiction resources, such as online sources and undertaking interviews, to test their hypotheses about other cultures, all while supported by a teacher who is careful not to impose her views on the students. This student-centred approach granted agency to the students and helped them move from ethnocentric views to a greater understanding of diversity within their own and others' cultures. Su (2011) might then exemplify how the approaches used to foster ICC matter more than text type.

5.4.2. Experiential and student-centred activities

Approximately half of the studies describe activities that allow students to draw on or create experiences, which potentially allows the students themselves to construct knowledge (Kohonen et al., 2017). An open and curious attitude to both one's own and others' cultures is key to fostering ICC (Byram, 1997). Accordingly, it is recommended that ICC modules start with learners' explorations of their own identities and cultural backgrounds (e.g. Byram et al., 2002). Based on the findings of the present review, this is an underused strategy. Shin and Riazantseva (2015), however, explored how readers' multiple identities influence their interpretations of a text. Furthermore, both Stewart (2015) and Oakley et al. (2018) showed how students express their voices by using their own experiences to draw connections to a culturally relevant text. This educated the students and the teacher alike. The next step could be reflecting on meetings with other cultures: for example, by using the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (Porto, 2016, 2019; Porto & Byram, 2015) or the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (Lindner & Méndez Garcia, 2014; Porto, 2019), which highlight the students' own experiences.

The latter are examples of experiential activities. Meetings with texts or people combined with dialogic or critical approaches enhance the opportunities for fostering ICC (Byram et al., 2013). Hayik (2011) and Hellerstein-Yehezkel (2017) described projects where Israeli and Palestinian students discussed literary texts. These dialogues highlighted their personal experiences, a student-centred approach that led to increased intercultural awareness. Similarly, Arizpe et al. (2014) argued for drawing on students' experiences in dialogue with texts, in particular visual texts, in the critical pedagogy context.

Hellerstein-Yehezkel (2017) developed a tool for assessing reading and intercultural development in tandem, which is reminiscent of Matos's (2011, p. 12) claim of connections between the dialogic reading process and intercultural learning. Other studies report on collaborations between students from different cultures, discussing and responding to literature and meeting physically, as described in Forsman (2010) and DeStigter, Aranda, & Eddy, 1997, or virtually (Porto, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2019; Akiyama, 2017; Juan-Garau & Jacob, 2015; Lee & Gilles, 2012; Liaw & Bunn-Le Master, 2010; Lindner & Méndez Garcia, 2014; Oakley et al., 2018; Porto & Byram, 2015; Prieto-Arranz et al., 2013). According to Boye and Byram (2018), role-play and drama are classical approaches to further students' ICC. However, drama activities, which can be defined as both student-centred and experiential, are underrepresented, with only three studies (Akpinar & Öztürk, 2009; Truong & Tran, 2014; Zoreda & Vivaldo-Lima, 2008) leaving the kinaesthetic potential largely unexplored. In summary, these studies featured teachers aiming to engage students, encourage intercultural learning and create a level playing field through dialogic explorations of culturally relevant texts.

6. Discussion

To address the four research questions, the type of text, their possible affordances and the rationales for their selection are discussed in section 6.1, followed by a discussion of the picturebook format. Then the activities and research designs are discussed in sections 6.2, 6.3. and 6.4.

6.1. Type of texts and the importance of rationale

The first two research questions ask what types of texts are represented in intercultural EFL/ESL teaching and how these are justified. The focus on rationale emerged due to the differing affordances of texts (van Lier, 2004). Whereas nonfiction texts provide factual information that appears to have one mode of interpretation, fictional texts can be open to a multitude of interpretations (Iser, 1978). For example, narratives might stimulate empathy to a higher degree than factual texts (Nikolajeva, 2018), while a factual text can provide knowledge on everyday habits and social and political structures. The results of the review show that the rationale

provided for the selection of fiction texts focus on their role in fostering ICC and, in some cases, critical literacy. Culturally relevant texts are highlighted, and the rationales for fiction texts are mainly anchored in reader-response or critical theory. All but two (Forsman, 2010; Tseng, 2017) of the studies involving fiction provide a theoretically founded rationale for their choice of text. The two exceptions used both fiction and nonfiction texts, but the type of texts is not the focus of their studies.

The reason why 80% of the studies on nonfiction fail to include a rationale for their text selection may be that their relevance is not debated by educators, policy makers or academics. The writer-reader contract of nonfiction texts stipulates that the content of the text conveys the truth. Thus, it is seemingly logical to select these texts when teaching students about other cultures (Løvland, 2018). The discourse on false facts (Duffy, 2018), however, serves as a reminder that there is no such thing as an objective account of truth. Accordingly, all texts must be examined critically to ascertain what perspectives are included and excluded, and in what way content is conveyed (Kramsch, 2011). Furthermore, considering how different texts can accommodate possibilities for engagement (van Lier, 2004), and foster different elements of ICC, can increase the robustness of a study.

For these reasons, it is noteworthy that a mixed-methods study on the development of students' reading comprehension and ICC does not include what types of texts are read (Hellerstein-Yehezkel, 2017). Interestingly, the results show that the developments of both ICC and critical reading skills correlate and interact. Furthermore, students who were resistant to employing strategies for critical engagement with the texts in dialogue with peers, struggled with reading and scored low in ICC. Future studies might include the role of texts in students' development and provide insight into "the dialogue [that] developed among students of diverse cultures" (Hellerstein-Yehezkel, 2017, p. 325) and the teacher's role as mediator, points not addressed by Hellerstein-Yehezkel (2017).

Only two of the studies on nonfiction texts comment on the choice of text. These two studies clearly show how their chosen type of nonfiction text is suitable for fostering ICC and critical literacy. The first one, Shie (2013), involved a largely unexplored phenomenon: allusive intertexts in article titles of a magazine. This warranted a thorough description of what allusive intertexts are, how they are selected and how they can foster students' "motivations to learn intercultural intertexts" (Shie, 2013, p. 416). The second one, Morgan's account of his ESL class in Morgan and Vandrick (2009), well illustrates the differences between the fiction and nonfiction studies in terms of rationale. Their classes aimed at developing students' critical literacy, and to this end it was valuable "to read texts for multiple perspectives and for multiple purposes" (Morgan & Vandrick, 2009, p. 516). In this study, Morgan provided a theoretically grounded rationale for the selection of nonfiction texts that are thematically relevant and may develop students' critical literacy by engaging their own experiences and perspective-taking skills (2009, pp. 516–517). Still, Vandrick's rationale is far more detailed. Her rationale includes a discussion of why war-related literature ought to be read in ESL classes, the intersection of linguistic and critical literacy, selection criteria, the relevance of topics and their links to identity work and challenging stereotypes (2009, pp. 521–525). Similarly, Porto (2013) provided a detailed, theoretically grounded rationale for the selection of fiction texts, highlighting their authenticity, suitability for understanding otherness and stimulating the readers' imagination. The latter, she held, is significant in developing perspective-taking skills and "cultural understanding" (Porto, 2013, p. 287). However, in Porto (2014) and (2016) no specific rationale is provided for the selection of nonfiction texts, other than stating that the students engaged with a range of thematically relevant texts presenting different perspectives (see also Porto & Byram, 2015).

The format of texts, i.e. the literary text type, is another point for consideration. Arguably, the picturebook is a format with affordances rendering it particularly suitable for ICC development (Burwitz-Melzer, 2014, p. 63), whether they be fictional and nonfictional. Picturebooks are objects of art, ideology and sources of cultural knowledge (Hayik, 2011; Stephens, 2018), and their multimodality makes for a more complex reading experience. The studies on picturebooks deem them suitable for developing students' cultural and social awareness and analytic and critical thinking skills (Arizpe et al., 2014; Hayik, 2011; Lee & Gilles, 2012; Stewart, 2015). Reading and exploring picturebooks in dialogue with peers provide an aesthetic and affective experience, ideal for exploring identities, cultural perspectives and fostering empathy with others (Hayik, 2011; Lee & Gilles, 2012; Stewart, 2015).

6.2. Dialogic and student-centred activities and approaches

Detailed activity descriptions serve to demonstrate the processes of students' intercultural learning, and discussion is the most frequently mentioned activity. However, the lack of detail in some of the reports makes it difficult to determine to what degree the discussions were dialogic (Dasli, 2012; Moya et al., 2016; Singh, Marsani, Jaganathan, Karupiah, & Abdullah, 2017; Tseng, 2017). Explanations of classroom procedures could also lead to increased insight in how students' intercultural learning might be facilitated. Nonetheless, this requires a more varied range of research methods to shed light on the execution of activities and the processes of intercultural development. For example, methods that analyse classroom talk could illuminate the nature of discussions and illustrate how intercultural learning unfolds. Prieto-Arranz et al. (2013) drew on discourse theory and used content analysis. They showed how their students' language style contributed to "the construction of a collective identity," which promoted the development of trans-cultural awareness (2013, p. 27). Another example is discourse analysis in combination with quantitative methods, such as measuring student talk time (Liaw & Bunn-Le Master, 2010), which could indicate if activities are student-centred. Notwithstanding the potential pitfalls of using a quantitative mindset to interpret qualitative data, using numbers in qualitative studies can contribute to "the *internal generalizability* of qualitative researchers' claim" (Maxwell, 2010, p. 478; emphasis added). Arizpe (2017) called for "a consideration of the overlaps between singular case studies and larger quantitative surveys" of reading (2017, pp. 132–133), an argument which could be extended to text-based practices for intercultural learning.

Some studies suggest a search for right answers, rather than dialogic explorations (Akpinar & Öztürk, 2009; Dasli, 2012). For example, the activities in Akpinar & Öztürk, 2009 study on multicultural fairy tales focused on finding factual knowledge about cultures, rather than knowledge related to socialization processes (Byram, 1997). The aims of the sessions, which included to "read, accurately comprehend and present folk tales", are valid aims for language learning, and may have been a starting point for

intercultural learning. However, critical approaches are required to "challenge, overcome and subvert the common beliefs, laws, values and norms of a culture" (Akpinar & Öztürk, 2009, p. 76), which the study presented as one of the affordances of folktales. In Dasli's (2012) study of a British studies module for international students, texts were presented as "a non-negotiable set of facts" (2012, p. 186). Dasli (2012) held that a lack of opportunities for affective engagement with the texts resulted in stereotyping the host culture on the part of the students, which supports the need for a dialogic approach to develop ICC.

6.3. Experiential and student-centred activities

Engaging with one's own experiences is central to experiential learning (Kohonen et al., 2017; Kolb, 1984), and allows the students to take charge of their own learning. Yet, the extent to which students are invited to reflect on their own cultural perspectives and how these are mirrored in their reading is largely unspecified in the sampled studies. An exception is Shin and Riazantseva (2015), who explored three readers' identity work.

The lack of tools to personally engage with curricula can lead to stereotyping, even in intercultural education. This point is exemplified by two studies of nonfiction texts. Dasli (2012) (see section 6.2.) serves as a reminder of how teaching facts through factual texts can reinforce stereotypes about a "national" culture, even when some degree of comparison with home countries is made. Dasli (2012) wrote that some students adopt an identity of being the victim of racism, ignoring evidence to the contrary. Since the students' personal experiences in Britain were not made a part of the course, they were not given the means to interpret these experiences and create a third space (2012).

Akiyama's (2017) examination of turn negotiation in American-Japanese telecollaboration was an interesting parallel: some knowledge of Japanese communication patterns led to stereotyping on the part of American speakers and missed communication when the Japanese speaker did not fit the stereotype. The teacher then needed to facilitate the intercultural dialogue (Akiyama, 2017). Considering the potential of fiction texts to engage readers' emotions (Nikolajeva, 2013), culturally relevant fiction texts might have better mediated these students' intercultural learning.

Experiential activities may also entail meetings with others, physically or through computer-mediated communication. Several studies saw students discussing texts online with peers in other countries (Akiyama, 2017; Juan-Garau & Jacob, 2015; Lee & Gilles, 2012; Liaw & Bunn-Le Master, 2010; Lindner & Méndez Garcia, 2014; Oakley et al., 2018; Porto, 2013; 2014; 2016; 2019; Porto & Byram, 2015; Prieto-Arranz et al., 2013). An important finding in these studies is that the digital environment allowed a sense of global community to evolve, an indication of a student-centred approach. Prieto-Arranz et al. (2013) in particular argued that the possibility of face-to-face interaction and informal "netspeak" contributed to the development of their students' transcultural awareness.

6.4. Critical approaches

Intercultural scholarship in the 1990s focused on reconciling differences between cultures (Dervin, 2016; Ferri, 2018; Hoff, 2014). The last decade, meanwhile, has seen a rise in critical theory in intercultural language learning, highlighting the need for a critical analysis of the discourses which construct and maintain social structures (Ferri, 2018; Kramsch, 2011). Critical approaches emerged as a theme through the analysis, and are advanced in several studies on both fiction and nonfiction. These studies also include an array of texts from multiple perspectives (Arizpe et al., 2014; Hayik, 2011; Hellerstein-Yehezkel, 2017; Morgan & Vandrick, 2009; Porto, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2019; Porto & Byram, 2015; Porto & Zembylas, 2020; Zoreda & Vivaldo-Lima, 2008). Porto and Zembylas (2020) expanded the critical approach through the pedagogy of discomfort, advocating engagement "with 'difficult' issues that promote critical intercultural citizenship values" to foster "empathy, solidarity and transformation" (pp. 357, 359).

Arizpe et al. (2014), Hayik (2011), Porto (2013) and Porto and Zembylas (2020) all include careful explanations of the strategies that facilitate the development of students' critical literacy skills. The data contain students' multimodal texts in response to both verbal and multimodal texts. Furthermore, the thorough theoretical rationale of these studies for their pedagogical approach and the analysis of responses testify to how individual students developed ICC through visual methods. Altogether, this gives some understanding of intercultural learning processes. As no quantitative analysis methods are employed, it is not possible to know if the approaches were effective for the majority of the students. However, studies like these show possibilities for intercultural learning by engaging with texts. Considering the apparent objectivity of nonfictional texts, and the potential of fiction texts to affect readers' emotions, critical awareness is equally important to reading both fiction and nonfiction.

7. Concluding remarks and the way forward

This review study mapped and critically analysed studies on fiction and nonfiction texts represented in research aiming to foster EFL/ESL students' ICC, and considered how the sampled studies may illustrate intercultural learning processes. The first research question asked what types of texts were represented in these studies, and the analysis showed that fiction is more frequently represented than nonfiction in the surveyed studies.

The second research question asked how the selection of texts was justified. The authors who provided theoretically grounded rationales for their choices of texts and activities share several commonalities. First, they worked with fiction. Second, the rationales provided revolve around the affordances of fiction, as opposed to nonfiction texts. Third, drawing on reader-response and critical theory, the authors viewed the possibilities of engaging the reader in interactions with texts that mirror their own cultural perspectives or those of others. Consequently, there is a strong focus on culturally relevant texts where readers can recognize their own cultures or learn about those of others, which is also the most frequently mentioned reason for choosing nonfiction texts. Fourth, cognitively,

emotionally and linguistically challenging texts are favoured.

The selection of fiction is more strongly rationalized, whereas the vast majority of studies on nonfiction fail to do so for their text choice. The cultural content of the texts and development of students' critical literacy are reasons provided for selecting nonfiction texts. This is not to suggest that nonfiction texts are not a valuable resource in intercultural language teaching, but that their affordances in fostering ICC need to be considered through a critical lens.

The studies on multimodal texts, such as films, videos and challenging picturebooks, in addition to computer-mediated communication, give theoretically grounded accounts of the affordances of these media in fostering students' ICC. In alignment with critical theory, this might indicate that a range of media and text types should be a part of an intercultural education, to allow for the representation of multiple voices and perspectives.

The third research question asked to what extent the studies featured text-based activities that are dialogic, experiential and student-centred. The results showed that the activities are generally student-centred, with frequent reference to dialogic theory and use of discussions, but without illustrating to what extent the discussions are dialogic. Nearly 50% of the studies involve experiential activities, but drama activities are marginalized. Moreover, the analysis of the sampled studies reveal that critical approaches are an emerging theme in intercultural language learning.

The fourth research question asked to what extent the research designs serve to illuminate the students' intercultural learning processes. With a few notable exceptions, the chosen designs provide limited insight into these processes, the focus being rather on the outcomes of intercultural education. Consequently, this review suggests a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to analyse classroom talk as one approach to illuminate the students' processes of intercultural learning. As the present review has shown, the majority of the studies are conducted in higher education. Consequently, more research on primary and secondary education is required to study potential differences in how intercultural learning processes unfold across age groups.

This review highlights how theoretically grounded rationales for selecting texts clarify their affordances in fostering intercultural learning. Consequently, the synthetic constructs *affordance* and *rationale* served to develop a synthesizing argument: an awareness of the affordances of text types and the rationales for their selection can be a tool that assists teachers and researchers in designing studies and activities for intercultural learning. Furthermore, discourse analysis or quantitative approaches to research and evaluation can supplement qualitative dialogue analyses to illustrate the intercultural learning processes in the EFL/ESL classroom. The potential of experiential approaches in this respect is also an area for further exploration.

This review study is not exhaustive, as it excluded conference proceedings, doctoral dissertations and chapters in edited volumes, as a rigorous peer review process is not guaranteed in these instances. Because the analysis stopped at the saturation point, other databases and journals may have produced additional results as well. Geographically, the studies span all continents except Africa. This may be due to the review's inclusion and exclusion criteria, or a lack of African studies in the field. In limiting the search to certain keywords, potentially relevant results may have been overlooked. However, this choice was made to systematize the search and consider the most readily accessible literature.

In conclusion, an awareness of the affordances of different types of text and media might facilitate intercultural teaching and learning. An array of text types, media and activities that engage students with multiple perspectives is essential to the emotional and cognitive transformations necessary to foster ICC. There is also potential for more research that considers the mediation of intercultural learning through experiential activities. A wider range of research approaches and methods can increase our understanding of the processes of intercultural learning as well.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2021.100390.

References

Aamotsbakken, B., & Knudsen, S. V. (2008). Sjangrer i gjenbruk [Genres recycled]. Oslo: Gyldendal akademisk.
Akiyama, Y. (2017). Vicious vs. virtuous cycles of turn negotiation in American-Japanese telecollaboration: Is silence a virtue? *Language and Intercultural Communication, 17*(2), 190–209. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2016.1277231
Akpinar, K. D., & Öztürk, M. S. (2009). Teaching culture and language through folktales. *Ekev Academic Review, 13*(40), 69–84.
Alexander, R. J. (2008). *Essays on pedagogy*. London: Routledge.
Arizpe, E. (2017). Picturebooks and situated readers: The intersections of text, image, culture and response. In C. Beauvais, & M. Nikolajeva (Eds.), *The Edinburgh companion to children's literature* (pp. 124–135). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Arizpe, E., Bagelman, C., Devlin, A. M., Farrell, M., & McAdam, J. E. (2014). Visualizing intercultural literacy: Engaging critically with diversity and migration in the classroom through an image-based approach. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 14*(3), 304–321. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2014.903056
Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays*. In Emerson, M. Holquist, M. Trans, & Holquist (Eds.). Austin: University of Texas Press.
Beacco, J.-C., Byram, M., Cavalli, M., Coste, D., Cuenat, M. E., Goullieret, F., et al. (2016). Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education. Retrieved from https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806ae621.
Berns, G. S., Blaine, K., Prietula, M. J., & Pye, B. E. (2013). Short- and long-term effects of a novel on connectivity in the brain. *Brain Connectivity, 3*(6), 590–600. https://doi.org/10.1089/brain.2013.0166
Bishop, R. S. (1990). Mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. *Perspectives: Choosing and Using Books for the Classroom, 6*(3).
Boye, S., & Byram, M. (2018). Language awareness and the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence. In P. Garrett, & J. M. Cots (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of language awareness.* (pp. 435–449). New York: Routledge.
Bredella, L. (2000). Literary texts and intercultural understanding. In M. Byram (Ed.), *Routledge encyclopaedia of language teaching and learning* (pp. 382–386). London & New York: Routledge.

Burwitz-Melzer, E. (2014). Approaching literary and language competence: Picturebooks and graphic novels in the EFL classroom. In J. Bland, & C. Lütge (Eds.), *Children's literature in second language education* (pp. 55–70). London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. London.

Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and assessing intercultural competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M. (2009). Intercultural competence in Foreign Languages: The intercultural speaker and the pedagogy of foreign language education. In D. K. Deardorff (Ed.), *The Sage handbook of intercultural competence* (pp. 321–332). Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

Byram, M., Gribkova, B., & Starkey, H. (2002). Developing the intercultural dimension in language teaching. *A practical introduction for teachers*. Retrieved from https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Guide_dimintercult_EN.pdf.

Byram, M., Holmes, P., & Savvides, N. (2013). Intercultural communicative competence in foreign language education: Questions of theory, practice and research. *Language Learning Journal, 41*(3), 251–253. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2013.836343

Chao, T.-C. (2013). A diary study of university EFL learners' intercultural learning through foreign films. *Language Culture and Curriculum, 26*(3), 247–265. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2013.833936

Council of Europe. (2020). Plurilingual and intercultural education: Definition and founding principles. Retrieved from https://www.coe.int/en/web/platform-plurilingual-intercultural-language-education/the-founding-principles-of-plurilingual-and-intercultural-education.

Dasli, M. (2012). Are we there yet? Intercultural encounters with British studies. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 12*(3), 179–195. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2012.691098

Deardorff, D. K. (2006). Identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 10*(3), 241–266. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315306287002

Deardorff, D. K. (2019). Manual for developing intercultural competencies: Story circles. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429244612.

Delanoy, W. (2008). Dialogic communicative competence and language learning. In W. Delanoy, & L. Volkmann (Eds.), *Future perspectives for English language teaching.* (pp. 173–188). Heidelberg: Winter.

Dervin, F. (2016). *Interculturality in education : A theoretical and methodological toolbox*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

DeStigter, T., Aranda, E., & Eddy, L. (1997). The Tesoros project: Treasuring students' lives. *English Journal, 86*(6), 89.

Dixon-Woods, M., Cavers, D., Agarwal, S., Annandale, E., Arthur, A., Harvey, J., et al. (2006). Conducting a critical interpretive synthesis of the literature on access to healthcare by vulnerable groups. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 6*(35), 1–13.

Duffy, B. (2018). False "facts" and faulty thinking. *Significance, 15*(5), 6–7. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1740-9713.2018.01183.x

Duncan, S., & Paran, A. (2018). Negotiating the challenges of reading literature: Teachers reporting on their practice. In J. Bland (Ed.), *Using literature in English language education : Challenging reading for 8–18 year olds* (pp. 243–259). London: Bloomsbury.

Eitel, A., & Scheiter, K. (2015). Picture or text first? Explaining sequence effects when learning with pictures and text. *Educational Psychology Review, 27*(1), 153–180. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-01-9264-4

Fenner, A.-B. (2001). Dialogic interaction with literary texts in the lower secondary classroom. In A.-B. Fenner (Ed.), *Cultural awareness and language awareness based on dialogic interaction with texts in foreign language learning* (pp. 13–42). Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Ferri, G. (2018). *Intercultural communication: Critical approaches and future challenges*. US: Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Forsman, L. (2010). EFL education in the new millennium: Focus on the promotion of awareness of difference and diversity. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 54*(5), 501–517. https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2010.508926

Gopalakrishnan, A. (2011). *Multicultural children's literature: A critical issues approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA; London: SAGE.

Grant, M. J., & Booth, A. (2009). A typology of reviews: An analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies. *Health Information and Libraries Journal, 26*(2), 91–108. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-1842.2009.00848.x

Harden, A., & Thomas, J. (2010). Mixed methods and systematic reviews: Examples and emerging issues. In T. Abbas, & T. Charles (Eds.), *SAGE Handbook of mixed Methods in social & behavioral research (2 ed.* (pp. 749–774). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Hart, C. (2001). *Doing a literature search : A comprehensive guide for the social sciences*. London: Sage.

Hayik, R. (2011). Critical visual analysis of multicultural sketches. *English teaching, 10*(1), 95–118.

Heggernes, S. L. (2019). Opening a Dialogic Space: Intercultural Learning through Picturebooks. *Children's Literature in English Language Education, 7*(2), 37–60. https://clelejournal.org/article-2-intercultural-learning/, 2019. (Accessed 15 December 2019).

Hellerstein-Yehezkel, D. (2017). The path to reading comprehension through intercultural competence in the multicultural EFL classroom. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 17*(3), 323–343. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2016.1261875

Hockley, W. E., & Bancroft, T. (2011). Extensions of the picture superiority effect in associative recognition. *Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology/Revue Canadienne de Psychologie Expérimentale, 65*(4), 236–244. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023796

Hoff, H. E. (2014). A critical discussion of Byram's model of intercultural communicative competence in the light of bildung theories. *Intercultural Education, 25*(6), 508–517. https://doi.org/10.1080/14675986.2014.992112

Hoff, H. E. (2017). Fostering the "intercultural reader"? An empirical study of socio-cultural approaches to EFL literature. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 63*(3), 443–464. https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2017.1402366

Imahori, T. T., & Lanigan, M. L. (1989). Relational model of intercultural communication competence. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 13*(3), 269–286. https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767(89)90013-8

Iser, W. (1978). *The act of reading : A theory of aesthetic response*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Jerrim, J., Lopez-Agudo, L. A., & Marcenaro-Gutierrez, O. D. (2020). Does it matter what children read? New evidence using longitudinal census data from Spain. *Oxford Review of Education, 46*(5), 515–533. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2020.1723516

Journal Impact Factor. (2016). Journal citation reports. Retrieved from https://jcr.clarivate.com/JCRLandingPageAction.action.

Juan-Garau, M., & Jacob, K. (2015). Developing English learners' transcultural skills through content- and task-based lessons. *System, 54*, 55–68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2015.04.017

Kidd, D. C., & Castano, E. (2013). Reading literary fiction improves theory of mind. *Science (New York, N.Y.), 342*(6156), 377–380. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1239918

Kohonen, V., Jaatinen, R., Kaikkonen, P., & Lehtovaara, J. (2017). Experiential learning in foreign language education. *Abingdon*. Routledge.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall.

Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and culture in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kramsch, C. (1995). The cultural component of language teaching. *Language Culture and Curriculum, 8*(2), 83–92.

Kramsch, C. (2011). The symbolic dimensions of the intercultural. *Language Teaching, 44*(3), 354–367. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444810000431

Kress, G. (2010). *Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. London and New York: Routledge.

Kress, G., & Van Leeuwen, T. (2006). Reading images. *The grammar of visual design* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Lee, H. C., & Gilles, C. (2012). Discussing culturally relevant books online: A cross-cultural blogging project. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique, 11*(4), 161–177.

Li, X., Heugh, K., O'Neill, F., Song, Y., Scarino, A., & Crichton, J. (2016). Developing English language and intercultural learning capabilities. Retrieved from https://www.unisa.edu.au/PageFiles/61842/Developing%20English%20Language%20and%20Intercultural%20Learning.

Liaw, M.-L., Bunn-Le Master, S., & Understanding telecollaboration through an analysis of intercultural discourse. (2010). *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 23*(1), 21–40. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588220903467301

van Lier, L. (2004). *The ecology and semiotics of language learning*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.

Lindner, R., & Méndez Garcia, M. D. C. (2014). The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media: exploring images of others in telecollaboration. *Language Culture and Curriculum, 27*(3), 226–243. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2014.977910

Littleton, K., & Mercer, N. (2013). *Interthinking : Putting talk to work*. London: Routledge.

Lotman, Y. M. (1988). Text within a text. *Soviet Psychology, 24*.

Løvland, A. (2018). Sakprosa for barn [Non-fiction for children]. In R. I. S. Stokke, & E. S. Tønnessen (Eds.), *Møter med barnelitteratur: Introduksjon for lærere [encounters with children's literature: An introduction for teachers]* (pp. 220–236). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Matos, A. G. (2011). *Literary texts and intercultural learning: Exploring new directions*. Bern: Bern: Peter Lang AG, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften.

Maxwell, J. A. (2010). Using numbers in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 16*(6), 475–482. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800410364740

Moeller, A. J. (2018). Foreword. In M. Wagner, D. C. Perugini, & M. Byram (Eds.), *Teaching intercultural competence across the age range: From theory to practice*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Morgan, B., & Vandrick, S. (2009). Imagining a peace curriculum: What second-language education brings to the table. *Peace & Change, 34*(4), 510.

Moya, M. E. G., Ortiz, L. M., & Díaz, A. M. N. (2016). Evidence of intercultural competence in tenth grader's narrative texts. *GIST Education and Learning Research Journal*, (13), 111–130.

Muthusamy, C., Marimuthu, R., & Sabapathy, E. (2011). Effects of teaching literature on culture learning in the language classroom. *American Journal of Applied Sciences, 8*(8), 789–795. https://doi.org/10.3844/ajassp.2011.789.795

Nikolajeva, M. (2013). "Did you feel as if you hated people?": Emotional literacy through fiction. *New Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship, 19*(2), 95–107. https://doi.org/10.1080/13614541.2013.813334

Nikolajeva, M. (2018). Emotions in picturebooks. In B. Kümmerling-Meibauer (Ed.), *The Routledge companion to picturebooks* (pp. 110–118). London: Routledge.

Nikolajeva, M., & Scott, C. (2006). *How picturebooks work*. New York: Routledge.

Oakley, G., Pegrum, M., Xiong, X. B., Lim, C. P., & Yan, H. (2018). An online Chinese-Australian language and cultural exchange through digital storytelling. *Language Culture and Curriculum, 31*(2), 128–149. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2017.1386193

Penz, H. (2001). Cultural awareness and language awareness through dialogic social interaction using the internet and other media. In A.-B. Fenner (Ed.), *Cultural awareness and language awareness based on dialogic interaction with texts in foreign language learning.* (pp. 103–128). Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Porto, M. (2013). A model for describing, analysing and investigating cultural understanding in EFL reading settings. *Language Learning Journal, 41*(3), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2013.836346

Porto, M. (2014). Intercultural citizenship education in an EFL online project in Argentina. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 14*(2), 245–261. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2014.890625

Porto, M. (2016). Ecological and intercultural citizenship in the primary English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom: An online project in Argentina. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 46*(4), 395–415. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2015.1064094

Porto, M. (2019). Using the Council of Europe's autobiographies to develop quality education in the foreign language classroom in higher education. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 19*(6), 520–540. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2019.1673401

Porto, M., & Byram, M. (2015). A curriculum for action in the community and intercultural citizenship in higher education. *Language Culture and Curriculum, 28*(3), 226–242. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2015.1087555

Porto, M., & Zembylas, M. (2020). Pedagogies of discomfort in foreign language education: Cultivating empathy and solidarity using art and literature. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 20*(4), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2020.1740244

Prieto-Arranz, J. I., Juan-Garau, M., & Jacob, K. L. (2013). Re-imagining cultural identity: Transcultural and translingual communication in virtual third-space environments. *Language Culture and Curriculum, 26*(1), 19–35. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2012.759585

Ruiz-Cecilia, R. (2012). Narrowing cultural boundaries in the EFL classroom: Fairy tales from India. *Revista Espanola de Linguistica Aplicada, 25*, 225–243.

Schrijvers, M., Janssen, T., Fialho, O., & Rijlaarsdam, G. (2019). Gaining insight into human nature: A review of literature classroom intervention studies. *Review of Educational Research, 89*(1), 3–45. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654318812914

Sercu, L., Bandura, E., & Castro, P. (2005). *Foreign language teachers and intercultural competence : An international investigation*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Shie, J. S. (2013). Intercultural intertexts encountered by Taiwanese EFL students. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 13*(4), 416–432. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2013.793346

Shin, C., & Riazantseva, A. (2015). Reader identity: A case study of Korean graduate students' meaning construction of an L2 literary text. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 15*(4), 600–615. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2015.1061535

Singh, M. K. M., Marsani, F. N. A., Jaganathan, P., Karupiah, P., & Abdullah, A. S. N. (2017). An intercultural reading programme (IRP) to enhance intercultural knowledge among secondary school students. *English Language Teaching, 10*(1), 26–38. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n1p26

Stephens, J. (2018). Picturebooks and ideology. In B. Kümmerling-Meibauer (Ed.), *The Routledge companion to picturebooks.* (pp. 137–145). London: Routledge.

Stewart, M. A. (2015). "My journey of hope and peace": Learning from adolescent refugees' lived experiences. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 59*(2), 149–159. https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.445

Stewart, J. A., & Santiago, K. A. (2006). Using the literary text to engage language learners in a multilingual community. *Foreign Language Annals, 39*(4), 683–696. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2006.tb02283.x

Su, Y.-C. (2011). The effects of the cultural portfolio project on cultural and EFL learning in Taiwan's EFL college classes. *Language Teaching Research, 15*(2), 230–252. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168810388721

Truong, L. B., & Tran, L. T. (2014). Students' intercultural development through language learning in Vietnamese tertiary education: A case study on the use of film as an innovative approach. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 14*(2), 207–225. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2013.849717

Tseng, C.-T. H. (2017). Teaching "cross-cultural communication" through content based instruction: Curriculum design and learning outcome from EFL learners' perspectives. *English Language Teaching, 10*(4), 22–34. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n4p22

Vezzali, L., Stathi, S., Giovannini, D., Capozza, D., & Trifiletti, E. (2015). The greatest magic of Harry Potter: Reducing prejudice. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 45*(2), 105–121. https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12279

Vrikki, M., Wheatley, L., Howe, C., Hennessy, S., & Mercer, N. (2019). Dialogic practices in primary school classrooms. *Language and Education, 33*(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2018.1509988

Yang, L. H., & Fleming, M. (2013). How Chinese college students make sense of foreign films and TV series: Implications for the development of intercultural communicative competence in ELT. *Language Learning Journal, 41*(3), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2013.836347

Zoreda, M. L., & Vivaldo-Lima, J. (2008). Scaffolding linguistic and intercultural goals in EFL with simplified novels and their film adaptations. *English Teaching Forum, 46*(3), 22–29.