



Original article

The Caribbean Literature and the Intercultural Competence in the formation of Teachers of English

La literatura caribeña y la competencia intercultural en la formación de profesores de inglés

Literatura caribenha e competência intercultural na formação de professores de inglês

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ABSTRACT

The development of the intercultural competence in students of foreign languages is a need today in Cuba. The intercultural competence can be developed in the experiential, but also in the teaching context. This article shows how the use of Caribbean literature, which is content of the subject History of the English-Speaking People's Culture III contributed to the development of the intercultural competence in students of Foreign Language at the University of Pinar del Río. As theoretical methods were used: the dialectic, the historical, the logic, the systemic and the modelling; as empirical methods were used: the observation, the document analysis, the interview the pre-experiment and the descriptive statistics. A strategy composed by a set of actions focused on the use of literary texts with interactive tasks was proposed. These tasks drew students to the development of the intercultural competence. The strategy was applied with Foreign Language students from fourth year, achieving satisfactory results in terms of interculturality.

Keywords: English learning; intercultural encounters; intercultural competence; literature.

RESUMEN

El desarrollo de la competencia intercultural en estudiantes de la carrera Lenguas Extranjeras es una necesidad hoy en Cuba. La competencia intercultural se puede desarrollar en la experiencia vivencial pero también en el contexto docente. Este artículo muestra cómo el uso de la literatura caribeña, que forma parte del contenido de la asignatura Historia de la cultura de los pueblos de habla inglesa III contribuyó al desarrollo de la competencia intercultural en los estudiantes de la carrera Lenguas Extranjeras en la Universidad de Pinar del Río. Se utilizaron como métodos del nivel teórico: el dialéctico, el histórico, el lógico, el sistémico y la modelación; como métodos del nivel empírico: la observación,

la revisión documental, la entrevista, la prueba pedagógica, el pre-experimento y la estadística descriptiva. Se propuso una estrategia didáctica compuesta por un conjunto de acciones que se centra en la utilización de textos literarios con tareas interactivas para facilitar el desarrollo de la competencia intercultural. La estrategia se empleó en estudiantes de cuarto año de la carrera de Lenguas Extranjeras, logrando resultados satisfactorios en términos de interculturalidad.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje; competencia intercultural; encuentros interculturales; inglés; literatura.

RESUMO

O desenvolvimento da competência intercultural nos alunos do programa de Línguas Estrangeiras é hoje uma necessidade em Cuba. A competência intercultural pode ser desenvolvida na experiência experiencial, mas também no contexto de ensino. Foram utilizados os seguintes métodos no nível teórico: dialético, histórico, lógico, sistêmico e de modelagem; como métodos de nível empírico: observação, revisão documental, entrevista, prova pedagógica, pré-experimento e estatística descritiva. Foi proposta uma estratégia didática composta por um conjunto de ações que foca na utilização de textos literários com tarefas interativas para facilitar o desenvolvimento da competência intercultural. A estratégia foi utilizada em alunos do quarto ano de Línguas Estrangeiras, obtendo resultados satisfatórios em termos de interculturalidade.

Palavras-chave: aprendizagem; competência intercultural; encontros interculturais; Inglês; literatura.

INTRODUCTION

Today, language learning addresses affective, cognitive, and situational factors and promotes intercultural communicative competence. (Arrieta, 2018). So interculturality must take place in the context of teaching and learning English in Cuba today. A language is taught and learned to interact interculturally in different contexts of personal and professional life.

It is therefore necessary to promote the development of intercultural competence in the context of language teaching. It is necessary to prepare the foreign language student to interact interculturally in a context in which, despite the impact of the economic crisis that the world is currently experiencing, intercultural encounters are maintained, whether in person or virtually.

Pérez, Hernández and Sánchez (2019) maintain that today we live in an increasingly multicultural scenario and it is necessary to teach language and culture in an integrated way.

For students studying Foreign Languages at the University of Pinar del Río, these intercultural contacts increase for reasons of student, professional and personal exchange. It is therefore necessary to develop intercultural competence in them, which, according to Martínez- Lirola (2018), consists of knowing how to behave communicatively in a flexible manner in the face of actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures.

Teaching foreign languages implicitly involves the linguistic contents and cultural aspects of the countries that speak it, from a language approach framed in culture. (Pérez, Hernández and Sánchez, 2019, p. 5). Today it is considered that language students must be aware of the linguistic and cultural diversity that exists in the world.

English spread with the British Empire to all continents, but it also ceased to be only the

mother tongue of those peoples who use it this way to become a lingua franca. Canto-Reyes (2023) maintains, no one doubts that English is the most used language for communication (...) around the world.

Thus, English language teachers and students must be aware of the different variants of English with which they can interact, of the various cultural traits that are expressed with the language, to teach and learn to be better communicators. Wu and Marek (2018) state, "...higher levels of cultural understanding make students more competent and more likely to achieve success in future international relations" (p.16)

For teachers of the Foreign Languages program at the University of Pinar del Río, it becomes a challenge to prepare students to interact with speakers from different cultural groups. This challenge involves developing intercultural competence in students which, according to Barrett, Byram, Lazar, Mompoin-Gailard and Philippou, (2014) "allows us to understand and respect people from different cultural groups, facilitates positive and constructive relationships and allows us to respond appropriately and respectfully to intercultural encounters." (pp. 16-17)

Intercultural competence is also defined as "a comprehensive set of cognitive, affective and behavioral factors that influence the understanding of and interaction with diversity in a broad sense, and that can be developed through education and/or experience". (Borghetti, 2017, p.3)

According to Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002), the components of intercultural competence are attitudes, knowledge, and skills. These same authors add a fourth element, the values that individuals manifest as social or cultural groups (p. 11).

intercultural competence, it is necessary to clarify concepts such as identity, culture, intercultural encounters and competence. Identity "is an abstract, dynamic and

multifaceted concept that plays an important role in communicative interaction and in particular in intercultural communication." (Samovar, Porter, McDaniel & Roy, 2009, p. 243).

According to Hofstede (2011), "Culture is the collective conception that distinguishes the members of one group of people from another" (p.3). On the other hand, "...an interpersonal encounter becomes intercultural when cultural differences are perceived in a specific situation..." (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 16) Likewise, competence, according to Pérez, Sánchez and Hernández (2019), consists of knowing how to integrate, mobilize and adapt knowledge, capacities and skills.

In the international context, intercultural competence has not been frequently studied. Wu & Marek (2018) state "intercultural knowledge is little present in the curriculum of teaching English as a foreign language. Consequently, intercultural competence has received less studies than language skills." (p.2). In the context of teaching English in Cuba, intercultural competence has not been widely addressed in pedagogical research either.

In the curriculum of the Foreign Languages program in Cuba, an approach is seen that provides a scientific understanding of the world based on materialist dialectics and in the programs this approach is specified through the development of communicative competence in English. A wide variety of actions can be seen, aimed at enhancing the communicative, cultural, linguistic, discursive and strategic aspects of the teaching of communication in English in students.

Action towards the enhancement of socio-cultural competence is also appreciated, but the necessary attention to the development of intercultural competence is not conceived. Then it is assumed as a scientific problem: How to contribute to the development of intercultural competence in

the students of the Foreign Languages program at the University of Pinar del Río?

A means to enhance intercultural competence in students of the Foreign Languages program is the use of literature in English, and it is contained in the subjects of the discipline History of the culture of English-speaking peoples. A literary work has multiple qualities for intercultural interaction. In a literary work you can interact with characters that reflect individuals from the most diverse social and cultural groups in the most diverse life situations.

The use of a literary work as a learning resource facilitates culture as content. So, the literary work is a source of knowledge about the cultural identity of the person who produces it. Keshavarzi (2012) states, "...the learning of a language has fundamentally to do with culture, with social understanding and it is this characteristic that demands materials related to the culture of the language being learned and literature is the culture of the people expressed in language" (p. 555). A literary work reveals the customs and social norms of the culture it reflects.

It allows you to interact with the psychology, behavior and points of view of those cultures. The literary text born in a foreign culture allows one to acquire knowledge about that culture and develop attitudes to interact in it. Therefore, the use of literature can incorporate an intercultural approach to the teaching and learning process of English and this approach, maintain Pérez, Hernández and Sánchez (2019), makes the contents and tasks more attractive, which in turn translates into significant learning.

The experience shown in this article is developed in the context of teaching and learning the History of Culture of English-Speaking Peoples III in the Foreign Languages program in Pinar del Río. This subject contains cultural, historical and literary aspects of the Caribbean people as content. Therefore, interaction with literary

texts by authors from the Anglophone Caribbean is facilitated. In this way, the objective of this article is to show how the use of literature contributes to the development of intercultural competence in third-year students of the Foreign Languages program at the University of Pinar del Río.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The teaching-learning process of intercultural competence and the use of literary texts for its development were diagnosed. Based on this diagnosis, a strategy was developed with methodological actions to put into practice the use of literature as a resource to contribute to the development of intercultural competence in students of the Foreign Languages program. A set of interactive tasks with literary texts in English by Caribbean authors is then proposed as part of this strategy.

The research carried out was mixed, using quantitative and qualitative approaches, with participatory action research. The intentionally selected sample was 26 4th year students of the daytime course of the Foreign Languages program in the 2022 academic year.

The dialectical-materialist method was assumed as a general method and based on this, the following theoretical level methods were used: the historical-logical, the structural systemic and modeling. Empirical level methods were used: observation, documentary review, interview, pedagogical test, pre-experiment and descriptive statistics techniques were used to process the information.

To evaluate the development of intercultural competence in the sample selected in the Foreign Languages major, the operationalization of intercultural competence exposed by Campos Cardoso LM, Urbay Rodríguez, M. & Gallardo López,

T. (2018) was assumed. For these authors, interculturality is expressed in three fundamental dimensions: cognitive, procedural and attitudinal.

1. Cognitive dimension:

1.1 Level of knowledge of the own and Caribbean cultural system.

1.2 Level of knowledge of the communicative and linguistic elements of Caribbean English.

2. Procedural dimension:

2.1 Level of development of skills to conduct oneself in an intercultural interpretive system where the own and the Caribbean converge.

2.2 Level of development of skills to critically evaluate one's own and the Caribbean cultural system.

3. Attitudinal dimension

3.1 Level of flexibility and tolerance for the acceptance of cultural differences.

3.2 Level of empathy towards other people despite cultural differences.

To quantify the results, the percentage technique was used. The following percentage ranges were established to classify the results of the indicators, dimensions and the intercultural competence variable. These ranges were: high level of development of intercultural competence: between 85% and 100%; acceptable level of development of intercultural competence: between 70% and 84.9% and low level of development of intercultural competence: between 0% and 69.9%. To establish a positive criterion according to the established ranges, the sum of the results in each high and acceptable tabulation will be taken into account.

RESULTS

The results of the pedagogical test and class observation were processed. Both instruments were aimed at diagnosing the level of development of intercultural competence in the selected sample. The results of these instruments were integrated applying the arithmetic mean criterion. The final result obtained from both measurements is shown below: Of the selected sample, 30 students were diagnosed with a high level of development of intercultural competence, representing 19.2%. Likewise, 58 students were diagnosed with an acceptable level of development of intercultural competence, for 37.1%. Both groups constituted 88 students, that is, 28.2% of the total sample with a high or acceptable development of the intercultural competence variable. This value is located in the range of 0 to 69.9%, a range established by the work to diagnose intercultural competence of low level of development.

Dimension 1 (cognitive) resulted in 11.5% of the total sample evaluated having a high level of development, while 32.6% were diagnosed as having an acceptable level. These two groups represented 22.1% of the total sample. This value is in the range of 0 to 69.9%, a range established by the work to evaluate the cognitive dimension of low level of development.

Dimension 2 (procedural) resulted in 13.4% of the total sample evaluated having a high level of development, and 36.5% of that same sample is diagnosed with an acceptable level. The two groups represent 22.8%. This value is in the range of 0 to 69.9%, established by the work to evaluate the procedural dimension of low level of development.

Dimension 3 (attitudinal) resulted in 32.6% of the total sample evaluated having a high level of development. 42.3% were diagnosed as acceptable. Both groups represent 37.5%. This value is in the range of 0 to 69.9% established by the work to

evaluate the attitudinal dimension of low level of development.

As can be seen, the most affected dimensions were the cognitive dimension with 22.1% of the total sample diagnosed with high and acceptable levels of development and the procedural dimension with 22.8%. The results by indicators were shown as shown in table 1.

Table 1- Result by indicators of the level of development of intercultural competence in the initial measurement, based on a pedagogical test and class observation.

Dim / Ind	Students.	% high	Students	% acceptable	Students	% low
D1. 1.1	4	15.3%	9	34.6%	13	fifty%
1.2.	2	7.6%	8	30.7%	16	61.5%
D2. 2.1	3	11.5%	eleven	42.3%	12	46.1%
2.2.	4	15.3%	8	30.7%	14	53.8%
D3.3.1	9	34.6%	10	38.4%	7	26.9%
3.2.	8	30.7%	12	46.1%	6	23.0

As can be seen, the indicators most affected in the initial measurement were 1.2, referring to the level of knowledge of the communicative and linguistic elements of Caribbean English, with only 10 students diagnosed with high or acceptable levels for 38.4%. 2.2, referring to the level of development of skills to critically evaluate one's own and the Caribbean cultural system, with only 12 students diagnosed with high or acceptable levels for 46.1% and 1.1, referring to the level of knowledge of one's own cultural system. and from the Caribbean, with only 13 students diagnosed with a high or acceptable level of development for 50%.

As part of the initial measurement in this work, an interview was carried out with the students with the objective of deepening the diagnosis of intercultural competence. This interview yielded the following results.

The students interviewed:

- They recognize the possibilities that interculturality offers for the promotion of identity, culture and communication.
- They value intercultural interpersonal relationships for better personal and professional performance.
- They recognize respect and appreciation for others as an essential source of development of intercultural competence.
- They recognize acceptance of differences, but it is not a conscious part of their daily actions.
- They consider knowledge of their own and Caribbean culture insufficient.
- They consider that to a certain extent the xenocentrism, what is foreign is valued more at the expense of what is native, without seeing the need for balance in the valuation of both as necessary.

Likewise, the documentary review of programs, subject preparation and class plans was developed. It was found that no actions are planned to influence the development of intercultural competence in Foreign Language students. A content-based approach is used where the didactic treatment is aimed at reproducing landscape, cultural, historical and literary elements of Caribbean culture.

Sociocultural competence is enhanced through authentic texts, but the content is not exploited to enhance interculturality in students. There are no actions to make students aware of what interculturality is, how to develop it and why.

After the diagnosis of intercultural competence, the following stages of the strategy were implemented: action planning, practical implementation and evaluation of the results. In the practical implementation stage, methodological actions and tasks with Caribbean literary texts were used in the context of the

subject History of the culture of English-speaking peoples III. These actions were developed during the second semester of the 2022 academic year.

Main actions taken into account during the implementation of the strategy.

- Identification of the level of development of intercultural competence in students.
- Selection of literary texts that promote the development of students' intercultural competence.
- Preparation of interactive tasks from literary texts that contribute to the development of intercultural competence.
- Treatment planning for intercultural competence in class subsystems.
- Implementation of literary texts with their tasks in HCPHI I classes (United Kingdom); HCPHI II (The United States); HCPHI III (Canada, the English-speaking Caribbean and English-speaking Africa)
- Implementation of actions to stimulate intercultural interaction, respect and tolerance for cultural differences.
- Evaluation of the use of literary texts and tasks in the development of intercultural competence in students.

Below are two examples of tasks with literary texts that are part of the set of tasks developed for the proposed strategy. The first task corresponds to the story *Hunters Hunted* by Guyanese writer Jan Carew. The second task is derived from another short story titled *Aunt Gold Teeth*, by Trinidadian writer VS Naipaul.

Homework 1

Text: *Hunters Hunted* by Jan Carew. (Ferracane, K.K., 1999)

Pre-reading

In small groups discuss:

a) What is the English-speaking Caribbean community? Where is it located? What countries belong to this community?

b) Do you know any Caribbean actor, athlete, songwriter, playwright or writer? Are they representative of the Caribbean culture? Why?

c) Look at the short-story *Hunters Hunted* by the Guyanese writer Jan Carew and check the title, structure and length of the text, its date of publication and writer. Comment.

d) Read this brief biographical information about Jan Carew and comment.

Jan Carew was born in The Cooperative Republic of Guyana, an English-speaking country located in South America, coast of the Caribbean Sea. He was a notable novelist, poet and short-story writer. He is a representative exponent writer of the Guyanese cultural identity. Most of his books depict life and culture of the Guyanese people. He also treats universal themes in his literary works.

e) Predict from the title of the short-story what this may be about.

A. While reading

Read to answer and discuss in the group.

a) Who are the characters and what is the relationship between them?

b) Where does the story take place? What do they do there? Why?

c) How do you describe these people and their way of life?

d) Find a fragment in the short story where the ethnic origin of these people is revealed. Comment on it.

e) Find in the short-story information about the geographical characteristics of Guyana.

f) Do the characters express folkloric references during the story? Exemplify.

g) Do they express their culture through the way of speaking? Exemplify.

h) Find in the text the way Tonic asked how long he had still to go: _____

i) Find these phrases in the text and determine what father Doorne means when he says:

...why you crying out with strain:

...save your breath for the walk:

...let the boy walk on he owns:

...I don't want no rice-pap mother's boy under me roof: _____

... "We better start fixing up camp before a tiger snatch-up one of us tonight: ____

j) Analyze the grammatical constructions in the above expressions and discuss regularities and differences with other English variants. Find more examples.

k) What characteristics of the language used in the short story identify these people? Exemplify.

l) What happened to these people at the end of the story? Do you see now the relationship of the text and the title? Explain.

B. Follow up

Discuss in small groups

to. Are the people in the short story culturally different or similar to the people in your country? Refer to the main differences and similarities in terms of ethnicity, cultural identity, way of life,

living conditions, customs, family relations, cultural level, language use.

b. How did you react before the cultural differences when interacting with the text? How would you react before cultural differences when interacting with people from another culture?

c. What is your opinion about the existence of cultural differences between people?

Task 2

Naipaul
(<https://www.theparisreview.org/fiction/4803/my-aunt-gold-teeth-vs-naipaul>)

A. Pre-reading

In small groups:

to. Read and comment. Add more information if possible.

- Trinidad and Tobago; homeland of the writer VS Naipaul, is a Caribbean country constituted by two small islands. Port Spain is the capital city of this tropical country where tourism is an important economic activity. Culture is rich and diverse due to the presence of European, African, Hindu and other cultural influences in the Trinitarian identity today.

b. Look at the short-story My Aunt Gold Teeth by the Trinitarian writer VS Naipaul and check the title, structure and length of the text, its date of publication and writer. Comment your observations.

c. Read this brief biographical information about writer VS Naipaul and comment. Add information if Item es considered

- VS Naipaul is a British-Trinitarian writer. He is a representative exponent of the Trinitarian literature. He was a winner of the Nobel Prize of Literature in 2021.

Naipaul's literary works depict the Trinitarian culture and society. Satire, irony and a pessimistic tone are present characteristics in Naipaul's works. Naipaul is a Hindu descent. So, the Hindu cultural influence within the Trinitarian society is also present in many of Naipaul's literary works.

d. Check this fragment from the short-story and predict what is going to happen.

- The fact was that Aunt Gold Teeth had no children and she was almost forty (...) oppressed her, and she was willing to try any means any ritual, any prayer in order to trap and channel the supernatural Power.

B. While-reading

Read to answer and discuss in the group

- Who are the main characters and what is the relationship between them?
- Where does the story take place? When does it take place?
- How do you describe these people's way of life?
- What is Aunt Gold Teeth like? What does she look like?
- What are Gold Teeth's conflicts? What is Gold Teeth's main conflict in the short story?
- What is the significance of religion for the main characters?
- Do they express their culture through the way of speaking? Exemplify.
- What is the meaning of Hindu? What is Hinduism?

i) Find in the text this phrase and say what it stands for according to the context?
...she prayed for the curse to be removed.

j) Find in the text this phrase and say what it stands for according to the context?
...feeling like an explorer in the land of cannibals.

k) Find in the text this phrase and say what it stands for according to the context?
...this man, is bewitched

l) What did Aunt Gold Teeth do when she concealed crucifix from her husband?

m) What characteristics of the language used in the short story identify these people? Exemplify.

n) What happens to these people at the end of the short story?

C. Follow-up

In small groups

to. Are these people in the short story culturally different or similar to the people in your country? Refer to the main differences and similarities in terms of customs and traditions.

b. Do you think Aunt Gold Teeth's culture influenced her actions? Why?

c. How did you react before Aunt Gold Teeth's actions in the short story? Explain. How would you react before cultural differences when interacting with people like Aunt Gold Teeth?

d. Share in the group what you learned about this foreign culture in the story. Compare with your own culture.

As part of the pedagogical pre-experiment, the information provided by the pedagogical test and class observation was processed in a measurement after the practical implementation of the strategy. Of the selected sample, 39 students were

diagnosed with a high level of development of intercultural competence, representing 25%. Likewise, 68 students were diagnosed with an acceptable level of development of intercultural competence, for 43.5%. Both groups constituted 107 students, that is, 34.2% of the total sample with a high or acceptable development of the intercultural competence variable. This value is located in the range of 0 to 69.9%, a range established by the work to evaluate intercultural competence of low level of development. However, there is significant progress between one measurement and another, given that of the sample of 26 students, 19 experienced progresses in the development of intercultural competence in the Caribbean, representing an advance of 6 percentage points.

Dimension 1 (cognitive) resulted in 28.8% of the total sample evaluated as having a high and acceptable level of development. This value is still in the range of 0 to 69.9%, the range in which the dimension of low level of development is evaluated. However, the final measurement of this variable (cognitive) showed an improvement of 6.7 percentage points with respect to its initial measurement. Although it was the most affected variable in the initial measurement, it experienced the greatest progress after the intervention with the proposed strategy, aspects that demonstrate a significant progress in the dimension.

Dimension 2 (procedural) resulted in 30.3% of the total sample evaluated as having a high and acceptable level of development. This value is still in the range of 0 to 69.9%, the range in which the dimension of low level of development is evaluated. However, the final measurement of this variable showed an advance of 5.3 percentage points with respect to its initial measurement, which demonstrates significant progress in the procedural dimension.

Dimension 3 (attitudinal) resulted in 43.2% of the total sample evaluated as having a high and acceptable level of development. This value is still in the range of 0 to

69.9%, the range in which the dimension of low level of development is evaluated. However, the final measurement of this variable showed an advance of 5.7 percentage points with respect to its initial measurement, which demonstrates significant progress in the attitudinal dimension.

The instruments in final measurement gave the results by indicators that are presented in table 2.

Table 2- Result of the final measurement of the indicators and dimensions that make up the intercultural competence variable.

GAVE.	Students	% high	Students	acceptable	Students	% low
D1.1.1.	6	23.0%	10	38.4%	10	38.4%
1.2.	5	19.2%	9	34.6%	12	46.1%
D22.1.	5	19.2%	13	fifty%	8	30.7%
2.2.	4	15.3%	10	38.4%	12	46.1%
D33.1.	10	38.4%	12	46.1%	4	15.3%
3.2.	9	34.6%	14	53.8%	3	11.5%

From the results of the final measurement, it was possible to determine that there was progress in all indicators. The most affected indicators in the initial measurement, 1.2, referring to the level of knowledge of the linguistic and communicative system of Caribbean English, showed an advance of 15.4 percentage points as 14 students in the sample advanced in this indicator to high and acceptable levels. Likewise, in indicator 2.2, referring to the level of development of skills to critically evaluate their own and the Caribbean cultural system, 14 students advanced to high and acceptable levels of development. This represented an advance of 7.7 percentage points. In indicator 1.1, referring to the level of knowledge of their own and the Caribbean cultural system, 16 students in the sample advanced to high and acceptable levels, for an advance of 11.5 percentage points with respect to the initial measurement.

The progress experienced by the sample in the intercultural competence variable in the

Caribbean area, its dimensions and indicators made the intervention with the proposed strategy feasible. Table 3 shows a discrete advance that is significant for the work with intercultural competence in the teaching-educational context.

Table 3- Comparative results in pre experiment

Measure ment	D.1 (cognitive)	D.2 (procedural)	D.3 (attitudinal)	CI variable
Initial	22.1%	22.8%	37.5%	28.2%
Final	28.8%	30.3%	43.2%	34.2%
Advance (percentage points)	6.7	7.5	5.7	6

DISCUSSION

The scientific research process developed corroborates the low level of development of intercultural competence in the students of the Foreign Languages program at the University of Pinar del Río. This work reveals how intercultural competence is marked by poor methodological treatment in the context of teaching and learning English in students studying Foreign Languages in Pinar del Río.

This work proposes a way to contribute to the development of this intercultural competence in future foreign language professionals. This work reveals literature as a way to learn to interact from interculturality in the educational context. Montiel (2023) states that literature, from its different manifestations, is the path that can bring human beings closer to culture and appropriate their identity.

The use of literature in this work allows students, through interactive tasks prepared from Caribbean literary texts, to interact with interculturality, analyzing, reflecting, comparing and acting towards intercultural differences, which results in

better treatment of competence. intercultural from working with communicative, interactive and intercultural competence. This work also specifically contributes to raising the level of information about Caribbean and maternal culture.

Likewise, a strategy is provided that contributes to the development of intercultural competence in students studying Foreign Languages in Pinar del Río. The proposed strategy has, in its practical implementation, a set of literary texts by Caribbean writers and interactive tasks that allow promoting knowledge, skills and attitudes to respect and value with empathy a foreign culture and one's own.

In the body of the article two model tasks are presented; which derive from the reading and analysis of two Caribbean stories. These short stories reflect the life, values, feelings, idiosyncrasies and culture of the Caribbean people.

They describe intra-family interpersonal relationships, religiosity as a cultural aspect of each society. These stories contain colloquial language. The real use of Caribbean English is appreciated, which is interesting to the student who rarely interacts with this variant of English. At the same time, the use of very local, informal terms constitutes a challenge for the understanding of the student who must face this aspect.

The first task is designed based on the story *Hunters Hunted* by Guyanese writer Jan Carew. This story specifically describes the life of a rural family in Guyana. The story exposes the functioning of this family in its daily activities. Cultural patterns are revealed around the education of children. Through the plot, the story reveals the harsh conditions of nature where a father and three children from a poor family face very difficult circumstances to survive, with a fatal outcome. The warmth of the Caribbean being is reflected in its environment, aspects of the climate, the

vegetation, the food and the cultural treatment of the topic of death.

The second example is also derived from another story. This second story is titled Aunt Gold Teeth by the Trinidadian writer VS Naipaul. In this story the cultural richness of the people of the Caribbean is also appreciated. The role of religiosity, the coexistence of various religious beliefs as a result of cultural diversity, is revealed here. The story describes aspects of the Caribbean idiosyncrasy, the people, their ways of life, their beliefs, their customs and traditions.

During the development of the tasks, the student is led to become aware of cultural differences, a primary aspect of the development of intercultural competence. Interactively, the student must contextualize the literary work that is used as a resource to promote interculturality. It leads to reflection on the Caribbean cultural system. The student is introduced to a cultural interpretive system, different from his or her own. In these tasks, the student interacts with culturally different characters, making a critical evaluation of that cultural system and the linguistic-communicative system. In addition, it aims to recognize the existence of cultural differences, foster attitudes of understanding, tolerance and empathy towards the characters in literary works, their behaviors marked by cultural differences.

Each task developed for this work is structured in three phases: before reading, during reading and after reading. This allows progress through levels of assimilation from familiarization to production and critical evaluation. In the first phase of the task, before reading the selected work, students' prior knowledge about Caribbean culture in general is activated. Likewise, students' prior knowledge about the work and its author is activated. Actions are carried out to contextualize the literary work and the life and work of the author. In this way, a prior preparation is achieved in the students that

favors a better understanding of the literary work later.

In the second phase, during reading, the student understands the plot of the text and interacts with new linguistic forms, typical of that culture and dialect variant. Then, in the third phase, after reading the story, the student critically reflects, evaluates, evaluates and expresses his or her views on cultural differences. In any case, the activities promote respect, tolerance and empathy with people from different cultures, while contributing to the training of a teacher who mediates their own culture with the foreign one.

The proposed strategy allows students to access knowledge of the English language through an understanding of the Anglophone Caribbean culture. Motivation is generated by finding linguistic forms typical of the Caribbean variant and the reading of original works is stimulated. The valuation of foreign cultural expressions is achieved in frank comparison with one's own.

Similarities and differences are presented with respect to other similar studies. It allows, like other research such as Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey, (2002); Samovar, Porter and McDaniel, (2009); Martínez-Lirola (2018); Wu and Marek (2018); Pérez, Hernández and Sánchez (2019) contribute to the development of intercultural competence. Many of these authors, as in the present work, deal with intercultural competence based on the construction of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes towards what is culturally different. They promote respect, tolerance and empathy by showing the existence of linguistic and cultural diversity. Likewise, literature is used from a critical perspective with an interactive approach, taking advantage of the cultural and linguistic wealth that is exposed in a literary text. Another aspect to consider is that many of these authors carry out their studies in teaching groups where there is a marked multiculturalism. This condition has a positive impact on the development of intercultural competence and constitutes a

difference in this work since this phenomenon of multiculturalism does not occur in the educational context where it was developed.

The use of literature as a resource to contribute to the development of intercultural competence is a feasible perspective in the context of the training of English teachers at the University of Pinar de Río. You do not need to be a specialist in Literature to use it to enhance intercultural competence, since you do not aspire to develop literary competence. English teachers can approach a literary work by identifying through reading and analyzing the elements of the author's life and work, the time and social context in which it takes place, the characters, the plot, the outcome and the use of English that contains. The definition of these elements is necessary to carry out an initial analysis of a literary work by the teacher who will use it not to enhance literary competence in students, but as a resource for the development of intercultural competence in students.

In the opinion of the authors, this work contributes, in addition to enhancing intercultural competence, to fostering feelings of love for the culture and identity of future Cuban education professionals. It demonstrates that foreign culture is not weighted above the mother's culture nor vice versa when it is studied from an intercultural perspective; on the contrary, the student is oriented towards knowledge and feeling for that identity culture. Foreign culture is not valued when values of respect, tolerance, consideration and empathy towards cultural differences are highlighted and learning to reveal cultural identity in the communication process.

It also presents as a fundamental limitation the absence of intercultural meetings after the implementation of the proposal where the level of development of intercultural competence of the sample can be observed. The study developed exposes the possibility of applying it in the context of other subjects within the Foreign Languages curriculum and in different

years. Its improvement is suggested, the development of other works that take advantage of the possibilities of literature to contribute to the development of intercultural competence in students of the University of Pinar del Río.

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