

English teachers' intercultural literacy, their transformations throughout their professional
development

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Medellín, Antioquia

Trabajo de Grado II

2022

Abstract

After further observation of the school's context, it is possible to evidence that the reality among classroom students and teachers is not homogenous but instead, is constructed throughout diversity, in terms of Place of birth and mother tongue, religion, political views, world view and so on. Every aspect of a classroom transforms a teacher's literacy, identity, and its practice. However, it is not possible to consider that transformation as only the practice of simple understanding and respect although it is critical and important, our research job tries to develop that concept of understanding to a deepest level of action in which interculturality takes place in the multidimensional reality that coexists among students and teachers. This research project uses narrative inquiry focus and tools, using semi-structured interviews, journals, and focus groups in order to construct the concept of: English teacher's intercultural literacy among the participants and their personal development of that concept throughout their years as teachers, analyzing their personal and group perceptions and realities. We select a group of teachers taking into consideration their tenures in the school, they must be English teachers from second graders, who have worked in different schools. The previous is going to be possible through a common agreement within the investigators and the participants.

Keywords: *Intercultural literacy, diverse classrooms, intercultural realities.*

Resumen

Tras una observación más profunda del contexto de la escuela, es posible evidenciar que la realidad entre los alumnos y profesores del aula no es homogénea, sino que se construye a través de la diversidad, en términos de: Lugar de nacimiento y lengua materna, religión, opiniones políticas, visión del mundo, etc. Todos los aspectos dentro de un aula transforman la literacidad del profesor, su identidad y su práctica. Sin embargo, no es posible considerar esa transformación como la simple práctica de la comprensión y el respeto que, aunque es crítica e importante, nuestro trabajo de investigación trata de desarrollar ese concepto de comprensión a un nivel más profundo de acción en el que la interculturalidad tiene lugar en la realidad multidimensional que coexiste entre alumnos y profesores. Este proyecto de investigación utiliza el enfoque y las herramientas de investigación narrativa, utilizando entrevistas semiestructuradas, diarios y grupos focales para construir el concepto de: literacidad intercultural del profesor de inglés entre los participantes y su desarrollo personal de ese concepto a lo largo de sus años como docentes, analizando su percepciones y realidades personales y grupales. Seleccionamos un grupo de maestros teniendo en cuenta su antigüedad en la escuela, deben ser maestros de inglés de segundo grado, que hayan trabajado en diferentes escuelas. Lo anterior va a ser posible a través de un acuerdo común entre los investigadores y los participantes.

Palabras clave: *Literacidad intercultural, diversidad en el aula, realidades interculturales.*

Justification

This research is intended to allow the concept of intercultural literacy to be analyzed from an educational perspective, thus allowing a greater understanding of the concept, taking into account the experiences of English teachers who live their classes day by day from interculturality. The previous will be done by conducting sessions from focal groups, class observations and semi-structured interviews allowing to expand on each teacher not only personal and professional knowledge but also, to how in practical terms the previous concepts are deployed, contributing to the concept of intercultural literacy by analyzing the experiences of each participant.

The teachers involved in this research are one of the fundamental axes of education; with the purpose of going deeper into their teaching praxis we will explore their planning, development and proposed tools that have allowed them to contribute to their development in intercultural literacy skills.

Research object

English Teachers' intercultural literacy and its transformation throughout their teaching process, working in a private school located in Medellin with second graders.

Problem Statement

The transformation of the Intercultural literacy of English teachers located in a private school in Medellin, through their experience in teaching students from different social and cultural backgrounds.

Teaching English in intercultural classrooms; in terms of levels of proficiency, student's identity, with different contexts and realities, is a daily challenge not only for the teacher but for the students as well. Part of the teacher's praxis is to develop an idealistic pedagogical framework, regardless of the circumstances, and help as much as possible all the students in the classroom. The previous implies automatically a deep understanding of the different realities and what we called cultures, from the school classrooms including the teacher's perceptions and individual cultural appropriations of each student. According to Nieto (2000), culture is "the values, traditions, social and political relationships, and worldview created, shared and transformed by a group of people bound together by a common history, geographic location, language, social class, and/or religion" (p. 383). Therefore, the teacher will have to make an effort not only to put into practice the pedagogical knowledge in order to teach but also to take into account the individual and group constructions of the reality of their students to make it meaningful and profound for them.

Intercultural literacy of an English teacher then aims to the acceptance, learning, and respect that starts from the difference between each other and how the pedagogical practices get constructed throughout the development of that exercise. In the private school where the

research project is being developed, it is possible to find several realities among students and teachers that allow a constant and scaffolded transformation of all the participants within the learning and teaching process. Alvarez (2019) provides the concept in which the intercultural teacher should think about daily teaching practices. “Interculturality involves the apprehension of diversity regarding cultural richness in our society. A society that humans made up and constructed constantly” (p.229). As humans that are constantly constructing their environment through differences, classrooms are impacted the same way, hence, the intercultural competence of language teachers is constructed constantly through richness, indifference, respect, and group development.

Following the same idea, it is possible to evidence that classrooms may not share one single cultural appropriation more than what they shared using the same uniform. In other words, it is likely that differences among students are more vivid than what they have in common such as their birthplace, religion, ages, or music that they enjoy the most. Furthermore, as English teachers, it is critical to evaluate those differences and not only embrace them in a respectful manner but also use them to transform their pedagogical practices and perceptions regarding intercultural realities. The previous is explored by Bennett (1995) ”When teachers become conscious of their own cultural identity, they become multiculturally efficacious individuals who can move between two or more cultures. They become advocates for those who are from cultures other than the dominant culture”.(p.259)

The previous is linked with the concept of teacher’s identity, taking into consideration that it includes the perceptions of professional development, and how to face situations that could be different from what has been constructed within years of teaching practice. Identity as a concept should not be taken as a static process in time, in which people gather ideas,

perceptions, desires, and purposes to follow or a simple list of characteristics that make oneself “full”. In contrast and for the purposes of the research project, the teacher identity conflagrates with several moments during the daily practice in which the teacher's pedagogy, beliefs, and ideas get transformed constantly without leaving behind what makes that person be. Moreover, the teacher's job gets constantly impacted throughout the experience of teaching to several students, each one of them with their own identity.

The previous led us to the question of how the intercultural literacy of English teachers gets transformed while working with second graders from different social and cultural contexts in a private school in Medellin, taking into account all the biological narratives that are constructed in a classroom; including the different realities from each student, their personality, their identity within their own community and individual culture, that has a direct impact on the teacher's praxis, personal and professional development.

General Objective:

To analyze how the intercultural literacy of English teachers gets transformed while working with second graders from different social and cultural contexts in a private school in Medellin.

Specific Objectives:

1. To describe how English teachers understand the concept of intercultural literacy.
2. To identify how English teachers implement their intercultural literacy knowledge, among second graders' classes.

3. To comprehend the intercultural literacy concept and principles, amongst English teachers of second-graders in a private school in Medellin.

Objectives Guide	
General Objective: To analyze how the intercultural literacy of English teachers gets transformed while working with second graders from different social and cultural contexts in a private school in Medellin.	
1. To describe how English teachers understand the concept of intercultural literacy.	This objective is to register the teacher's understanding of the concept of intercultural literacy.
2. To identify how English teachers implement their intercultural literacy knowledge, among second graders' classes.	This objective is intended to observe the praxis and professional tools developed by English teachers, in regards to intercultural literacy knowledge.
3. To comprehend the intercultural literacy concept and principles, amongst English teachers of second-graders in a private school in Medellin.	This objective is intended to enclose the principles and concepts of intercultural literacy for teachers, in order to measure the transformations they face throughout the research process.

Literature Review

International

In the Canary Islands, Spain, a problem is generated in schools when they show the number of immigrants in the classrooms, a situation that generates great cultural diversity in the school environment, in the article they raise the need to have a good command of a language does not mean only understanding and knowing how to use its grammatical structures but also understanding the culture in which the language is used and learning to put one culture in contact with the other as a reference to the improvement and immersion of the differences in the classroom and as the decent implement new methodologies for their use (Clouet, 2012).

When considering the need to refurbish classrooms for the effective implementation of educational models, methodologies, and approaches that allow significant progress in the acquisition of a second language, it must be taken into account that, according to the intercultural model, languages are related to cultures, communities and societies that use them for communication and we, as teachers, must encourage language students to become competent intercultural speakers (Garrido and Álvarez, 2006). There, he highlights the help of new technologies, and new techniques according to the diagnosis, feasibility, and importance of a teacher who recognizes his context and how it influences his way of acting, living, surviving, and relating to others.

Local

The influence of interculturality in the teacher's identity is a topic that has been investigated by different authors (Álvarez, 2019). This article is an ethnographic study. Arleth used documentary analysis as a methodology in which she identifies how English teaching contributes to cultural identity and intercultural competence formation. Moreover, the author analyzed the teacher's perception regarding the relationship between English teaching, cultural identity, and intercultural competence. As a result, the author gave some recommendations that she found in the study such as the need of promoting a renewal in the teaching practices of English as a foreign language, and creating an English curriculum that implements intercultural competence; keeping in mind the concepts treated by the MEN of Colombia and the coherence between one grade to another from elementary school and high school.

This research shows the lack of strategies used by pre-service teachers, even though their teachers presented a lot of options but they just forget about them and they do not apply the knowledge in their pedagogical practices (Cano and Londoño, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

Literacy

Literacy has been a complex concept to be defined due to the term changes in agreement with time and evolution of society. Literacy has been related to reading and writing abilities. However, it incorporates more and more arguments over time, expanding the interpretation to levels which become the concept in a social construct and a complex idea. Nonetheless, this research has taken the following idea exposed by Rintaningrum (2009) to explain the concept of literacy: “it is an integrated complex of language and thinking processes and skills, incorporating a range of habits, attitudes, interests and knowledge, serving a range of purposes in different contexts”(p.2)

Literacy has been a term used by different fields in order to establish an idea that involves the psychological, educational, sociological and linguistic part of the individual. Therefore, as we can see, the term involves processes and practices that will lead our paper to narrow the topic taking into consideration the next concept to unify and compose the intercultural literacy definition.

Interculturality

Interculturality has historically been studied, although for different purposes it has always been sought to highlight the evident difference between countries, cities, cultures, regions, social groups, and people. Similarly, there have been progress and discoveries that allow us to speak confidently and accurately about this term.

Interculturality as a term is related to cultural negotiations and exchanges which involve three key elements: attitudes, values and language. Through all these items equity and acknowledgment can be reached. Moreover, interculturality concerns comprehension of those components such as culture, identity and background which are fundamental to complement

and build thinking and feeling. Walsh has studied interculturality from the beginning of the 2000's, she stated the following regarding the concept in hand: "interculturalidad no se trata simplemente de reconocer, descubrir o tolerar al otro o la diferencia entre si...se trata, en cambio, de impulsar activamente procesos de intercambio que permitan construir espacios de encuentro entre seres y saberes, sentidos y prácticas distintas" (Walsh, 2005, p.45)

Further, according to Walsh (2005) interculturality is a concept beyond a conversation between cultures; it implies an historical and philosophical background that entails journeys and imposition to construct the civilizations we have today. Notwithstanding, and at the same time, this concept is linked with the pedagogical point of view. When it is related to education where every day it is necessary to include, create or innovate concerning educational practices, the role of the teacher is found in a constant challenge to generate integration spaces. This relationship will allow equality, learning, respect, and the exchange of significant experiences among the members of a community (Cruz, 2013).

It can be allowed from the training as professionals but the teaching identity and the experiences that can recognize and be recognized in society must always be taken into account "la utilidad de las tendencias desarrolladas en interculturalidad susceptibles de ser aplicadas en la didáctica intercultural de lenguas" (Moreno y Atienza, 2016, p.3). This and several studies have developed strategies and have outlined the need to strengthen intercultural competencies in teachers as a mechanism for student contextualization.

It is essential to take into account that an ELF class is a socio-pedagogical space where culture, as well as language, are manifested by teachers and students in the classroom, as a result of it, this manifestation should develop an intercultural dialogue that seeds different ways to see the world (Alvarez, 2019). This is how the need has been created to recognize what is

the awareness that teachers have about their fundamental role in the recognition of this item or if, on the contrary, they do not show it and omit its implementation in the classroom.

Intercultural Classroom:

Definition taken by Cambridge Dictionary: “the fact of many different types of things or people being included in something; a range of different things or people or the fact that there are many different ideas or opinions about something” .

Although the definition is very broad, it does not lose the sense to be related to the school environment, where the same situations of diversity occur, with the only change being that they have a school model that governs them, and the classrooms are also culturally diverse.

According to Nieto (2000), culture is “the values, traditions, social and political relationships, and worldview created, shared and transformed by a group of people bound together by a common history, geographic location, language, social class, and/or religion” (p. 383). The crucial dimensions of social class and gender are included in the cultural definition because they may be key factors that explain educational achievement. As well as Forgiony-Santos (2019) mentioned that learning to live together, points out the importance of knowing, participating, and cooperating with others, learning from diversity, discovering oneself, accepting otherness, and facing the inevitable tensions between human beings.

Taking diversity into account implies bringing knowledge regarding differences in order to develop understanding, mutual recognition, and positive acceptance to others; equality refers to tolerance by stressing the negative consequences of discrimination (Verkuyten and Thijs, 2012). Furthermore, Batelaan and Van hoof (1996) stated the implementation of intercultural education implies that teachers manage the skills and knowledge that children

bring into the classroom, create opportunities to work in heterogeneous groups, and ensure equal participation in the learning processes. Additionally, Drew (2015) quoted in Tarbutton (2018) indicated that “diverse classrooms create advantages for learners, including offering multiple perspectives on issues. In classrooms where diversity is plentiful students are more engaged and their learning experiences are richer and more meaningful” (p.5).

Methodology

Design

The general description for a narrative inquiry can be described as the exercise of gathering the life experiences of individuals or groups of people in order to organize them for further analysis and possible understanding of a specific situation. Therefore, it demands the special attention of the interviewer or investigator to be able to capture what the interviewee is narrating. According to Savin-Baden and Niekirk (2007), there are several reasons that enclose the purpose of a narrative inquiry: To analyze a phenomenon in a broad manner; understand that phenomenon within the context, and emphasize the necessity of immersion to comprehend human meanings. It is then, not only the record of people sharing information that is going to end in a repository of records without meaning but the intentional and purposeful strategy to understand meaning by the structured narratives of a specific situation.

Also, taking into account the author Polkinghorne (1995), narratives in a deep level of understanding are created by all that makes an individual’s experience unique, including all the possible parts of what happened, transforming it into one, what it is further configured in that individual life. “(...) Narrative creates its meaning by noting the contributions that actions and events make to a particular outcome and then configures these parts into a whole episode.” (p. 6) In other words, what makes the narratives so important in our development as human beings,

is the direct relationship between the experiences among our life that makes us redefine the meaning and how it is narrated in a way that becomes real for us.

That being said in order to develop our research project, we decided to use the narrative inquiry method taking into account that the main purpose of it is to understand the transformation of the intercultural competence coming from English teachers working in a specific environment, basing ourselves in the narratives from those teacher's experiences, personal and professional changes throughout time and in a specific setting that have allowed them to change meaning and practice development.

Paradigm

The research will be based on the historical-hermeneutic paradigm, which aims to “comprensiones mediadas por el lenguaje, las cuales conducían a procesos interpretativos de la realidad social y humana” (Gallego, 2009.p.20). Which will allow, from a description of the different moments, to assertively interpret the relationship between the experiences of the teachers and their context, taking into account their class strategies and how they are permeated by the specific characteristics of the students.

Data Collection

We applied various data collection methods. Firstly, we proceeded with a focus group in order to discuss together the concept of intercultural literacy. Then, we proceeded with class observations and finally, we did a semi-structured interview.

The main idea of the focus group was to discuss and construct together the concept of intercultural literacy, taking into consideration the construction and personal perception of each teacher; taking as a base a group of 3 teachers - and the investigators as participants too. The focus group was based on four questions. The participants were together and one of the investigators guided the conversation. In general terms, the reasons for the questions are the following: They will help to identify the prior knowledge that participants have regarding interculturality. Recognizing the strategies used by the participants in their classrooms when implementing the themes, taking into account intercultural literacy. Moreover, knowing how the participants identify intercultural literacy in their teaching experience and identify how the participants recognize intercultural literacy in their teaching practice.

The observation of the class has also the intentionality of understanding what is the teacher's practical and "hands-on" praxis in regards to intercultural literacy. In this method, there was an observation format to address the specific aspects that are relevant to favor the research. The observation format is structured if the teacher uses and what didactic intercultural tools he/she provides. The formative assessment method was observed as well. The previous allowed us to explore how the teacher implements fresh strategies for class development and how the teacher not only implements strategies but overcomes possible difficulties within the international context of a classroom and takes into account their reflections. Further, how they reacted to those realities to make them part of their daily classes and how the assessment favored the student's intercultural knowledge development.

The last method with the semi-structured interview questions is intended to provide the teacher the chance to reflect on the last moment of the investigation, in regards to the intercultural literacy theme. Throughout the questions, the idea was to provide a safe space to the teachers/participants to reflect on the intercultural literacy topic and its relevance during their daily duties. The questions used in this method provided the space to discuss intercultural literacy and possible similar topics, and identify how the participants recognized intercultural literacy in their teaching practice with its relevance. In that way, the previous allowed the investigators to better understand the concept from the English teacher's perspective.

Context

A private school, located in Medellin, school uses active teaching methods in relation to English from early grades, students learn English in an environment, in which the subject is transversal from different elements and courses such as: Biology, Ethics, Civics, Social studies, Religion, craftworks, etc. Known as CLIL, Looking for a connection with the language and a 2L. The students are learning the topics and structures in a coherent alignment with their mother tongue: Spanish, which allows them to connect knowledge, internalizing it and making it meaningful. However, the school allows the education of guys from different countries. If they know English or Spanish, they will be accepted into the institution. The use of Spanish is a vital channel to consolidate their cognitive development in a second language, according to their stages, multisensory stimulation, and multiple intelligences.

Most of the teachers in the institution have only a degree in English or languages and no other studies as a master, phd and so on. The teaching method requires an integral teacher in primary, this one will be in charge of all the subjects, but physical education, swimming, sports, music and technology. The participants were chosen for the heterogeneous classrooms they have. In these classrooms, the participants have migrant students who come from different

countries and have a mother language different from Spanish. We are going to apply this methodology with 5 teachers of the school, they are teachers from 2nd and 3rd grade. They have been working from 3 to 10 years in the school.

Findings

During the conversation that was conducted on the focal group, I was able to recognize and observe that among the participants, there is a strong focus on the relevance of the differences, intercultural background and student's identity for the development of their classes and planning. Both participants in the focal group mentioned as a critical item the importance of acknowledging the differences within students; having students that come from different backgrounds and even parts of the country. The previous has led both participants to acquire different experiences throughout situations within the classes that have provided them with more tools and spaces of reflection for their pedagogic, professional and personal development. It is important for them also, to keep into consideration what the students bring to the classroom, in terms of the previous knowledge and experiences in regards to the intercultural background of each other as unique individuals and part of a whole, in terms of a specific setting which is the school and their classrooms.

Rick Sánchez with the question, “¿Cómo implementa sus clases basadas en la literacidad intercultural?” mentioned that it is critical to acknowledge the interculturality among the classroom since that allows him the opportunity to deploy and develop different spaces for the students to reflect and communicate with each other based on their differences and cultural backgrounds. “Para mi resulta fundamental considerar y reconocer la interculturalidad ya que como docentes debemos permitir posibilitar espacios donde todo tipos

de diversidad tenga lugar, que se sientan parte de algo, que tengan identidad del lugar del que van a aprender”

At the same time and with the same question, the participant Lorraine Vergara mentioned that for her it is interesting to deploy the interculturality in the classroom considering that it is possible to construct meaningful knowledge on the students through the planning and development of classes that take into consideration the differences of each student and the diversity that is brought up to the classroom, based on each experience that the student with its unique identity. “En la práctica se hace bastante interesante porque se logra nutrir mucho los conocimientos de los niños a través de todo este conocimiento y de las diversidades que cada uno desde su origen y medio en el que se desarrollan, pues traen acá a las aulas de clase”

The previous correlates with that Ready and Wright (2011) mentions in their Research Journal on the following item, when teachers have models for understanding cultural differences they can create classroom organization and management from the inside out, instead of responding only to students external behaviors and guessing what might be going on inside their minds and hearts. Hence, the participants demonstrate that even though there could be a lack of knowledge in regards to the actual concept of intercultural literacy, there is a strong interest in deployment and understanding of the students’ differences and diversity.

In addition to the previous, it is evidenced that for the participants, the intercultural literacy it is a critical aspect of their professional development taking into consideration that this in-depth understanding of differences, diversity and what makes a classroom unique rooted on what all the students bring individually and construct as a group, provide not only sensitivity and respect but also allows the possibility of building knowledge, meaningful experiences and common ground based on the respect, tolerance and acceptance. With the previous I was able

to conclude that there is a strong relevance of intercultural literacy, using cultural background, previous knowledge as a resource to increase the students' experience in the classroom.

Later on the previous conclusions, I proceeded with observing the participants in their most immediate developmental environment, within the classroom classes. All the three observations took place by taking into account certain critical aspects of intercultural literacy relevance, such as: Didactic and pedagogical tools that allow the students to develop intercultural skills and acknowledgement, appropriate assessments methods, etc.

Based on the observation conducted during the investigation, I was able to notice that even though there could be vague knowledge in regards to literacy as a concept within the participants as evidenced in the observations, there is a strong interest by the teacher in order to deploy intercultural elements and didactic tools in the classroom. All the participants shared their interest in having their students on the same page, by using several strategies for proof of understanding, such as doing comparisons as class exercise in order to help the students to understand better what they are learning in the class.

In terms of interculturality, there is a strong interest as well in planning classes according to the topic, bringing to the classroom subjects of interest that allow students to reflect and to discuss the importance of personal identity and differences; as the main root of what makes each student unique. I observed that the teachers are strongly interested in providing the students with spaces of dialogue and conversation as a pedagogical and didactic strategy for meaningful learning, constructing the knowledge as a group. The previous

evidence that the participation in the classroom is more than an isolated exercise to assess students, is used as a pragmatic and organical element in the class to experience the diversity and the interculturality among students.

In addition to the previous, the students are provided with the possibility and opportunity to be heard and to understand better in a language that they feel more comfortable with, when the time comes and need the “Language Code Switching” strategy from the teacher. In other words, I observed that the teachers have a deep understanding of language as a cornerstone of diversity and difference within the classroom and personal/professional development. Once again, the previous evidence shows that the teachers are aware and care about the diversity of their students and proceed with strategies and natural procedures in order to make the students feel that regardless of their differences, they could get along in the same classroom, aiming for the same objective of building knowledge together; and even more important switching language for better understanding is a critical element of showing respect to each other, since as student and teacher I’m interested in being understood in my native language or within a language that is more easy to understand.

There was a specific class from the participant Rick Martinez that allow the teacher to organically construct the diversity topic and recognize an area of opportunity, taking into consideration that there were students in the classroom not only from different parts of the country but also from the globe (Students from Israel, Choco and Barranquilla) and he was using a specific word “Guys/Chicos” that raised on the students different sentiments, such as feeling offended or diminished (due to spanish meaning of “chico” or small), or with a different sexual orientation (Guys understood from the pronuciation of the word Homosexual to denotate the slang “Gay” in spanish) or even “Less” intellectual; for the same reason as with Small in spanish. The previous led the teacher to take it not only to be careful and more aware

of the language used in class but also to generate a group discussion and deep reflection around difference and respect, in favor of tolerance and respect to each other regardless of their own and unique differences.

Along with the previous, I noticed that the students are provided with the opportunity as well of sharing their own experiences according to what has been taught and learned throughout the topic, which has been planned in order to discuss diversity, interculturality and its relevance. This is also part of the deep interest of the teachers of generating spaces of dialogue but more importantly, strategies of participation as the cornerstone of their classes.

With both elements I was able to partially conclude that the participants constantly build didactic and pedagogical resources to develop intercultural literacy in the classroom. Last but not least, I proceeded to interview the participants aiming to identify how English teachers understand the concept of intercultural literacy, in which all the concepts brought in the previous segments were discussed with all the participants.

After carrying out the semi-structured interview, we realized how interculturality takes place in the classroom and its function around the students. Interculturality is evidenced in the way of speaking and communicating with the other. Through experiences within the classroom, a different method of communication is demonstrated between students who belong to different geographical locations. The words and gestures used are part of a totally different worldview and they allow us to see things differently between student-student and teacher-student relationships. Additionally, Rick mentions something very relevant, such as the role of interculturality in the classroom. Its function is aimed at the emotional and academic well-being of the student, and his closeness to his environment. The purpose of interculturality is related to the recognition of the familiar and that students act from their comfort zone.

Literacy as a concept, on the other hand, is described by Rick as the learning of knowledge. Besides, Rick gives it totally importance to this knowledge to avoid conflicts within the classroom as a foreign language teacher. Likewise, this knowledge not only implies that it would be covered from the theoretical but also from the practical. This acquired knowledge must become a habit, something usual to implement daily.

After the semi-structured interview exercise, we found a similar word to define literacy between the participants. Lorraine defines literacy as “knowledge”. However, she expanded the concept of knowledge when she mentioned: “es el conocimiento que tenemos en este rol de ser maestros; es observar y detectar la diversidad y cómo trabaja...” Lorraine sees the observation and discovery as a helping hand to ensure that literacy itself develops more every day. Through these processes cultural interaction is possible and they bring appreciation of differences. Alvarez (2019) states in what an foreign language class becomes “se convierte en un escenario que favorece el desarrollo de procesos interculturales, dado que es una oportunidad para enseñar una lengua extranjera y consigo la cultura de la misma”(p.232)

In the same way, the role of interculturality is in accepting our differences according to Lorraine. Differences given by our family, social circle, tradition and country. This statement is connected to what Alavez (2014) mentions “Las diferencias entre seres humanos son sólo superficiales, y se pueden dar tanto por influencia social de unos pueblos sobre otros, como por evolución” (p.27).

Lorraine concludes by commenting that interculturality allows us to go beyond, open our mind to the world and learn new words. At the end with the participants it was concluded that interculturality develops a new worldview in teachers and students and its relevance within the classroom.

Limitations:

During the data collection process, there were a couple of limitations, including the availability of one of the participants during the process, who left the project leaving the investigation with only two participants to analyze and comprehend the information gathered. In addition, there were limitations in regards to the time that it was available to conduct the data collection, due to specific activities that the school conducted during the designated time for the recollection. Therefore, all the data collection process needed an adequation in order to accomplish the goals.

Implications:

By doing a deep research and study in regards to the “Intercultural Literacy” the teacher’s experience and knowledge can be expanded and fed, with the comprehension of how unique elements of students identity, cultural backgrounds, appropriation of items that make them feel and think, can be implemented in their classrooms and class planning process. In addition to the previous and not only in pragmatic elements, it is a crucial element that among the formation of english teachers, can help to their development professionally and personally.

Conclusions

In regards to the General Objective:

To analyze how the intercultural literacy of English teachers gets transformed while working with second graders from different social and cultural contexts in a private school in Medellin.

Intercultural literacy for these teachers and ourselves, becomes the deep understanding, recognition, and transformation of oneself throughout the individual and community

experience, that gets constantly transformed and developed, through individual characteristics, due to the inherent co-existence regardless of other's differences, that makes each person unique and contributes to the construction of small and big communities. We were able to analyze that the transformation of each other, the visibility and respect, the tolerance and recognition; among others, become crucial parts in the capacity of living as a society and this is how the English teachers get transformed as well.

In regards to the Specific Objectives:

To comprehend the intercultural literacy concept and principles, amongst English teachers of second-graders in a private school in Medellin.

We were able to conclude that the principles in regards to the concept, Intercultural Literacy, are not strong or clear among the English teachers. The previous can be comprehended taking into account that the term itself has not been studied during their daily duties, but it is lived regardless of being studied or not. In other words, it is more a concept that is experienced more than reviewed.

To identify how English teachers implement their intercultural literacy knowledge, among second graders' classes.

After the analysis conducted throughout the observation of the classes, we conclude that even though there is not a strong perception or appropriation per se of the academic concept of "intercultural literacy" among english teachers who worked with second graders; there is still a strong interest in developing classes that aim to the respect of each other throughout the difference, the tolerance, and the space to learn throughout the diversity, and how it is possible

to learn based on the details of a whole spectrum that makes a society highly diverse and full of possibilities.

To describe how English teachers understand the concept of intercultural literacy.

English teachers understand this concept in several ways. Mainly, all the participants understand the concept of intercultural literacy as the ability to recognize differences among students as a valuable element for the construction of meaningful knowledge throughout the respect of each other. In addition to the previous, the participants also understand this concept, as the possibility of knowledge expansion based on the unique elements throughout their students that make them be what they are, in relationship to their identity and specific elements that make them different.

Recommendations:

Taking into consideration the limitations in terms of the studies done so far in regards to intercultural literacy, we recommend to expand on this investigations and subject of study in order to contribute, not only to the academic field, but also to the understanding of societal dynamics, that in classrooms and schools - having their own natural habitats - become complex and diverse for in-depth understanding.

Expanding on the research on a topic that allows the understanding of society dynamics, could provide teachers from social sciences an additional tool aiming to recognize themselves; within their personal and professional transformations, and also their students, while contributing to their practices among significant experiences and meaningful processes that help them throughout their academic career.

Appendix 1 - Focal Group

Project	Teachers' intercultural competence and its transformations in English language teaching located in a private school in Medellin.
Objective	To comprehend the intercultural literacy concept and principles, amongst English teachers of second-graders in a private school in Medellin.
Questions	Justification
1. Based on your specific knowledge, what is interculturality?	Identify the prior knowledge that participants have regarding interculturality.
2. How do you implement your classes based on intercultural literacy?	Recognize the strategies used by the participants in their classrooms when implementing the themes, taking into account intercultural literacy.
3. Based on your teaching experience. How have you experienced intercultural literacy through your teaching praxis?	Know how the participants identify intercultural literacy in their teaching experience.
4. How important is it for your teaching work to recognize intercultural literacy?	Identify how the participants recognize intercultural literacy in their teaching practice.

Codes:


1. Diversity on students: culture and background.

2. Students previous knowledge and identity.
3. Teacher's Recognition of Interculturality and Relevance.
4. Teacher's pedagogical and didactic resources to approach students.
5. Teachers Experience in the classroom.

Category:


1. The relevance of intercultural literacy, using cultural background, previous knowledge as a resource to increase the students' experience in the classroom.

Appendix 2 - Observation of Classes

INSTRUMENT # 2 Participant #1	OBSERVATION MATRIX	
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Project:	Teachers' intercultural competence and its transformations in English language teaching located in a private school in Medellin	Observer	Yesenia Guzmán
		Observed:	Jerry Smith 12 years of experience as a teacher. English teacher Diploma in preschool education French
Place :	Private School In Medellin	Instruction: Mark (✓) when the teacher complies with the prescribers given for each interculturality literacy class moment Mark (x) when the teacher does not comply with the prescribers given for each interculturality literacy class moment	
Starting time	9:46		
Ending time	10:26		
Date:	September 19th- 2022		
Objective:	To identify how English teachers implement their intercultural literacy knowledge, among second graders' classes.		


Strategy	Observation	Accomplished		
Criteria		Yes	No	Why?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher provides to the students' didactic intercultural tools for the student's knowledge development and construction. 		✓		Use different synonyms, comparisons and images to allow a better understanding of terms that are not known by the students.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher uses pedagogical tools to deploy intercultural elements in their class planning. 		✓		Planning according to the objectives set in relation to the recognition of diversity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher uses formative assessment methods to observe the student's intercultural knowledge development. 		✓		Use a language that allows integration between students. Create spaces for dialogue

INSTRUMENT # 2 Participant #2	OBSERVATION MATRIX	
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Project:	Teachers' intercultural competence and its transformations in English language teaching located in a private school in Medellín	Observer	Yesenia Guzmán
		Observed	Lorraine Baines 7 years of experience as a teacher. English teacher Técnica de la primera infancia tecnología informática

Place :	Private School In Medellin	Instruction: Mark (✓) when the teacher complies with the prescribers given for each interculturality literacy class moment Mark (x) when the teacher does not comply with the prescribers given for each interculturality literacy class moment		
Starting time	11:40			
Ending time	12:20			
Date:	September 19th- 2022			
Objective:	To identify how English teachers implement their intercultural literacy knowledge, among second graders' classes.			
Strategy	Observation	Accomplished		
Criteria		Yes	No	Why?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher provides to the students' didactic intercultural tools for the student's knowledge development and construction. 		✓		Use images and videos on the computer related to the topic of diversity in the classroom. Students make an almost immediate comparison of the observations and examples that the teacher gives during the explanation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher uses pedagogical tools to deploy intercultural elements in their class planning. 		✓		When speaking with the students, the teacher changes language at will seeking a better

			understanding, this allows her different populations to understand the teacher and integrates students who do not have Spanish as their mother tongue.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher uses formative assessment methods to observe the student's intercultural knowledge development. 	✓		<p>He uses class participation, where his students talk about their experiences and what they have seen, according to the class theme.</p> <p>Use commands like "Stop right there" to attract attention</p> <p>Students are interested in the topic from the beginning to the end of the class</p>

INSTRUMENT # 2 Participant #3	OBSERVATION MATRIX	
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Project:	Teachers' intercultural competence and its transformations in English language teaching located in a private school in Medellin	Observer	Yesenia Guzmán
		Observed	Rick Sanchez 2 years of experience as a teacher. English teacher Master of education
Place :	Private School In Medellin	Instruction: Mark (✓) when the teacher complies with the prescribers given for each interculturality literacy class moment	
Starting time	9:40		
Ending time	10:20		

Date:	September 20th- 2022	Mark (x) when the teacher does not comply with the prescribers given for each interculturality literacy class moment		
Objective:	To identify how English teachers implement their intercultural literacy knowledge, among second graders' classes.			
Strategy	Observation	Accomplished		
Criteria		Yes	No	Why?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher provides to the students' didactic intercultural tools for the student's knowledge development and construction. 		✓		<p>Regarding planning, the students brought images allusive to the different cultures in the classroom and as a central activity was a mural of diversity.</p> <p>The teacher enters to make a more biological explanation about the differences between human beings.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher uses pedagogical tools to deploy intercultural elements in their class planning. 		✓		<p>The teacher has a way of referring to his students as "guys" and "chicos"</p> <p>The teacher tells me that at first he had faces of doubt and offense because the students from Israel, Choco and Barranquilla took this word to mean small, less intelligent or with a different sexual orientation.</p>

			Situation that generated a whole reflection and allowed him to be more aware of what he says and the importance of using language properly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher uses formative assessment methods to observe the student's intercultural knowledge development. 	✓		By recognizing the subject and recognizing the characteristics of his students, the teacher uses a vocabulary and a questioning that greatly highlights the differences of the students in favor of tolerance and respect for others.

Codes:

1. Audio Visual Didactic Resources.
2. Interculturality Syllabus
3. Participation as a formative assessment.
4. Language strategies based on diversity in the classroom.
5. Didact Resources for understanding
6. Interculturality areas of opportunity.

Category: *Didactic and Pedagogical Resources to develop intercultural literacy in the classroom.*

Appendix 3 - Semi-Structured Interview

Project	Teachers' intercultural competence and its transformations in English language teaching located in a private school in Medellin.
Objective	To identify how English teachers understand the concept of intercultural literacy.
Questions	Justification
What do you understand about literacy in your own words?	Identify the prior knowledge that participants have regarding interculturality, taking into consideration their own words without specific data.

<p>What examples can you give about Interculturality in your classroom?</p>	<p>Evidence how the participants identify intercultural literacy in their teaching experience and the development in the classroom with specific examples.</p>
<p>How could you apply it in your classroom? Is it important to you or not? Why?</p>	<p>Comprehend how the participants implement intercultural literacy elements in their teaching practice and how relevant it is for them.</p>

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