Using IMAGE model to De- Center Stereotypes

Sobeida Correa Morelo

Faculty of Human Science and Education, University of Córdoba

Research Project

PhD. Ana Maria Sangre Barboza

February 3, 2023

Table of Contents

Abstract……..3

Introduction……...4

Theoretical Framework……..7

Conceptual framework……...7

Culture and Intercultural communicative competence……7

Stereotype ……...8

Authentic Materials……9

IMAGE Model……...10

Literature Review……17

Methodology……22

Type of Research……..22

Data collection techniques……25

Context and Participants……...26

Implementation of the IMAGE model……..27

Data Analysis……34

Findings……35

Discussion……52

Conclusion……56

References……58

Appendix……..62

Appendix A. Students' Workgroup……..62

Appendix B. Chart Filled by Students……..65

Appendix C. Unit Implemented……66

Abstract

This research seeks to explore how eight-grader students from a public school located in a rural area from Lorica, Córdoba dispel from judgment and stereotypes concerning cultural differences through authentic material inserted in the IMAGE model approach. This study also attempts to give an answer to the following question: How might authentic materials and the IMAGE model help secondary school students to de-center from judgment and stereotypes regarding cultural differences? To achieve this, this study used a qualitative research method and it applied the action research cycle. The instruments used were participant observations and written tasks. The findings showed that students were able to move from making generalizations and having prejudices to being mindful of cultural differences concerning the English language, especially in terms of where it is spoken, its variety of accents and people who speak this language. The present research project showed that the integration of a cultural lesson throughout the IMAGE model approach and real materials helped secondary school students to change their perceptions into positive ones based on the new knowledge they were capable to acquire during the process and with the exposure to cultural and rich content that they coped with in the classes.

Keywords: stereotype, IMAGE model, culture, authentic materials

1. Introduction

Teaching English is not only about language but also about culture. Students come from diverse cultures and perceive the world from different points of view. These varied perspectives also apply to languages since learning a new language is also a matter of cultural understanding and practice. Thus, EFL teaching curriculum should go beyond grammar and vocabulary activities and cover more cultural-based teaching practices that allow students to learn the language by also understanding cultural perspectives. Materials are therefore one possibility to access these new teaching and learning competencies, particularly to teach culture. The necessity of materials to help teachers in their work in a classroom has been always presented since they are bridges that connect students with knowledge. As an example, there are textbooks, educational videos, songs, and a lot of platforms with educational materials. In addition, there exist authentic materials that, according to Richards (2001), are those resources that were not created to be used in a classroom with the purpose of teaching (e.g., photographs, Tik Tok videos, posts on social media, texts from no academic webpage). This type of material helps students to have close contact with people and countries from their own culture as well as other cultures since they show realities students might understand. Consequently, learners become more open-minded while learning the English language because their perspectives towards cultures positively change(Salwa, 2013, p.5) . In this sense, students might develop an intercultural awareness which consists of removing barriers in terms of establishing relationships with people who have different roots. Santana and Cely (2021) express that “it is relevant to promote Intercultural Communicative Competence in English classes to develop awareness, acceptance and respect among members from other cultures and backgrounds” (p.61).

However, students hold many general ideas concerning cultures around their own context and also from abroad, this situation generates that learners grow with wrong perceptions about people and places. For example, when observing and teaching classes at Jesús de Nazareth school, I noticed that 8th graders hold the belief that the English language is only spoken in The United States, England and France. A possible cause is the little emphasis schools provide on cultural perspectives in EFL classes since there is a strong emphasis on language rather than teaching from a cultural perspective. Having that in mind, the purpose of this research is to help secondary school students de-center from judgment and stereotypes regarding cultural differences studied in the EFL class through authentic materials using the IMAGE model method. Some studies have been conducted in order to develop cultural competence in learners using authentic materials, researchers have found that after the process, students showed positive attitudes and behavior regarding cultural diversity. They also gained open mindedness in relation to foreign cultures (Bernal,2020; Codina, 2020; Touhami et al., 2020).

This study answers the question: How might authentic materials and the IMAGE model help secondary school students to de-center from judgment and stereotypes regarding cultural differences ? The IMAGE model is a method teachers might implement in their English classes to teach not just language but also culture and make students aware of the world around them through images and questions following 4 steps: first, showing Images and Making observations; second, Analyzing additional information; third, Generating hypotheses about cultural perspectives; and finally, Exploring perspectives and reflection further (Donato et al., 2017). With the implementation of this method, this study seeks to contribute to the development of students' cultural awareness by helping them not to generalize situations, attitudes, behavior or likes, but to analyze what is beyond the cultural practices and perspectives.

In order to have a complete notion of this research, the following chapters describe the conceptual framework which includes the main concepts of this study. They are Intercultural communicative competence, authentic materials, and IMAGE model; the literature review contains some national and international inquiries related to the topic of this research; and the methodology. It explains the type of research, data collection techniques, context and participants and how the information will be analyzed.

2.Theoretical framework

The following section describes the main concepts regarding Intercultural communicative competence, culture, stereotype, authentic materials, and image model.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 *Culture and Intercultural communicative competence*

Based on Donato et al (2017), " culture is not a universal property of nationalities but a dynamic system of beliefs, values and worldviews that emerge in and are shaped by the shared social practices and products of a group or groups of individuals" (p.116). That is to say, culture is not permanent, it keeps changing and developing constantly over time. That is why, there are people who do not have the same perception or attitudes towards the world, people, and situations, as five or ten years ago. For that reason, intercultural communicative competence is not just about knowing other cultures, it involves understanding and respecting traditions, beliefs, thoughts, personalities, backgrounds and acts without discriminating against others because of their differences. This competence is one of the most important things an individual can develop these days to negotiate meaning, meet people and expand his/her linguistic repertoire. According to Guzman et al (2016), "cultural competence is the ability of a person to effectively interact, work, and develop meaningful relationships with people of various cultural backgrounds. Cultural background can include the beliefs, customs, and behaviors of people from various groups"(para. 1). For instance, we can see how different cultures (Chinese, Mexican, Canadian, etc.) coexist in the same place, (USA) sharing the different backgrounds each of them have in a respectful way.

Aligned with this, intercultural communicative competence is, therefore, "an ability to abandon ethnocentric attitudes towards and perceptions of other cultures, and to see and develop an understanding of the differences and relationships between one's own and a foreign culture; this involves an affective and cognitive change in learners" (Byram, 1997, p. 56). It indicates that the first step to comprehending the diversity among people is to forget

or not keep in mind that our own culture is at a higher level or is better than others just because it is the one we consider deserves respect. Thus, ethnocentrism is a barrier to developing intercultural communicative competence as well as its dimensions.

Byram and Wagner (2017) have identified five dimensions of intercultural communicative competence. The first is knowledge, which refers to the information we have about our own practices and products as a social group as well as those from a different country. It also includes the knowledge of the process that individuals have when interacting, such as greetings, gestures, the level of formality when speaking, slang, context, and habits, among others; The second is skills of interpreting and relating, it is the ability to understand events, experiences and texts from another culture in order to describe and connect them with the ones we have in our own culture; the third one is skills of discovery and interaction, it contains the capacity people have to obtain new and more knowledge about another culture and the capacity to use that knowledge in real-time interaction. The fourth is about attitudes, it includes three main attitudes: curiosity, openness, and readiness as a way to avoid disbelief in others' cultures and belief in one's own. And the last dimension is critical cultural awareness, which makes reference to the capacity to critically evaluate practices, products and perspectives from one's and others' cultures and regions. In a nutshell, intercultural competence contributes to an open mindedness toward other cultures, which help us be curious, open, and eventually dispel stereotypes.

2.1.2 *Stereotypes*

Stereotypes are those beliefs about practices, characteristics, attitudes or abilities that are attributed to a group of individuals or cultures. For example, *"Colombia is a dangerous country"*, this is an idea that some people might have, maybe, because it was heard from one person who had a bad experience in one place of this country, so instead of being specific

with the information, what he/she does is to attribute this idea to all the places in Colombia. As a consequence, people start developing a pre-conception that is not totally true about Colombia. In this sense, "stereotypes expressed in speech tend to take the form of what linguists call generics. Generics lack quantifiers like "some," "most," or "all," and they do not make claims about specific individuals. Instead, they state general claims about kinds" (Beeghly, 2015,p.676). General claims which might be harmful for cultures and their real identities, since the kind of stereotype presented before allows others to have certain prejudices towards others. Kurylo (2012) expresses that stereotypes are "rigid representations in cognitive processes that are functional for those who use them"(p.337). It refers to those strong ideas that are not easily changed or moved in one's mind with the objective of opening the way for diverse perceptions. Instead, people tend to use those rigid representations to guide their way of thinking and acting regarding people, things or events, since stereotypes "save us time and cognitive resources by simplifying our environment" (Sibley & Osborne, 2015, p. 1).

Sibley & Osborne (2015) also manifest that stereotypes "are neither intrinsically "good" nor "bad." However, I find most of them bad, owing to the fact that many times they cause offense or hurt people's feelings and identity. For that reason, I consider it important to start teaching about them in school in order to avoid misunderstanding regarding people, situations and characteristics.

2.1.3 *Authentic materials*

Authentic materials are those texts, songs, images, sentences, drawings that do not have an academic purpose. That is to say, they were not created to be used in a classroom. In addition, "authentic materials refer to pictures, photographs, video selection, and radio. Authentic materials are the real things around the students' life that the teacher brings into

the class" (Marpaung & Situmeang, 2020, p.2). In this sense , we realize that the meanings of this concept are similar and apart from teachers, these materials also can be chosen by students to work with them in the classroom. Umirova (2020) stated that authentic materials are "print, video, and audio materials students encounter in their daily lives, such as change-of-address forms, job applications, menus, voice mail messages,radio programs, and videos"(p.129). In the words of Richards (2001) "authentic materials refers to the use in teaching of texts, photographs, video selections, and other teaching resources that were not specially prepared for pedagogical purposes" (p.252).

Using these kinds of authentic materials to teach the English language can make the learning process even more engaging, imaginative and motivating for students. For example, nowadays, students are interested in social media, so this is an opportunity to gain the attention in learning through a Tik Tok video, a post on Facebook, an image from Instagram or a new song which allows students to connect the academic space with the world outside through language. All these materials help students to be open minded, understand different situations, be critical and propose alternatives or points of view regarding an issue.

2.1.4 *IMAGE model*

The IMAGE model is a method in which teachers can teach culture through a set of images and questions , previously selected, from a critical perspective, making students infer meanings beyond what they can observe. Besides, this model helps teachers to plan the lesson, enact it and follow-up some tasks and assignments in which the focus is on dialogic interactions in the language that is being learnt. IMAGE lessons are developed taking into account a variety of images related to a cultural aspect which are described and analyzed through two types of questions: the fact questions and thought questions. Fact questions enable students to describe in a literal way the image presented, it includes setting, people,

actions and objects. Though questions allow students to go beyond what they see, it requires analysis, sharing opinions , hypotheses and ideas about the image (Donato et al, 2017). " The acronym, IMAGE represents 4 steps of the model: Images and Making observations, Analyzing additional information, Generating hypotheses about cultural perspectives, and Exploring perspectives and reflection further"(Glisan & Donato, 2017, p. 119).

IMAGE model has 4 steps for teaching culture. The tables below show the main phases each step follows:

Table 1

Step 1. Images and Making observations

Begin the lesson by asking students to describe **the product** and/or **practice** that they see in the first set of images. Ask **FACT questions in the TL** (*What do you see?*). Write **THREE to FIVE FACT questions** here for each image. (*Space provided for three images but it is up to you to decide how many. Use as many or as few images as you like for this step*).

Image 1 is a picture of _____

Fact questions:

Image 2 is a picture of _____

Fact questions:

Image 3 is a picture of _____

Fact questions:

Adapted from " *HLTP #5: Focusing on Cultural Products, Practices and Perspectives in a Dialogic Context,"* by Donato et al., 2017.

In step 1, the teacher presents one or more images to their students about a cultural practice or product in order to start the interaction with them. Then, three of five fact questions, in the target language, using what, where, when, and who should be asked for learners to make detailed observations. These observations can be done in groups and later share their answers with the rest or individually. The main purpose of this step is to allow students to understand in a clear way what they can observe in the cultural practice or product shown (Donato et al., 2017). For example, "an image of a 10 soles bill from Peru, students needed to identify the cultural product as currency, describe the symbols on the bill, and identify the portrait of the famous Peruvian air force hero, José Abelardo Quiñones Gonzáles" (Donato et al, 2017, p.126)..

Table 2

Step 2. Analyzing additional information

At this point in the lesson, what **additional information** will you provide in the form of **TEXT** or **DATA in the TL** on the cultural product or practice? What will you ask students to do with this information? This information should help students to **BEGIN TO THINK ABOUT PERSPECTIVES**. (*Space provided for two sources of information but it is up to you to decide how many*).

Informational source #1 is _____

With this information, I will ask students to _____

_____

_____

Informational source #2 is _____

With this information, I will ask students to _____

_____

_____

Adapted from " *HLTP #5: Focusing on Cultural Products, Practices and Perspectives in a Dialogic Context,"* by Donato et al., 2017.

In step 2, the teacher provides some extra, important and concise data or information about the product or practice that complement the image presented in the previous step. The additional information should be carefully selected. A good source are articles, also information through short texts, graphs and charts enable students to have another perspective from the image they have described(Donato and et al., 2017). As an example, "an ELS class compared the types of side dishes that were ordered with McDonald's Happy Meals for children in 2011 and 2013" (Donato, 2017,p. 5). What the graph used in step 1 showed, was " that in 2013 apples were ordered more frequently as a side dish for children compared to only french fries in 2011"(Donato 2017, p, 127).

Table 3

Step 3. Generating hypotheses about cultural perspectives

Now show the second set of image(s) that prompt hypotheses about possible perspectives conveyed by the product and/or practice. Ask students to begin to **REFLECT** on perspectives. Ask **THREE to FIVE THOUGHT questions in the TL** (*What do you think?*). THOUGHT questions prompt students to think about possible **MEANINGS** of the product or practice. Since students are seeing the second set of images for the first time, you may begin this step with a few **FACT questions** to begin the interaction and encourage participation. (*Space provided for one image but it is up to you to decide how many. Use as many or as few images as you like for this step*).

Image #1 is a picture of _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Option 1 for Intermediate- or higher-level language classes:

Ask students to use the thought questions to hypothesize about and to state in their own words the *relationship of the product or practice to a cultural perspective*. This step should be carried out in pairs or small groups followed by a report back to class.

(a) How you will carry out this part of the lesson?

(b) What directions will you give to the students?

(c) Can you anticipate any misinterpretations or cultural stereotyping that might occur? If yes, what might they be?

(d) If misinterpretations occur or if students express cultural stereotypes, how will you respond?

Option 2 for Elementary-level language classes:

If you think your students will not be able to state a perspective in the target language on their own, provide a multiple-choice task. Write for the students *three possible perspectives* in the TL and ask students in pairs or small groups to (a) *select* one based on the images and information they have seen and analyzed and/or (b) *rank order* the three perspectives from the most to least important, obvious, comprehensive, interesting, etc. If possible, ask students to tell you WHY they selected or rank ordered the perspectives in this way.

Write the three perspectives for your images that you will give to students for their selection. Use comprehensible target language.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Adapted from " *HLTP #5: Focusing on Cultural Products, Practices and Perspectives in a Dialogic Context,"* by Donato et al., 2017.

Step 3 is an analysis students make taking into account the image(s) and the extra information provided before. Teachers can ask students to analyze, reflect and hypothesize. After that, the teacher shows another image(s) to continue the lesson and keep students interested and provoke further reflection. In this step, the teacher should elaborate the fact questions in the target language (three or five will be enough) since at this point, students should be ready to give a significant analysis of the information presented in step 1 and 2 (Donato and et al., 2017,).

Table 4

Step 4. Exploring perspectives and reflection further

Ask students what they are *wondering* about the cultural product or practice. That is, what do they want to learn more about?
Students or student teams may be given *a homework assignment* or *project* to explore the cultural product, practice, and perspective(s) more deeply. Students may use Internet tools (e.g., websites, YouTube, blogs, Google images, texts) to expand their cultural knowledge and find additional cultural images and/or information related to the theme. Students bring the *findings* of their cultural exploration to class and present in the target language. Another option would be to engage students in making cultural comparisons between their own culture and the culture(s) of the target language users.
What homework assignment or project will you design to engage students in exploring in more depth the relationship of the cultural product and practice to the cultural perspective(s)?

Adapted from " *HLTP #5: Focusing on Cultural Products, Practices and Perspectives in a Dialogic Context,"* by Donato et al., 2017.

In exploring perspectives and reflection further, the lesson goes beyond the classroom. In this step, students have the chance to think about other reflections, ideas and questions that were not covered during the lesson or anything they would like to add to expand the topic. This is required in order for students to explore deeply in their perspectives about a product or practice. For that, learners may do out-of- class activities in small groups or individually search for more information through online or offline sources that expand their cultural knowledge, this can be an image or any information. Then, that new information is presented to the class in the target language so that students can carry out some class discussions (Donato and et al., 2017).

The steps explained above are a useful guide not just to enable students to use their target language, but also to develop their critical thinking as well as raise their cultural

awareness towards another culture through real life images. These images allow students to have a close contact with another culture, discover facts, places, people that facilitate students becoming interested and curious about the topic, since this method is totally different from what students are used to. In sum, our work as teachers is to innovate day-to-day in order to find and implement the best way in which students can learn significantly.

3. Literature review

Many studies have been carried out to analyze how authentic materials and intercultural approaches such as Engage, Study and Activate procedure (ESA) and authentic tasks approach to develop the intercultural competence in EFL learners from public and private institutions. For instance, the development of intercultural competence through the exposure to authentic material in 5th graders' group from a public primary school in Pereira, Colombia which was carried out by Palacio et al. (2015). It was carried out "to analyze the development of learners' sociocultural competence throughout the implementation of authentic materials in classrooms" (p.12) since students need to learn and become aware of foreign language and culture. In this qualitative research, the authors used data gained through a format of reflection on action and reflections. The result showed that "learners were able to produce in oral and written form simple sentences about food from Colombia and other countries" (p.37). However, results also revealed that the objective was not achieved considering that they did not have the communicative competences required to describe some similarities and differences taking into account the sociolinguistic aspects they worked with, for example, students were not able to reach some differences and similarities between foreign cultures and their own country due to the low level of English regardless grammar and the lack of coherence of the stages in the lesson plan to students achieved what was proposed. This study suggests that teachers present elements to students that help them identify another foreign culture through videos, songs, short readings and images given that learners have different learning styles. Besides, the results suggested that teachers should be the most useful practices to develop the students' communicative competence .

In a similar study, Bernal (2020) identified "what is the role of authentic materials and tasks, based on cultural topics, in the development of intercultural competences in third-level English students at a private university"(p. 30). In this qualitative action research

study, the author used two surveys, one interview, and teacher field notes techniques to collect the data. Results indicate that when students are in contact and exposed to methodologies with authentic materials, there are more possibilities to develop their intercultural competence, increase their knowledge about language at the moment of using it in real contexts and raise some attitudes and behaviors about interculturality, showing respect for and valuing other cultures, including the interest that the students developed in knowing their own and other societies. In addition, learners were able to contrast oher cultural practices with their own and determine stereotypes Colombian have towards others societies as well as those which have other cultures about us. The author recommends teachers to read the material that will be implemented in the class in order to know if there is any modification they have to do regarding vocabulary, and have clear objectives, this helps teachers to choose the adequate authentic material to teach a specific topic.

In addition, Codina (2020) "used authentic materials to see to what extent the use of oral authentic materials improves the linguistic and cultural diversity awareness in 4th of ESO students" (p.3), seeing that students have a low performance in the target language. To gather the information for this quantitative research, the same questionnaire was applied before and after the lesson. The results obtained was that students started to change their linguistic attitude, more exactly, an inclusive attitude where different varieties of English are seen as having the same value. The author concluded that first, the sample of students should be bigger; second, students should be in B1 level according to the CEFR, so in that level, they have the capacity to understand the activities presented; third, the lesson plan should be longer, with more examples of different dialects; finally, do not use just questionnaire, but also interviews which show a better perception of students.

Aligned with this, in a study conducted by Castillo et al. (2017) "analyzed the extent to which the use of authentic materials and tasks contributes to the enhancement of the

communicative competence on an A2 level English course" (p.89) at a Colombian university due to the lack of classroom-based strategies to develop this competence. To collect the data, the researchers used a pre-test, a post-test, observations, semi-structured interviews, surveys, and diaries integrating a mixed method. This inquiry showed the exposure of authentic materials in students have an impact not just in learners' communicative progress, but also in the teacher's practices. For example, teachers expressed that authentic materials enrich the teaching practice, since there is a variety of them that allow them to plan authentic activities and tasks promoting the use of language and culture. In sum, Castillo et al. expressed that authentic materials allowed teachers to reflect on their own practices as well as their process when teaching. Moreover, it is important that teachers have experience dealing with these types of materials, since the success of the class also depends on this.

The following study focus on students' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials to raise learners' cultural awareness was developed by Touhami et al.(2020) since, according to these authors, EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University do not have enough knowledge about the socio-cultural dimension caused by the little exposure to the structure of a culture. For that reason, the authors wanted, first, to explore the students' and teachers' perspectives towards the use of authentic materials in order to raise students' cultural awareness and second, to know the best authentic material the sample considers is the most effective to improve their cultural awareness. The researchers used the questionnaire technique to analyze the information in this qualitative study. The findings showed that most students presented a positive attitude using authentic materials in developing their cultural awareness given that the use of them fosters language skill and students feel closer to the real world and are attracted to learn. Another finding showed that instead of other authentic material, students and teachers preferred using videos, since they consider them easy to access, always available, and develop concentration and body language. The authors suggest

for future studies the use of another data collection technique different from questionnaires since they did not give valid information, on the contrary, students tend to express different opinions or perspectives about the field of study.

Concerning the IMAGE model, In regard to the intercultural communicative competence, Vega, (2020) conducted a qualitative research study with 36 undergraduate students from an English course of a Language Teaching program (ELT) at Universidad de Córdoba for the purpose of "fostering the interpreting and relating skills of these first semester students, in order to provide them with different cultural perspectives and use them as potential communication tools" (p.7). This researcher focused on that skill considering that, first, students had a limited knowledge to interpret and relate the cultural practices of their own context or culture; and second, students had many prejudices regarding other cultures. In order to gather the information, observations, interviews, semi-structured interviews, students´ journals, and teachers´ journals were applied. The study revealed that students were able to improve their ability to interpret cultural images and relate them to their own culture. In addition, students changed their negative attitudes into positive ones in terms of different practices. The research also showed that the IMAGE model approach helped students to develop their interpreting and relating skills regarding their own and a foreign culture.The researcher concluded that the preconceptions and the negative attitudes held by students were the lack of knowledge in relation to people practices and traditions. The author suggested that the teacher training in intercultural competence is necessary in order to prepare students in real communication.

To conclude, authentic materials are a useful tool that teachers should implement in their English classes as they allow students to have a more direct contact with the target language and increase their communicative competence while learning about culture and raising their awareness towards cultural practices. However, little is known about the IMAGE

model and its impact in the development of students' cultural awareness and practices. Due to the lack of inquiries to develop intercultural communicative competence in which the IMAGE model is used as a method to increase this competence in the classroom, this research seeks to help secondary school students to de-center from judgment and stereotypes regarding cultural differences through authentic materials using the IMAGE model approach considering that this develop step by step not just the class itself, but also the planning stage. Besides, this innovative method offers students a different way to learn as their awareness and critical and proposal thinking improve.

4. Methodology

This chapter explains the methodology and states the research approach that supports this study. In addition , this chapter describes the context and participants in order to realize this inquiry. Lastly, it offers an explanation of the data collection techniques which will be used to gather the information.

4.1 Type of Research

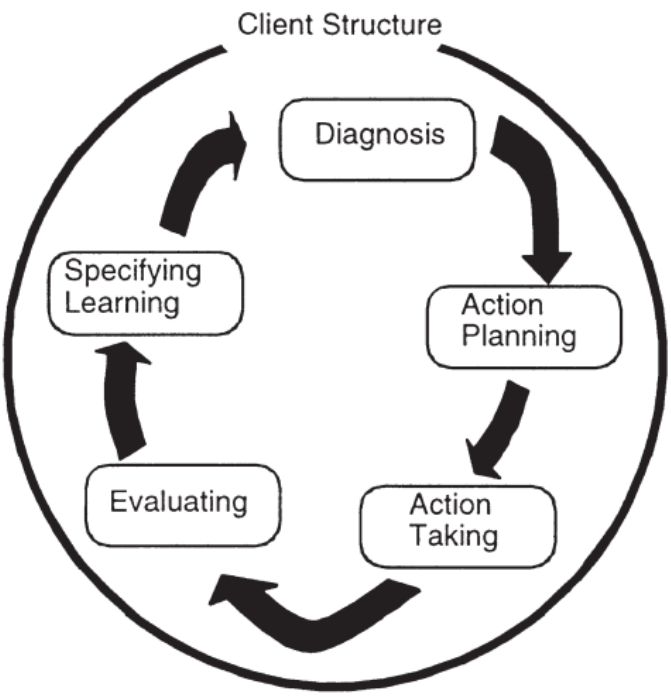
This investigation followed a qualitative approach to explore the research question. Qualitative research is a path in which researchers can expand their understanding from experiences, insights and perspectives. It indicates having close contact with the world around them in order to comprehend a particular topic of study. Denzin et al (2003) express that “qualitative research is a situated activity that colocates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible”(p.4). This means that in a qualitative study, the researcher is immersed in the activity he wants to investigate and use different tools to gather the information that helps him to watch and understand a phenomenon. In this sense, these authors say that this approach “involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world” (Denzin et al, 2003. p.4). In other words, qualitative research analyzes humans, their learning, teaching processes, interaction, behaviors, attitudes, thoughts, among others in their natural environment for the purpose of understanding a situation, person or group of individuals. Qualitative research helped to explore how authentic materials raise graders' awareness about cultural differences in the ELF class and also describe the changes in students' stereotypes and judgments about other cultures using authentic materials in the EFL class through image model method for the purpose of promoting their intercultural communicative competence.

This study employed the use of action research model for exploring teacher practices as it is mentioned by Clark et al (2020), "action research is a process for improving

educational practice. Its methods involve action, evaluation, and reflection. It is a process to gather evidence to implement change in practices" (p.8). This model of research plays an important role in any academic community, since this is the way in which educators can change or improve their daily practices by making reflections about what they are doing. Following this idea, Koshy (2010) expresses action research as "a method used for improving practice. It involves action, evaluation, and critical reflection and – based on the evidence gathered – changes in practice are then implemented"(p. 2). Therefore, the job of a teacher is not just teaching, but understanding, acting, reflecting and changing something they realize is not leading them and their students down the right path. Thus, to have a clear understanding of the process to pursue, the cycle of action research is shown below.

Figure 1

Action Research Model



Note: This figure explains the steps of the cycle of action research. Adapted from "*Grounded Action Research: a Method for Understanding IT in Practice,*" by R. Baskerville and J. Pries-Heje, 1999, *Accounting, Management and Information Technologies*,9, p. 4.

In the first instance we have diagnosing. In this step is when the problem, situation or fault is detected. In the second place,which is plan action, according to the problem, some actions are planned to be carried out; in the third step, taking action ,the plan created is implemented; fourth, evaluating, the actions are evaluated to know the consequences; and finally, in the last step, specifying learnings, the information can be analyzed in order to identify findings. Taking into account the aforementioned, the principal purpose of this study is to help secondary school students to de-center from judgment and stereotypes regarding cultural differences studied in the EFL class through authentic materials using image model methods. For this, action research is helpful to reach this purpose given that it seeks to transform teacher's daily practices to allow students to increase their performance.

4.2 Data collection techniques

The following are the data collection techniques used to answer the main question of this research: "How might authentic materials help primary school students to de-center from judgment and stereotypes regarding cultural differences using the IMAGE model method?" participant observations were used, given that they "allow the researcher to experience activities and interactions between people in situ and are often selected when the researcher wishes to observe the participants' social interactions and processes within a specific setting" (Berthelsen et al., 2016, p.2). That is to say, teachers not only are passive observers in terms of what is happening in the classroom, but also participate actively with students in the whole process. It indicates the immersion in the day-to-day classroom context observing interaction, culture, behavior, and motivation. In this study, the participant observations allowed obtaining information about the students' perceptions as well as stereotypes and judgment they initially have about other cultures. It helps to observe and perceive the possible changes students experienced regarding culture differences using authentic material such as images through the IMAGE model during the whole process. In this study I taught six classes that were video recorded and transcribed for a period of one month and a half. I observed the video recordings and reflected on them before teaching and recording the upcoming lessons.

Moreover, to answer the question of this study, "How might authentic materials help secondary school students to de-center from judgment and stereotypes regarding cultural differences using the IMAGE model method?" written tasks were collected in order to understand how students perceive cultural diversity in the EFL class through the IMAGE model.

4.3 Context and Participants

This study was conducted in Jesús de Nazareth, a public school located in a village called Los Monos which belongs to Lorica, Córdoba. Students in this institution have low and medium socioeconomic status. It offers pre-school, basic, and secondary levels. the institution does not have internet access. The school has a cafeteria where students have breakfast; a library where students have the opportunity to read different texts in their spare time; a laboratory where they usually have classes and a sport field where they carry out physical education classes and also they hold a championship annually.

The course chosen is 8th-03 grade in which there are 33 students. These learners are in A- English level. The average age is from 13 to 17 years old. For these learners, the school assigns one English teacher who teaches this foreign language 2 hours per week, the English classes are guided by a book, called *Way to go* provided by the ministry of education, photocopies, markers, and a whiteboard. Some of the students are not afraid to participate while others struggle a lot with that. They like working groups and it is better for them to do the activities in the classroom rather than at home. This group of learners was selected since they lived in a rural area and they have little knowledge about what is the world outside, and how different people are from other countries.

4.4 Implementation of the IMAGE model

For the implementation of the model, I designed 1 unit following all the stages suggested by Glisan and Donato (2017), as detailed below. The unit consisted of four lessons that were taught in six lessons. Each lesson responded to the steps of the image model.

Lesson 1: In the first lesson, students watched a set of images,answered some questions related to them and finally established some differences and similarities following the first step of the model, as described below.

Step 1. **I**mages and **M**aking observations: during this step of the model, students were asked to make some observations regarding a set of two images projected on the board throughout a PowerPoint presentation. The images included women from different parts of the world who speak English. After the observations, students answered some fact questions as a whole class discussion concerning the images shown. When learners finished that part, they were asked to fill a chart with the similarities and differences they found relating to the set of images (See appendix B). Figures 2, 3 illustrate the first set of images and the fact questions presented to the students, while figure 4 shows the template students used to write down differences and similarities.

Figure 2

PowerPoint Screenshot of the first image, Lesson 1

Note: this figure shows the first image presented to the students and the fact questions they answered in lesson 1 of the first step of the IMAGE model.

Figure 3

PowerPoint Screenshot of the second image, Lesson 1

Note: this figure shows the second image students watched and the fact questions they answered taking into account what they saw in the photograph in lesson 1 of the first step of the IMAGE model.

Figure 4

Template of Task 1 Lesson 1

Task 1

After making the observation and answering the questions, think and write down the similarities and differences (if any) you found in the images previously presented.

Similarities	Differences

Note: this figure shows the template used by students to write down the similarities and differences they found concerning the images previously presented.

During this first task, some examples were given to the students in order for them to have an idea of the information they were going to write. Then, students were able to identify some important similarities and differences about the English language.

Lesson 2: During this lesson, students analyzed some extra information concerning the English language and its accents, following the second step of the model (see description below). This lesson was divided into 4 classes (class A, class B, class C and class D) due to time constraints.

Step 2. **A**nalysing additional information about the product or practice: in the second step of the model, two pieces of information were shown. During class A, B and C, students analysed the first piece of information concerning a blog which contains the countries in the different continents and regions (Asia, Africa, Oceania, America, Europe and the Caribbean island) where the English language is spoken. At the beginning, students were asked to watch an image inserted in the blog and read its title in order to answer some questions such as *Why do you think the author chose it? Does this image have to do with the title of the blog? If so,*

in what way? (Figure 5) as part of task 2 in a whole class discussion. Next, participants were divided into 6 groups, each group was in charge of one of the continents/regions in order to answer two questions:*Did you find something new for you? If so, what was it? How many countries in that continent have English as its official language? Underline them* as shown in figure 6 (see also appendix A). When students were able to understand the extra information and answer the questions, each group shared what they found with the rest of the class. In class D, students analysed the second piece of the information with respect to an extract from Babble Magazine a and a Genially presentation of different accents of the English language around the different countries studied in lessons aforementioned with the objective of giving answer to this question, *do you believe that all Spanish speakers have the same accent? Is it the same in all countries? Why do you think it is different?* (Figure 7).

Figure 5

PowerPoint Screenshot of the task 2 Lesson 2

Note: screenshot of a PowerPoint presentation from lesson 2 in step 2 of the IMAGE model.

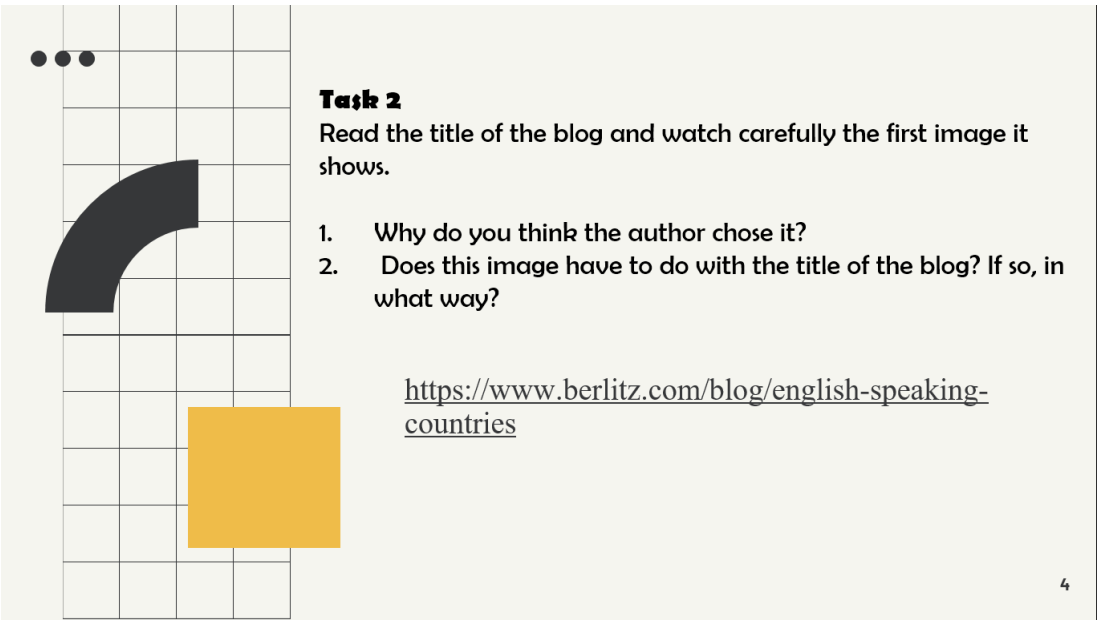
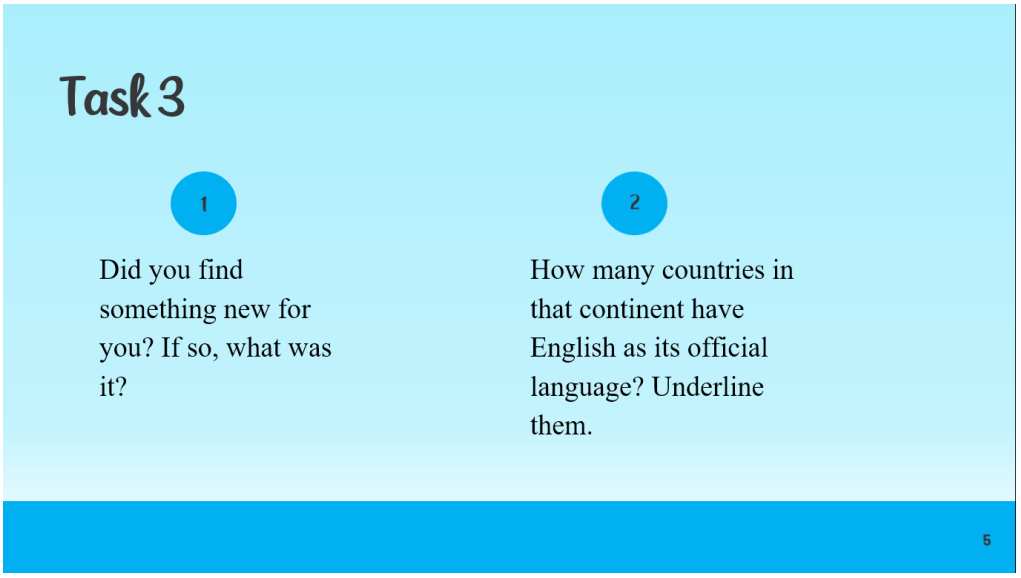


Figure 6

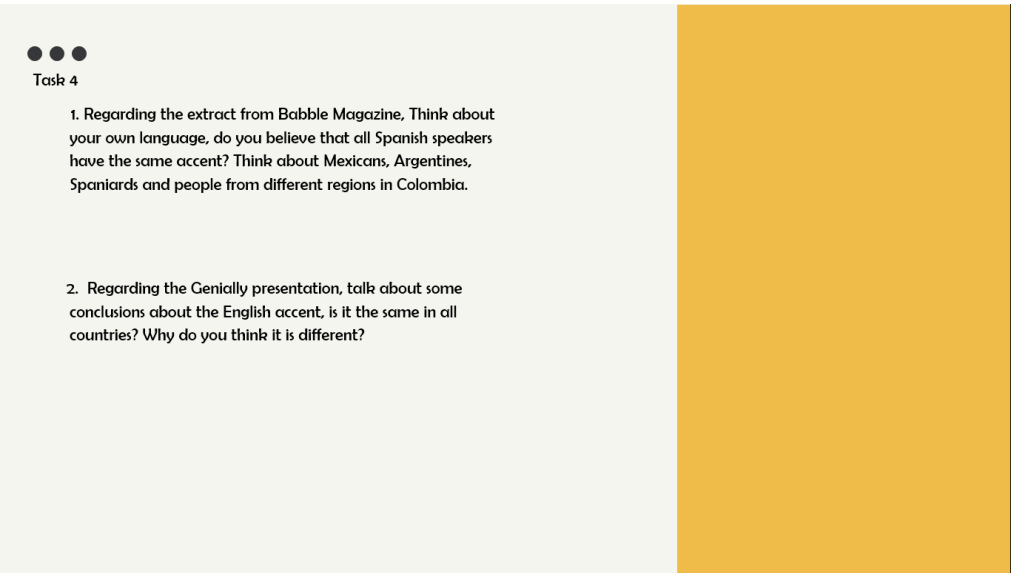
PowerPoint Screenshot of the task 3 Lesson 2



Note: this figure shows the screenshot related to the lesson 2 of the second step of the IMAGE model approach.

Figure 7

PowerPoint Screenshot of the task 4 Lesson 2



Note: PowerPoint screenshot of task 4 regarding the second piece of information analysed in step 2 of the IMAGE model.

Lesson 3: learners shared their perceptions regarding the last image of the model, following step 3, as described below.

Step 3. Generating hypothesis about cultural perspectives: during this step, students watched another new image from a PowerPoint presentation so that students answered some thought questions as a whole class discussion related to the English language to promote new perspectives on them as seen in figure 7.

Figure 8

PowerPoint Screenshot of the image and thought questions in Lesson 3

1.Do you think that all of them have the same English accent?

2.If they are talking in English ,does it mean that they are from the United States or England? Explain your answer.

3.Does the English language come from the United States or England?

4.Do you think there should be a standard English language?

5.What is the importance of language, especially the English language around the world?

24

Note: screenshot of a PowerPoint presentation from lesson 3 of the third step of the IMAGE model to de-center stereotypes.

Lesson 4: In this lesson, participants shared their findings with the rest of the class, following step 4.

Step 4. **E**xploring perspectives and reflecting further: In this last step, students were asked to investigate for more information that was not covered during the lessons to be shared in the next class. The class was divided into three big groups of 11 students. Each group was in charge of find out data respecting three different aspects: the first of them was the reason why there is only one country in Latin America in which the English is its official language; the second was to bring to the class a different English accent; and the third one, the reason why English is not the official language of the US. Each group shared their findings to the class. Students commented on their partners' participation and showed critical thinking respect to the data discussed.

4.5 Data analysis

The data to analyze was collected through participant observations and production and production tasks.

In order to analyze the information gathered through the different techniques aforementioned, coding was used as a way of understanding the data. Coding is a qualitative research analysis procedure that helps to identify the most important parts of the data; it can be a word, an item, a phrase, or a single sentence, in order to classify them into categories or codes (Linneberg and Korsgaard, 2019). Furthermore, coding was followed using a deductive approach, seeing that codes or categories were established, and the analysis was focused on those codes(Linneberg and Korsgaard, 2019). As the main purpose of this work was to identify the awareness in relation to stereotypes, the analysis related to the preconceived stereotypes: places where English is spoken, variety of English accents, and Skin color in relation to place of origin. In the first step, the researcher writes down the data collected and states how the data is going to be organized. Second, the information transcribed is read in order to get familiar with it. Third, the data should be read again in order to start writing some notes or memos and see patterns and categories. Fourth, the researcher looks for similar codes into categories, reorganized the data, eliminates what is unnecessary and names the categories; fifth, the categories are classified into themes. Sixth, the validation of the data should be done using different forms such as peer review; and finally, after doing the previous steps, the information should be interpreted in order to report the findings collected and provide answers to the questions.

5. Findings

This chapter shows the findings concerning the question of this study after the implementation of the IMAGE model using authentic materials. The data analysis showed that students were able to de-center from stereotypes and judgment regarding cultural differences. For instance, students realized that the English language does not come just from countries such as the United States or England. Besides, they became aware of the different accents surrounding this language around the countries where it is spoken. Learners also understood that not only fair-skinned people live in the aforementioned countries and speak the English language. These three main stereotypes from which students were de-centered will be described below in detail showing how authentic materials such as images, audios and texts as fundamental parts of the model, helped students to build different perspectives from the ones they previously had.

English language comes from the United States or England: students had limited knowledge concerning the places where the English language is an official language around the world. However, with the implementation of the unit, students were changing this notion. To start, I will describe the process students followed for the transformation of this stereotype by showing first the perceptions students had when they were asked about where the English language is spoken.

Transcript 1: students' perceptions about where the English language is spoken.

T: ¿De dónde creen ustedes que viene el idioma Inglés?

Ss: (XXX)

S1: Viene de Estados Unidos

S2:de Estados Unidos

S3: de Inglaterra

S4:de Estados Unidos

S5: de Francia, seño

As it is seen in the transcription above, most of the students agreed on the idea that the English language comes from the U.S.A. Others said that it comes from countries such as England and even France. This indicates, first, that learners have gained through life that those who are English native speakers are American or British, which implies that students have a pre-establish conception in their minds about the English language and take it as totally true, probably because it has been seen or heard before. Second, the response *France* indicates the students' lack of awareness regarding other cultures. As a result of that lack of knowledge (including all students' responses), it is easy for students, who are exposed to different sources of information (social media), to start drawing in their head wrong beliefs about other cultures.

In the first step of the IMAGE model (Images and Making observations), while students were watching two images and answering some questions, they started changing their minds by comparing the images and mentioning diverse places where the language was spoken . The following transcription shows the initial changes in students' viewpoints after analyzing the responses given by themselves.

Transcript 2: Initial awareness

Figure 8

T: ¿Algo más que puedan decir de la imagen? ((Pointing at the image projected on the board))

S1: ¡Seño!

T: ((point at the student))

S1: Ella es de Estados Unidos porque usted está hablando en Inglés y ella tiene que estar hablando en Inglés.

T:¿ tú dices que ellas están hablando en Inglés?

Figure 9

S1:Yo creo. ¡Mire! ((Point at the board showing the words in English))

Figure 3

T: chicos, ahora. ustedes dijeron que ella podría ser de Suiza, ella de India y ella de Estados Unidos. ((point at each woman in the image, respectively)).

T: ((get closer to the students)) ustedes mencionaron tres países diferentes. Tres países diferentes. ¿Y en qué idioma están hablando? ((Look at the board))

S? : En Inglés

S? : En Inglés

T: ¿En Inglés? ¿Y por qué se da esa situación?

S2: ((raise his hand)) porque las tres son de los Estados Unidos.

T: Porque las tres son de Estados Unidos. ¡Ok! ¿Qué más?

S? : porque las tres hablan Inglés

T: Ok!

S3: porque en los países o ciudades en donde ellas viven se habla Inglés. O ellas lo aprendieron.

T: Very good!

After being shown the images, students started to answer some fact questions such as *Where are they from? What do they look like?¿En qué idioma están hablando?*After that, in task 1 (see appendix B), they established some differences and similarities taking into account the images by writing them down in order to fill a chart. The most notorious similarity students wrote down was that people in the images use the same language to communicate: *"Hablan el mismo idioma", "Hablan el mismo lenguaje", "Hablan inglés", "el idioma".*However, the most common difference they wrote was that people in the images were from different countries: *"Diferentes países", "Son de diferentes países", "Son de partes diferentes".* In this sense, I asked students *¿por qué se da esta situación?* (That even when they are from different backgrounds, they speak the same language). To answer this question verbally, some students started giving the same answer as in transcript 1 which was that the English language comes from the USA or England, which means that people in the images speak English because they are from those countries. Nevertheless, with the S3 response *(Porque en los países o ciudades en donde ellas viven se habla Inglés. O ellas lo aprendieron)* , I could notice a significant change in the student opinion. This response implies the beginning in which students take the first step to change their views.

In step #2 of the model (Analyzing additional information), students showed a new understanding while analyzing extra information regarding the different countries around the world where the English language is spoken. The next transcript shows that students' knowledge with respect to English language precedence is not limited to a single country such as the US. Instead, they recognize that there are more.

Transcript 3: Students' new understanding

Figure 10

T: Entonces,¿ el Inglés solo se habla en los Estados Unidos?

Ss: ¡No!

T: ¿Están seguros?

Ss: (XXX)

S4: Si hay 67 es porque hay un poco, seño.

In this opportunity, while students read and analyzed the information contained in Berlitz blog concerning the 67 English speaking countries, students were asked if English language is just spoken in The United States. To this question, most of them gave the same answer: *no*. Then, one of the learners expressed that *if there are 67 it is because there are a lot. It* signifies that if there are 67 countries where English language is spoken it is because we can find more English native speakers in other countries around the world, so the student did not limit himself to think about American or British, on the contrary, he showed the new knowledge acquired with the extra information.

In step #3 of the IMAGE model (Generating Hypotheses about Cultural Perspectives) while students answered some questions, it is evident that they were conscious about the fact

that there are many countries where this language is spoken, therefore, their responses contained the name of different countries for all over the world as is shown in the following transcript.

Transcript 4: Students are aware of the different countries where the English language is spoken

Figure 11

T: Si ellas están hablando en Inglés, ¿quiere decir que son de Estados Unidos o Inglaterra?

Ss: ¡No!

S6: ((move her head from side to side indicating a negative response))

T: ¿De dónde más pueden ser entonces?

S5: De otro continente o país

T: ¿Cómo cual?

S5: Suiza

S? : Africa

S5: Canada

T: Very good!

S? : Irlanda

T: perfect!

S5: Nueva Zelanda

After students watched an image with a group of women, from different nationalities, talking in English about environmental matters, I asked students: *Si ellas están hablando en Inglés, ¿quiere decir que son de Estados Unidos o Inglaterra?* Participants agreed that the people in the image could be from other countries such as Switzerland, Canada, Ireland or New Zealand, or from another continent such as Africa. These responses indicate that the students at this point of the unit know and are aware that apart from the United States and England, the English language expands beyond these two territories, which means that from now on they are more likely to associate the English language with other countries in America, Africa, Oceania and Europe, which also indicates that they have become more open-minded and that they have achieved the purpose of this unit and research: to de-center students from the stereotype or preconception regarding this language.

English speakers have the same accent: at the beginning of the unit, students were not aware of the different accents surrounding the English language. However, during the process, especially after listening to some native English speakers from all over the world, they understood that just as in the Spanish language there are different accents, the English language also has a great variety of accents depending on the region where it is spoken. To start with,I will present the students' first understanding concerning the different accents the English language has in some countries as illustrated below.

Transcript 1: students' initial awareness

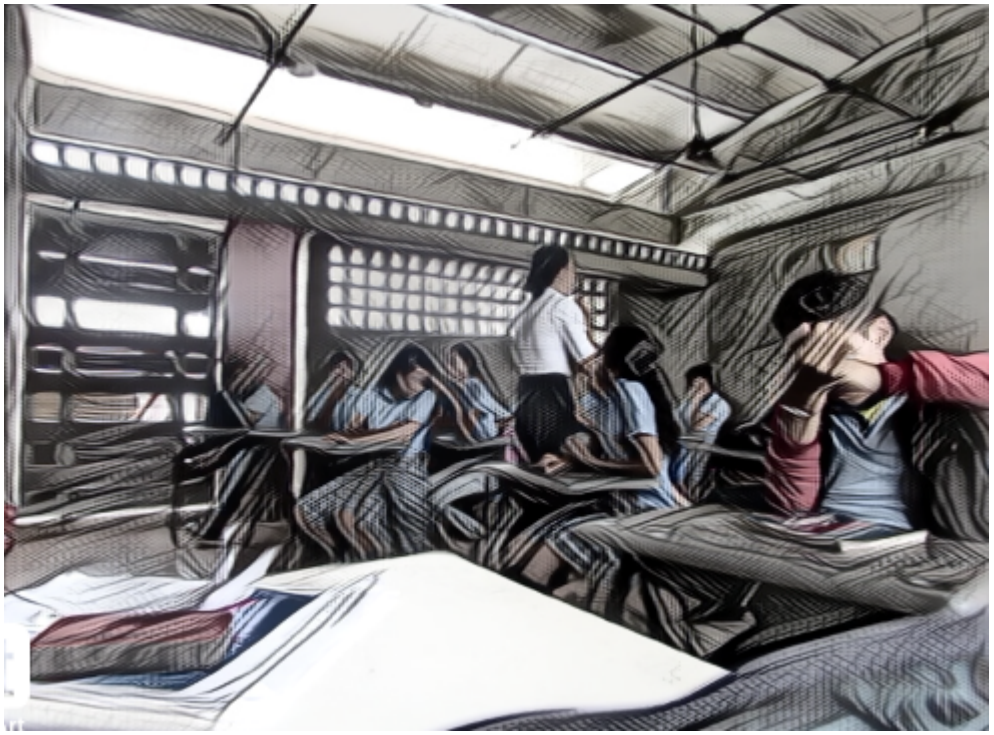


Figure 12

T: ¿Ustedes creen que en todos los continentes que ustedes dijeron, en todos los países en donde se habla el Inglés, todas esas personas tienen el mismo acento, hablan igual?

Ss: ¡No!

T: Yes or no?

Ss: Noo!

T: ¿Las personas en África hablan el Inglés igual?

S?: No!

S?: No!

T: ¿ Las personas en América hablan el inglés igual?

Ss: ¡Noo!

T: ¿las personas de Canadá con las personas de Australia hablan el mismo Inglés ? Yes or no?

S?: Yes!

S?: No!

T: ¿Por qué?

S7: ((XXX))

T: S7 dice que ellos hablan Inglés pero no con el mismo tono.

Pero más que con el mismo tono, es con el mismo acento.

While students were analyzing additional information about accents, I asked them if they thought that in the different English-speaking countries they had studied before, all of them had the same accent. To this question, even though one of the students said yes, most of them said that the English spoken in Africa or the United States is not the same as the English spoken in Canada or Australia. For example, I asked, *¿Las personas en África hablan el Inglés igual?, ¿ Las personas en América hablan el inglés igual?, ¿Las personas de Canadá con las personas de Australia hablan el mismo Inglés ?* To answer these questions, most of the learners said the same answer: *"No"*. In this transcription above, we can see how 8th graders started to recognize the accents as something specific to each person, community, city or country when S7 said that *"ellos hablan Inglés pero no con el mismo tono*", with the word *tono,* she meant accent.

When answering some questions regarding the last image of the model in step #3, Generating Hypotheses about Cultural Perspectives, students showed the new understanding they acquired about this concern. In the following transcription it is seen that students (most

of them) not only are aware of the English accents but also they recognize that it does not have to be the same for everyone, since each person has his own way of speaking.

Transcript 2: students awareness of the different accents surrounding the English language

Figure 13

T: ((asked one of the students)) Do you think that all of them have the same English accent ? ((pointed at the image on the board))

S?: ((No answer))

T: ¿Crees que todas ellas tienen el mismo acento?

Ss: ¡Noo!

T: ¿Seguro?

S?: Sí, seño.

T: yes or no?

S?: yes, yes!

T: ¿ tienen el mismo acento?

Ss: ¡Noo!

T: Chicos, ¿ustedes creen que tiene que haber el mismo Inglés para todo el mundo?

Ss: ¡No!

T: ¿Por qué?

Ss: ((XXX))

T: Porque tienen la misma lengua, ¿pero el acento es qué?

Ss: Diferente

Students started answering some questions concerning the last image presented in which there were some women gathered. They expressed that although they were speaking English, their accent was not the same. In addition, to the question *"¿Ustedes creen que tiene que haber el mismo Inglés para todo el mundo?"* they agreed that English should not be a standard language because everyone has an accent which is *"Diferente"*.This means that students expanded their knowledge by referring to the way in which people talk to one another even when it is the same language. Now, they think it does not have to be the same, since each person and group of people is different, this reveals that students recognize the cultural differences that make one or more people unique.

Skin color determines one's place of origin: throughout the application of the IMAGE model unit, they realized that dark-skinned people can also be American or Swiss as well as English native speakers. But first, I will show the ideas students had at the beginning. When they watched a set of images showing fair-skinned and dark-skinned people, they labeled them as coming from Switzerland and the United States, the former, and from Africa and Chocó (Colombia) as shown next.

Transcript 1: students categorize people by their physical appearance

Figure 14

T: ((pointed to a student)) ¿Por qué piensas que es de Estados Unidos?

S1: Porque es blanquita y bonita.

T: ¿Las únicas personas bonitas son de Estados Unidos? ((asked the whole class))

S?: ¡Sí!

S?: ¡No!

Figure 15

T:((showed another image))

S2: ((pointed to one of the three women in the image))Aquella es chocoana.

T: vamos a empezar con esta. Ella es… ((pointed to the students))

S3: Suiza

S4: Suiza

T: ¿Por qué?

S3: Por la forma de sus ojos, de sus ojos y de su cara

S4: Por sus características, seño.

S3: Por las características.

T: ¿Cuáles características? ¿Físicas?

S3: ¡Ajá! ((nodded her head))

T: ¿De dónde es ella? ((pointed to one of the women in the image))

S2: De Estados Unidos

S5: De África

S?: África, África.

S6: De Estados Unidos no es, porque allá no aceptan a los morenos.

T: ¿Tú piensas que los discriminan?

S6: ((nodded his head))

When the first image was presented to the students in the first step of the model, S1 indicated that one of the two women was from the United States because she was pretty and fair-skinned. To that argument, some students agreed, some disagreed and some did not

answer. After that, the second image was shown, this time, the image contained three women. The first reaction to this image came from S2, who at first glance indicated that one of them was *"Chocoana"* (from Chocó-Colombia) because of her dark skin color while others mentioned that she was from *"África"*. Regarding another woman in the image, some learners agreed with the idea that she was from *"Suiza"*, because of her physical appearance, especially because of her blue eyes. As seen in the transcript, S2 changed his mind and said that the dark-skinned woman was American. Taking this response into account, S6 was in disagreement since he thinks that *"de Estados Unidos no es, porque allá no aceptan a los morenos",* in other words, he thinks that dark- skinned people are discriminated against in the USA. This information points out the general belief 8th graders have when they assume that if a person is fair-skinned and has blue eyes it is because they are from countries such as the United States or Switzerland. On the other hand, dark-skinned people are from Africa or Chocó. It is evident how students attribute one single characteristic to an entire continent or region without taking the time to think carefully about the diversity of people we can find everywhere.

In the step # 3 of the IMAGE model, Generating Hypotheses about Cultural Perspectives, students realized how diverse a country can be regarding people's skin color, that in the US we can find dark-skinned people as well as fair-skinned people in Africa as is described next.

Transcript 2: students are aware that dark- skinned people can be from the U.S. as well.

Figure 16

T: ¿Ustedes piensan que todas las mujeres que son blancas y bonitas son de Estados Unidos?

Ss: ¡Noo!

T: ¿En Estados Unidos hay personas de color moreno?

Ss: ¡Síii!

T: ¿pueden mencionar a una persona de color moreno que sea de Estados Unidos? algún famoso que conozcan.

S?: Will Smith

T: Excellent

T: Chicos, ¿todas las personas morenas son de África?

Ss: ¡No!

At this point, students were able to recognize that all pretty and fair-skinned women are not only from the U.S. but from other regions, and that, in fact, English speakers from a

different skin color such Will Smith are from that country as well. Participants also realized that all dark-skinned people are not only from Africa, when I asked them *¿todas las personas morenas son de África?* they responded immediately with a *No*. This shows that learners seem to be more conscious of the fact that a country such as the United States is rich in ethnic and cultural diversity. For this reason, students will think carefully before labeling people just taking their physical appearance into account.

6. Discussion

After analyzing the information collected, the results show that students were able to move from making generalizations and having prejudices to being mindful of cultural differences concerning the English language, especially in terms of where it is spoken, its variety of accents and people who speak this language. The findings revealed that the IMAGE model and authentic materials helped to bring about these changes in the students. Bearing that in mind, the majority of students have a broader understanding of the countries where the English language is spoken or is an official language, given that their previous knowledge was reduced to only two. In the same vein, the participants realized that all people who use this language in their daily lives do not have the same accent, on the contrary, it might vary,even from person to person. Additionally, the findings showed that learners developed their cultural awareness when they were cognizant of the fact that a single physical characteristic does not define an entire society. In this particular case, it denotes that both light-colored and dark-colored people can belong to the same region and be native English speakers as well. Such findings suggest that students started to gain some insights in relation to culture and intercultural communication, having more open mindedness about how diverse a culture could be.

The findings of this study agree with Touhami and Sebbat (2020) and Vega (2020) when showing that raising students' awareness regarding cultural differences allow students to change their attitudes and perspectives towards other product or practice what help students to start thinking by their own, giving their own ideas rather than being attached to the beliefs of others. Moreover, this research also supports previous studies (Pinzón and Norely, 2020; Codina, 2020; Touhami and Sebbat, 2020; Catillo et al., 2017) in that authentic materials are helpful and have an important role in the development of cultural awareness, since they encourage students to think critically, reflect and express their opinion concerning

cultural topics. . In this same line of thought, the current study shares the view of Palacio and Pulido (2015) when they highlighted that authentic images and short texts help students to establish a connection with real aspects of the target culture such as social, economic, geographic and cultural aspects among others. Considering that, in this era of globalization learners need to be acquainted with aspects of their own culture as well as with foreign cultures, this is the way in which students stop creating prejudices and start being empathetic in different contexts. Besides, this study also evidenced that the IMAGE model approach is appropriate to the organization of a cultural lesson, given that the structure of the lesson is divided into four steps that are not difficult to follow and also demonstrated the effectiveness of this application when dispelling students from stereotypes and judgment (Vega, 2020).

This study unveiled that the IMAGE model could be an effective approach to teach culture, and especially, to decenter stereotypes even when students have a low English level to elaborate their analysis in this language, given that images make meaning and facilitate the understanding of the language. Also, the implementation of the model in this context, showed that a low English level in students is not a barrier to carry out this approach in a secondary English class, since students are able to develop their awareness throughout verbal and non-verbal information. Furthermore, bearing in mind that students live in a rural area where they have limited access to the world outside, to people from a different background and the cultural diversity that characterize them, it is unlikely that they de-center from the preconceptions they have. Nevertheless, the implementation of the model provided a way in which they might cope with stereotypes. It is expected that from now on they have the capacity to discern whether they are making generalizations in order to rebuild their thoughts.

The implementation of the model also showed that it is possible to integrate content and cultural content into the English class. Beyond learning grammar and vocabulary, they learnt about diverse accents, the reason why they are different, about cultural diversity in

different regions. Besides, they gained a general view in relation to geography, especially where continents and countries are located.

Additionally, this research focuses on mainly perspectives rather than practices or products (e,g., festivals, folks, foods), given that the unit was planned by and for students to see in a different and deeper way than what is seen at first glance.That is to say, that students were able to move on from their initial thoughts in order to develop others viewpoints thank to the acquisition of new knowledge. Another important thing to have in mind, is that this single unit was the beginning of a long journey for both the students and myself, as a teacher, to gain insights about how to integrate vocabulary, grammar and culture which is interesting in that language that is no longer taught in isolation, but within a context.

The present study informs how the target language, the grammar, the culture and content could be integrated in a single English class. In this sense, this study shows a way in which a lesson could be contextualized, that is to say, it helps to create a situated and connected lesson with the context where students are in light of the fact that "it motivates learners by establishing clearly defined reasons and purposes for communication in cultural context" (Donato and Glisan, 2017, p. 11). Additionally, this research also presents the first insights in order to know how to address some topics that lead to creating stereotypes such as discrimination, culture diversity, and freedom.

For further research, I suggest the application of more than one unit of the IMAGE model approach when improving students' cultural awareness and de-center them from prejudices and judgment since this is a useful model for teachers to teach culture and for students to know more about the world surrounding them and about language. Besides, I also recommend teachers and future teachers concentrate not only on grammar but also on foreign and local cultural aspects as well as the language itself, since students nowadays need to be

mindful of how the culture is influenced every day by practices and products of the societies. For future research, it is also recommend to take into account the use of the second language and strategies to facilitate target language comprehensibility when working with students with a basic knowledge of the English language.

7. Conclusions

The current research showed that the integration of a cultural lesson throughout the IMAGE model approach and real materials helped secondary school students to change their perceptions into positive ones based on the new knowledge they were capable to acquire during the process and with the exposure to cultural and rich content that they coped with in the classes.

At the beginning of the application, students showed confidence when sharing their ideas regarding some aspects of the foreign culture, which denoted stereotypes. These ideas were the ones they had grown up with and took as the only truth, in other words, they had "rigid representations" (Kurylo, 2012, p.337) that became flexible step by step. As a consequence, students rethought and rebuilt their mindset and their cultural awareness skills improved.

The present study informs how the target language, the grammar, the culture and content could be integrated in a single English class. In this sense, this study shows a way in which a lesson could be contextualized, that is to say, it helps to create a situated and connected lesson with the context where students are in light of the fact that "it motivates learners by establishing clearly defined reasons and purposes for communication in cultural context" (Donato and Glisan, 2017, p. 11). Additionally, this research also presents the first insights in order to know how to address some topics that lead to creating stereotypes such as discrimination, culture diversity, and freedom.

This study also presented some limitations which make the whole process challenging. First, while searching for information and other studies in connection with the IMAGE model approach and its implementation to de-center stereotypes, it was hard to find out some sources in order to have a guide to develop the present study. Second, the low

English level students had was the reason why they did not use this foreign language to give their comments and opinions. They were also ashamed to use it for fear of making pronunciation mistakes. Third, the lack of internet connection made the development of the unit difficult to be carried out, considering that some of the authentic resources chosen, needed to be used online. Fourth, the time for the development of the steps of the model was not enough, given that students had 2 hours of 45 minutes a week, and sometimes, during English classes, they had to comply with other activities of the institution itself. This also influenced the fact that only one unit was carried out and the fact that most of the activities were questions to be answered orally, because more elaborate tasks required more time to be done. Another consequence of the lack of time was the fact that interviews or free conversations were not carried out in order to know the students' perception concerning their experience during the whole process.

This project helps teachers to realize that the importance of English teaching lies in students' needs, experiences, views and practices more than the repetition of some grammatical structures. The point is that students need to see the reason why they are learning something in order to motivate themselves throughout a topic of their interest. Another thing to mention is that the low English level is not an obstacle to students when learning, since the classes might be adapted to their knowledge. For those reasons, it is necessary that teachers look again at their practices and improve them as well as students' learning.

References

Babchuk, W. A. (2019). Fundamentals of qualitative analysis in family medicine. *Family Medicine and Community Health,7*(2), 1-10 doi:10.1136/fmch-2018-000040

Baskerville, R., & Pries-Heje, J. (1999). Grounded action research: a method for understanding IT in practice. *Accounting, Management and Information Technologies, 9*(1), 1–23. https://sci-hub.se/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0959-8022(98)00017-4

Berthelsen, C. B., Frederiksen, K., & Lindhardt, T. (2016). A discussion of differences in preparation, performance and postreflections in participant observations within two grounded theory approaches. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences, 31*(2), 413–420. doi:10.1111/scs.12353

Bernal, A. (2020). Authentic materials and tasks as mediators to develop EFL students' intercultural competence.*HOW Journal, 27*(1), 29-46. https://doi.org/10.19183/how.27.1.515

Beeghly, E. (2015). What is a Stereotype? What is Stereotyping? *Hypatia,* 30(4), 675–691. doi:10.1111/hypa.12170

Byram, M. (1997). "Cultural awareness" as vocabulary learning. *The Language Learning Journal*, 16(1), 51–57. https://sci-hub.se/https://doi.org/10.1080/09571739785200291

Byram, M. & Wagner, M. (2007). *Intercultural Citizenship. The International Encyclopedia of Intercultural Communication, 1-6.* DOI:10.1002/9781118783665.ieicc0043

Castillo, C., Insuasty, E., & Jaime, M. (2017). The Impact of Authentic Materials and Tasks on Students' Communicative Competence at a Colombian Language School. *PROFILE, 19*(1), 89-104. http://dx.doi.org/10.15446/profile.v19n1.56763

Clark, J., Jobe, M., Porath, S., & Thiele, J.(2020). *Action Research*. New Prairie Press. https://newprairiepress.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1034&context=ebooks

Codina, M. (2020). *The use of authentic materials to promote language diversity awareness in secondary education.* [Bachelor dissertation, Universitat Central de Catalunya]. UVIC Campus Repository. http://dspace.uvic.cat/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10854/6511/trealu_a2020_codina_marta_use_authentic_materials.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (Eds).(2003). *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. Sage Publications. https://books.google.com.co/books?hl=es&lr=&id=ocGxhJEMf0kC&oi=fnd&pg=PR5&dq=Denzin,+N.+%26+Lincoln,+Y.+2003b,+Collecting+and+Interpreting+Qualitative+Materials,+Sage+Publications,+Thousand+Oaks,+California.&ots=tfU8e8B8s8&sig=cRdyZ5AYehxXDcwxzoGL0ok5YNI#v=onepage&q=Denzin%2C%20N.%20%26%20Lincoln%2C%20Y.%202003b%2C%20Collecting%20and%20Interpreting%20Qualitative%20Materials%2C%20Sage%20Publications%2C%20Thousand%20Oaks%2C%20California.&f=false

Donato, R., & Glisan, E. (2017). *Enacting the work of language instruction*. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

Durden, T., Guzman, J.,Guzman, M., Potthoff, K. & Taylor, S.,(2016). Cultural Competence, an Important Skill Set for the 21st Century. *UNL Extension publications.* https://extensionpublications.unl.edu/assets/html/g1375/build/g1375.htm

Koshy, E., Koshy, V., & Waterman. H. (2011).*Action Research in Healthcare.* SAGE Publications Ltd. https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446288696

Kurylo, A. (2012). What AreTheyLike? Non-Expert Definitions of Stereotypes and Their Implications for Stereotype Maintenance. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 9(4), 337–350.* doi:10.1080/14780887.2010.500517

Linneberg, N., & Korsgaard, S. (2019). "Coding qualitative data: a synthesis guiding the novice", *Qualitative Research Journal*, *19*(3),259-270. https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-12-2018-0012

Marpaung, M. S., & Pinondang, H.J. (2020). Enhancing Students' Vocabulary through Authentic Materials and Multimedia. *Journal of English language pedagogy, literature and culture*, 5 (2), 85-101.https://doi.org/10.35974/acuity.v5i2.2247

Osborne, D. & Sibley, C. G. (2015). Stereotype. *The International Encyclopedia of Political Communication, 1–5.* doi:10.1002/9781118541555.wbiepc096

Palacio, E., & Pulido, J. (2015). *Developing intercultural competence through the exposure to authentic material in a public primary school* [Bachelor dissertation,Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira]. UTP Campus Repository. https://repositorio.utp.edu.co/items/373ae4de-db32-420e-82af-18c70a1b9c00

Richards, J.(2001).*Curriculum development in language teaching.*Cambridge University Press.https://www.academia.edu/36786525/Curriculum_Development_in_Language_Teaching?auto=download&email_work_card=download-paper

Salwa, S. (2013). The importance of using authentic materials in increasing EFL learners motivation. In Cahyono, B. Y., & Megawati, F. (Eds), *Materials and media in English language teaching.*(pp. 5-11). State University of Malang Press. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318741542_THE_IMPORTANCE_OF_USING_AUTHENTIC_MATERIALS_IN_INCREASING_EFL_LEARNERS'_MOTIVATION

Santana, A. M. ., & Cely, B. L.(2021, May 10). La importancia de las competencias comunicativas interculturales en las clases de inglés en el contexto de las actuales olas

migratorias. *Paradigmas Socio-Humanísticos*, *3*(1), 61–72. https://doi.org/10.26752/revistaparadigmassh.v3i1.519

Touhami,M., & Sebbat, S. (2020). *Teachers and students' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials to raise learners' cultural awareness.* [Bachelor dissertation, Université de Jijel]. UNIV-Jijel Campus Repository. http://dspace.univ-jijel.dz:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/7599/420.407.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

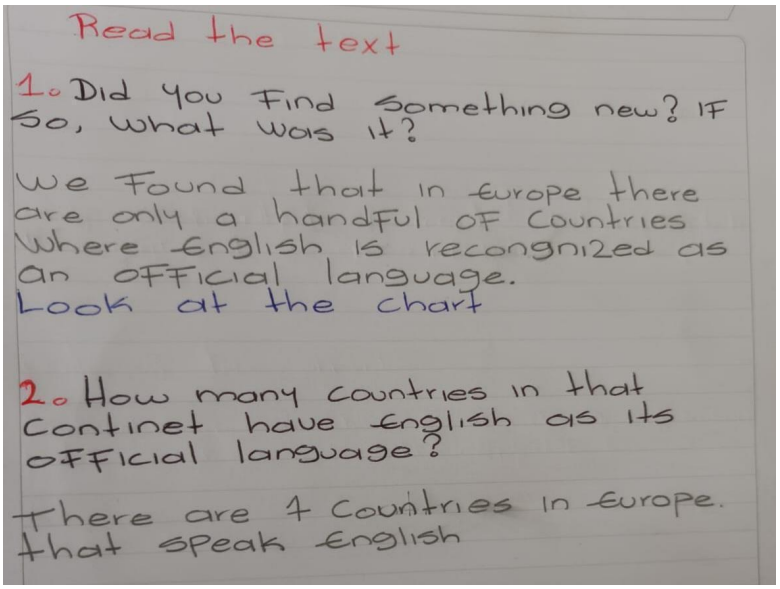
Umirova, D. (2020). Authenticity and Authentic Materials: History and Present. *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Educational Sciences*, *8*(10), 129-133. https://www.idpublications.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Full-Paper-AUTHENTICITY-AND-AUTHENTIC-MATERIALS-HISTORY-AND-PRESENT.pdf

Vega, Y. M. (2020). *Promoting intercultural competence, specifically skills of interpreting and relating through the use of image model mediated by ICT* [Master Thesis, Universidad de Córdoba]

Appendix

Appendix A

Students' workgroup

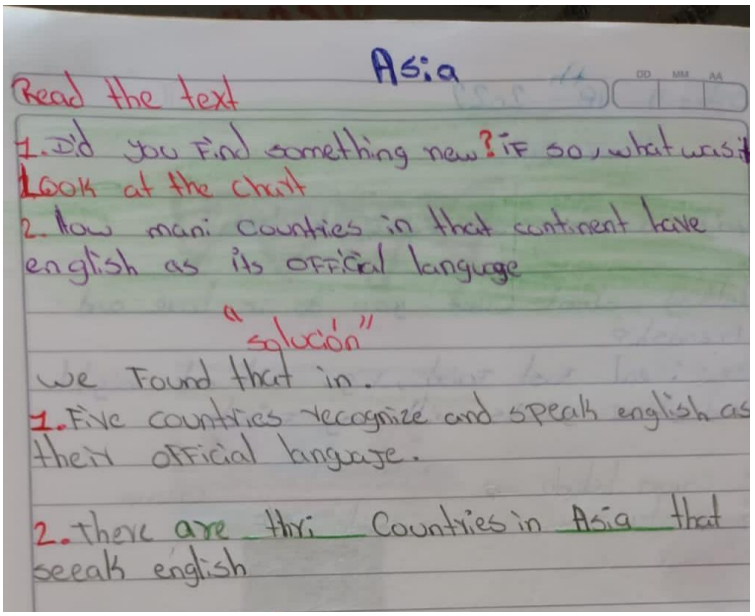

Read the text

1. Did you find something new? If so, what was it?

We found that in Europe there are only a handful of countries where English is recongnized as an official language.
Look at the chart

2. How many countries in that continet have English as its official language?

There are 4 countries in Europe. that speak English


Asia

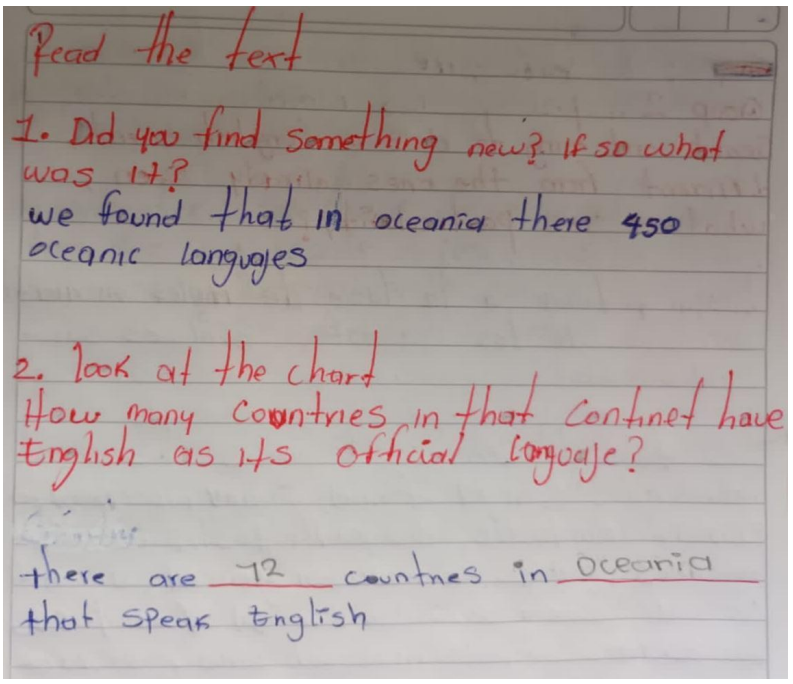
Read the text

1. Did you find something new? If so, what was it
Look at the chart
2. How mani countries in that continent have english as its official language

"solución"

we found that in.
1. Five countries recognize and speak english as their official language.

2. there are thri Countries in Asia that seeak english



Read the text

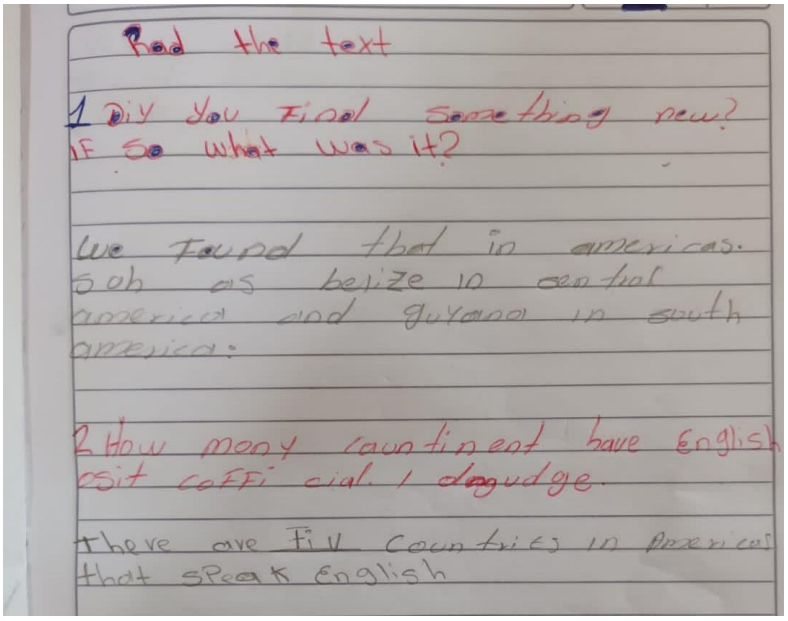
1. Did you find something new? If so what was it?

we found that in oceania there 450 oceanic languages

2. look at the chart

How many countries in that continet have English as its official language?

there are 12 countries in Oceania that speak English



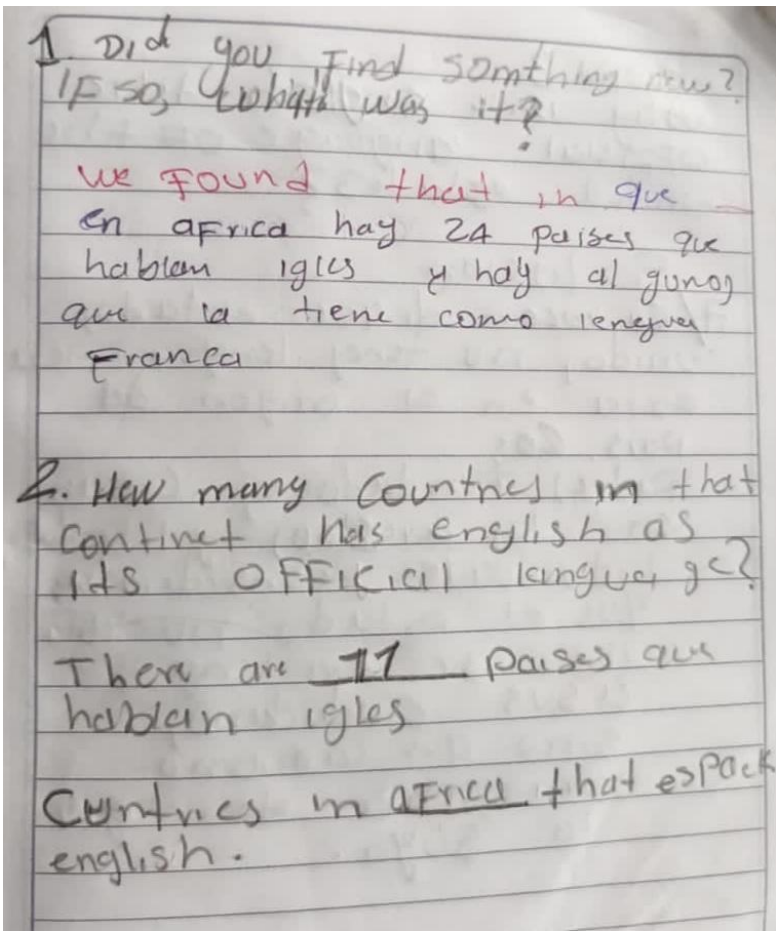
Read the text

1 Did you find something new? If so what was it?

we found that in americas. such as belize in central america and guyana in south america.

2 How many countinent have English osit coffi cial / dogudge.

There are Five Countries in America that speak English



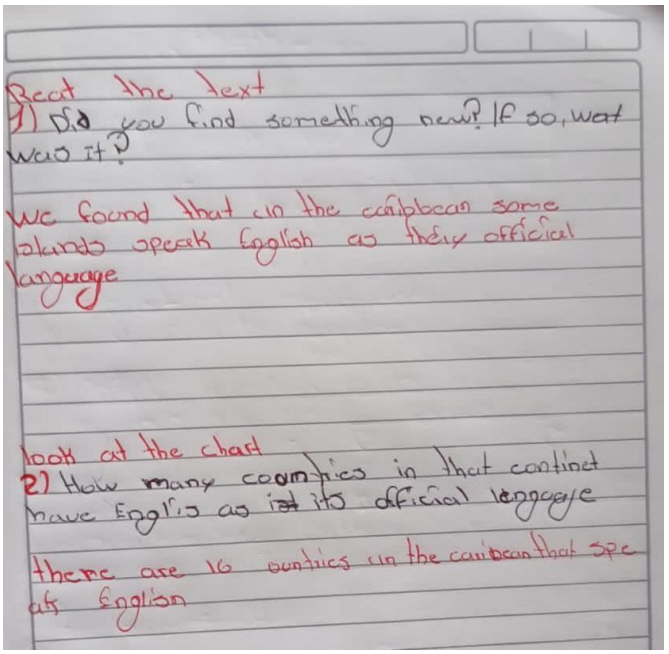
1. Did you find something new? If so, what was it?

we found that in que en africa hay 24 paises que hablan igles y hay algunos que la tiene como lenguaje Franca

2. How many countries in that continet has english as its OFFICIAL language?

There are 11 paises que hablan igles

Countries in africa that espack english.



Read the text

1) Did you find something new? If so, wat was it?

We found that in the caribean some islands speak English as their official language

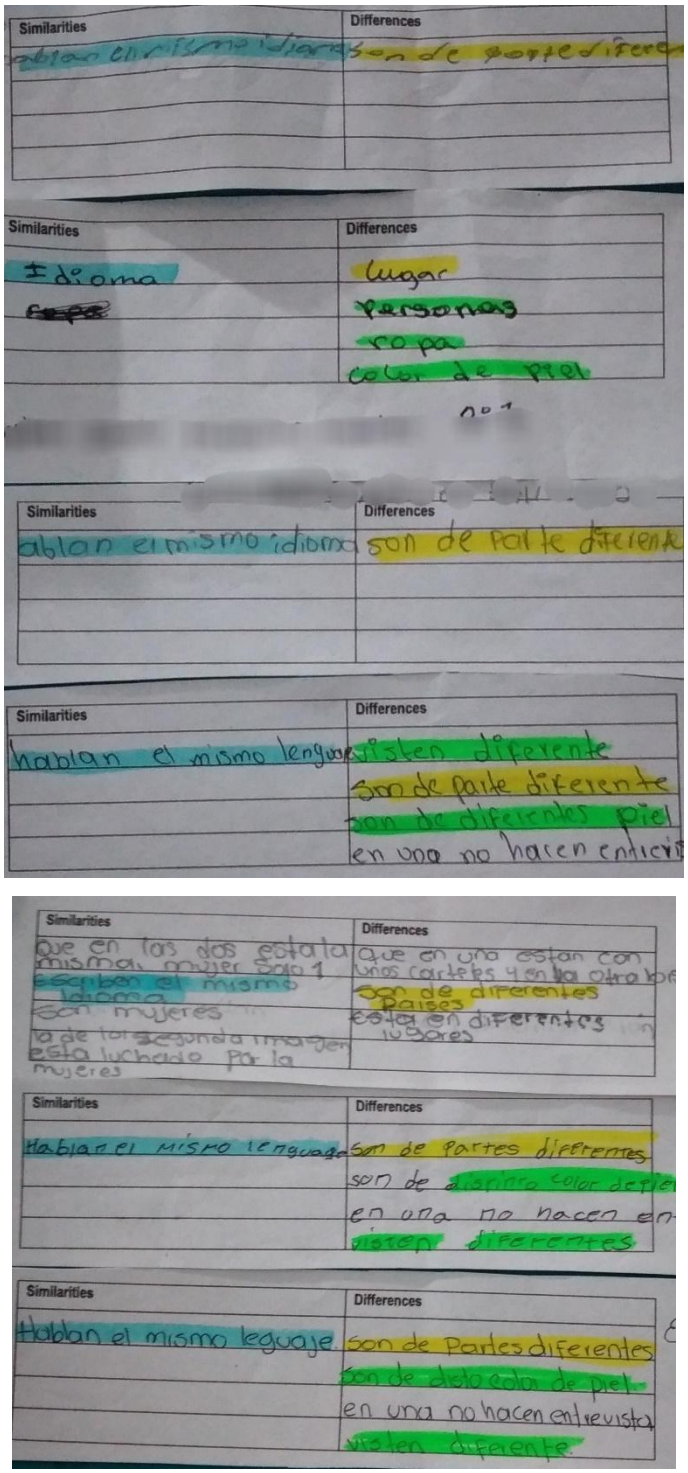
look at the chart

2) How many countries in that continet have Englis as ~~ist~~ its official language

there are 16 countries in the caribean that spe aks Englisn

Appendix B

Chart filled by students



Similarities	Differences
ablan el mismo idioma	son de parte diferente

Similarities	Differences
Idioma	lugar
~~ropa~~	personas
	ropa
	color de piel

Similarities	Differences
ablan el mismo idioma	son de parte diferente

Similarities	Differences
hablan el mismo lenguaje	visten diferente
	son de parte diferente
	son de diferentes piel
	en una no hacen entrevi

Similarities	Differences
que en las dos está la misma mujer solo 1 escriben el mismo idioma son mujeres la de la segunda imagen está luchando por la mujeres	que en una están con unos carteles y en la otra no son de diferentes Paises está en diferentes lugares

Similarities	Differences
Hablan el mismo lenguaje	son de partes diferentes
	son de distinto color de piel
	en una no hacen en-
	visten diferentes

Similarities	Differences
Hablan el mismo leguaje.	son de partes diferentes
	son de dieto color de piel
	en una no hacen entrevista
	visten diferente.

Appendix C

Unit implemented

PLANNING STAGE: PREPARING FOR THE UNIT

A. Who are the students?

8th graders from a public school
This lesson will be divided across several days

B. What is the cultural content of the lesson?

Practice: English language

Perspective (s): English language doesn't come from the United states, but from other countries around the world.

Images:

Set 1:

Set 2:

C. What vocabulary do students need to participate in the lesson?

Specific vocabulary
Continents, countries, nationalities
Adjectives to describe physical appearance
Numbers

Essential vocabulary words
Because
official language
accent
De facto

Formulaic phrases

one similarity/ difference I found …

I (don't) think/ consider/ believe…

I found that…/ I didn't know that…

it is (not) the same…

It is (not) important…

D. What grammar structures do students need to participate in the lesson?

Specific grammatical structures
Present tenses: present simple and present with the verb to be
Past tense: past simple
There is/ there are

ENACTING THE CULTURAL IMAGE UNIT

Step 1: Images and Making Observations

Image 1 is a picture of an interview between two activists

https://www.cpr.org/2015/11/06/viral-video-emma-watson-inspires-malala-to-call-herself-a-feminist/

Fact questions :

1. What do you see?
2. Who are they?
3. What are (were) they doing?
4. Where are they from?

Image 2 is a picture of three women showing written messages
https://www.instagram.com/p/CeorYbQDRwY/?igshid=NDc0ODY0MjQ%3D

Fact questions:

1. What do you see?
2. What do they look like?
3. Where are they from?
4. What language do they use?

Task 1

After making the observation and answering the questions,think and write down the similarities and differences (if any) you found in the images previously presented.

Similarities	Differences

Step 2: Analyzing Additional Information about the Product and/or Practice

Information source #1 is: a blog which contains the different countries where the English language is spoken.

https://www.berlitz.com/blog/english-speaking-countries

With this information, I will ask students to:

Task 2
Read the title of the blog and watch carefully the first image it shows. Why do you think the author chose it? Does this image have to do with the title of the blog? If so, in what way?

qué entienden de estos tres términos

Task 3 What is the text about? contextualized

In the same groups, students will have part of the information of the blog (a continent for each group), they will read the information contained in the short text. After that, they will observe and analyze the information of the chart.

Regarding to the text:

1.Did you find something new for you? If so, what was it?

Regarding to the chart:

2. How many countries in that continent have English as its official language? Underline them.

Following, two students of each group will share the information they found with the rest of the class

Information source #2 is: an extract from Babble Magazine and a Genially presentation of different accents
https://www.babbel.com/en/magazine/every-english-accent/

Cambridge Dictionary | Dictionary | Translate | Grammar | Thesaurus | +Plus | Log in

accent | English | English–Spanish

Ads by Google
Stop seeing this ad
Why this ad?

accent

noun [C]

US /ˈæk.sᵊnt/ UK /ˈæk.sᵊnt/

accent *noun* [C] (PRONUNCIATION)

B1

the way in which people in a particular area, country, or social group pronounce words:

- *He has a **strong** southern/Boston accent.*
- *She's French but she **speaks with** an impeccable English accent.*
- *He speaks with a **heavy/strong/thick** Australianaccent.*

Pick a language to speak →

SPANISH | FRENCH | GERMAN | ITALIAN | RUSSIAN | PORTUGUESE | MORE...

The "English" accent is a tricky beast. It doesn't just change from country to country, but from person to person, with qualities as unique as the voice that carries it. Any traveler will know there is something truly comforting about hearing the accent of your home country after an extended time away. It would seem that accents have an endless supply of emotional power, political power and physical power (if you find one *especially* sexy).

Now, take a look at this:
https://view.genial.ly/5ea2b5c66489ab0dc225efcc/horizontal-infographic-maps-english-speaking-world-different-accents-and-vocabulary-experiences-present-perfect

With this information, I will ask students to:

Regarding the extract from Babble Magazine, think about your own language, do you believe that all Spanish speakers have the same accent? Think about Mexicans, Argentines, Spaniards and people from different regions in Colombia.

Regarding the Genially presentation, talk about some conclusions about the English accent, is it the same in all countries? Why do you think it is different?

Image 1 is a picture of the #COP26 PANEL, young climate leaders gathered from around the globe.

https://www.instagram.com/p/CWQdMhMt3Ma/?igshid=NDc0ODY0MjQ%3D

Thought questions

1. Do you think that all of them have the same English accent?
2. If they are talking in English ,does it mean that they are from the United States or England? Explain your answer.
3. Does the English language come from the United States or England?
4. Do you think there should be a standard English language?
5. What is the importance of language, especially the English language around the world?

Possible perspectives
1.

2.

3.

Step 3: Generating Hypotheses about Cultural Perspectives

Step 4: Exploring Perspectives and Reflecting Further

Assignments:
Task 4
The class will be divided into 3 groups, each of them will be composed of 11 students

Group 1
In groups of 2 (one of 3) students, look for information about the following: why is there only one country in Latin America which has English as its official language? After gathering the information, make an infographic with the most important data to share in class. Make sure to use keywords and images.

Group 2
Individually, search and bring to class one English accent, different from the ones already seen, what is its particularity?

Group 3
Individually, search for information about the following question, why isn't English the official language of The United States? Be ready to share your findings.