

How far have we gone? Integration of intercultural language learning principles in Philippine ESL classrooms

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ABSTRACT

Intercultural education is firmly rooted on the notion that language and culture are intrinsically linked. Several studies have looked into the importance of understanding different languages and cultures in language teaching; however, studies on the integration of principles intercultural language learning (IcLL) in Philippine English as a foreign language (ESL) classrooms seem to be lacking. This is what the article addresses as it looked into the extent of integration of IcLL principles in two higher educational institution in Region 2, Cagayan Valley, Northern Philippines. Anchored on the principles of IcLL and through the employment of survey to elicit responses of the language teachers as to the integration of IcLL principles in language classrooms, results revealed that teachers perceive IcLL to be integrated in their classrooms to a great extent. Specifically, the principles of active construction and social interaction are integrated to a very high extent while the principles making connections, reflection, and responsibility were perceived to be integrated to a high extent. As regards classroom activities, the teachers favored the employment of discussions, lectures, writing tasks, oral reports, role plays, small group tasks, simulations or skits and collaborative learning activities in transmitting the target culture.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Over decades, views on culture have shifted from discussions about arts and literature by the educated few to the deeper and more comprehensive examination of belief systems, values, and relational dynamics of various groups including those traditionally marginalized. Hence, rather than defined, restricted and imposed by social hierarchy, culture is now understood as something that is continuously shaped and maintained by members of a community [1]. The contemporary society is characterized by diversity and change. Societies require the co-existence of people belonging to different ethnic groups, various linguistic cultures and religious backgrounds. Given this diversity, intercultural education has been incorporated into the educational system which is anchored on the vision that this educational process promotes values of tolerance, freedom, openness, acceptance of differences, and understanding of diversity, pluralism and cooperation [2].

An inseparable part of culture is language. Thus, alongside developing views on culture, language teaching and learning has undergone reconceptualization. Since the emergence of 'the Communicative

Approach' and 'Communicative Language Teaching' in the 1970s, language teaching and learning has undergone a 'cultural turn' [3]. Language learning is no longer characterized as the mere mastery of rules of a linguistic system but is now construed as a learning process encompassed within a social, economic, gendered, cultural and political contexts [4]. Language is a value-laden and dynamic activity and is not a constant and neutral system of communication. In the context of globalization, English has become a primary means of communication in multicultural contexts, thus, making English an international language, a *lingua franca*, and a global language [5].

Bennet 2008, cited in [6] defined intercultural competence as "a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts." Deardoff [7] remarks that intercultural competence is one's capacity to communicate appropriately and effectively in intercultural situations. In the same manner, Spitzberg and Chagnon cited in [8] posited that intercultural competence is concerned with the effective and appropriate management of interaction between people who, to some degree or another, represent different or divergent affective, cognitive, and behavioral orientations of the world. Furthermore, it is based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes. This is also tantamount to understanding and respecting individuals who are perceived to have different cultural affiliations from oneself. Therefore, distinguishing between intercultural competence and intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is of utmost importance. According to Byram [9], the first deals with peoples' capacity to engage into meaningful interaction employing their own language with the people from another country and culture, while ICC takes into account language teaching and focuses on peoples' ability to interact with people from another country and culture by utilizing a foreign language. In Byram's view, a person who has developed ICC is able to build relationships while speaking in the foreign language; communicates effectively, taking into consideration his own and the other person's viewpoint and needs; mediates interactions between people of different backgrounds, and strives to continue developing communicative skills [9].

Moreover, *et al.* [3] contended that the issue of enhancing ICC to English as a second language/English as a foreign language (ESL/EFL) learners is one of the ultimate objectives in the field of English language education. In the same vein, Samovar, *et al.* [10] argued that the incorporation of intercultural instruction may equip learners with the knowledge of intercultural communication. This ability, in turn, necessitates them to use the language effectively in bridging cultural differences and achieve more harmonious, productive and meaningful relations.

Several studies have been conducted to examine and establish the pedagogical significance of intercultural language education in the academe. Within the realm of ELT, Baker [11] looked into the cultural connections and pedagogical implications of English as a *lingua franca*. This paper incorporates within the analytical realm the significance of ELF as a category in examining the interplay between language and culture. In doing such, the complexity theory was used to frame the understanding of intercultural competence as a fusion of complex elements which are to be interspersed in language pedagogy. The paper also discussed the adverse effects of simplification which easily leads into essentialist representations of language and culture in ELT. This essentialist approach is tantamount to an over-representation of "Anglophone cultures." The author offered a number of suggestions and examples for how such complex understandings of culture and language through ELF can be meaningfully interspersed into pedagogy.

Estaji and Rahimi [12] looked into the relationship of EFL teachers' experience, educational attainment and level of instruction on how they perceive ICC. The study also aimed to analyze the effect of their ICC perceptions on their pedagogical practices. In order to achieve the research aims, the researchers employed a questionnaire adopted from Zhou and a semi-structured interview to enrich the discussion. The data indicated that while no significant differences as regards chosen variables were recorded, ICC perceptions have an effect on teaching practices as perceived by the respondents. The semi-structured interview yielded that the teachers have a high regard towards ICC as contributory to the success of ESL learners.

In the same vein, Boonmoh and Banjongjit [13] gathered the perceptions of teachers in the promotion of ICC in EFL learning contexts. The qualitative study was participated by seven Thai teachers who teach English for Workplace Communication course. Using Deardoff's ICC framework [7], it was found that ICC is perceived positively by the teachers. Moreover, they typically focused on desired external results, knowledge, skills and attitude towards differences in culture and cultural orientations. Furthermore, in promoting ICC, there was a high preference of classroom activities such as anecdotes, reading and discussion, and role-playing or simulations.

With the aim of establishing the importance of intercultural communication activities in achieving the goals of ICC, Velasco [14], examined two groups of Japanese students who are learning English in a higher education institution. The study reveals that classroom exercises such as film-viewing, picture elicitation, situational judgment facilitates in the achievement of intercultural communicative competence.

Furthermore, the survey shows that self-reflection, assessment of beliefs and biases supports the Japanese students' appreciation of diverse cultures.

Tran and Duong [5], examined the effectiveness of the intercultural language communicative teaching model for EFL among Vietnamese learners. The study showed that the ICLT model was seen an effective form of intercultural language education in facilitating the achievement of learners' ICC. This study might suggest that if used long term, the ICLT model can equip learners with ICC in order to become intercultural speakers who can be fluent in a foreign language and function appropriately and effectively in the context of globalization.

Aimed at building a framework to develop intercultural competence for global education, St. Paul University- Philippines launched its internationalization program. A study that looked into its effectiveness was conducted by Ang [6]. Results indicate that the developed framework establishes the interplay of affective, cognitive and behavioral dimensions of intercultural competence. Accordingly, the affective element includes values, attitudes, sentiments, curiosity, openness, care, concern and difficulty. The cognitive element is comprised of knowledge, awareness, understanding, study, learning, pre-judgment and bias. Furthermore, the behavioral aspect encompasses the skills, observable conduct and gestures, countenance and interactions. Moreover, Ang [6] asserts that internationalization programs such as the one developed in their academic institution lead to the development of intercultural competence facilitated by global learning, international experience and international partnerships and linkages.

Pullin [15] incorporated in his inquiry Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF) in the context of the School of Management Vaud in Switzerland. As affirmed by the data, the researcher forwarded the meaningful interplay of prior knowledge and needs analysis, implementation of task-based approaches, match between aims and learning outcomes, assessment and evaluation and the competence of the knowledge-providers for the effective instruction of BELF.

As regards development of intercultural competence in the middle phase of learning, Fakhruddinov and Akhatovna [16], posit that the success in teaching a foreign language in a multicultural educational space is an offshoot of an informed, careful selection of training materials by teachers. This goes hand in hand with the simultaneous use of several guidelines, both for the teacher and for the learners. Also, Irimia [17] focuses on raising awareness of culture through the lived experiences of the learners and people from target language cultures as well as other cultures represented in the classroom or community. Using European conventions, the researcher offers a comprehensive array of learning tasks and guidelines for assessment. In Haerazi, *et al.* [18] looked into possible means of meeting the needs of students in a multicultural setting. Results of the study indicate that the conduct of needs analysis in identifying cultural materials is a helpful method in meeting students' needs and expectations. The development of English materials aided intercultural language learning for writing classes. The data also indicate that the students are particularly interested in cultural topics appropriate for their level. These include wedding ceremonies, historical buildings, and traditional music. Moreover, the study emphasizes the significance of the Instructional Model in the teaching and learning of intercultural language.

Taking into account the epistemic context and the scholastic traditions of Muslim students, Diallo [19] was able to identify problems in intercultural teaching (ICT) in the Arab Gulf region. The inquiry is prompted by an observation which reveals that there lies a monocentric paradigm in Arab-Muslim context of the Gulf countries in as much as the implementation of intercultural teaching theories is concerned. Apparently, ICT theories clash with local cultures and values because they are perceived as a subtle medium for the expansion of Western socio-cultural values and lifestyles. The researcher proposes that to be culturally-sensitive, intercultural teaching should not be limited to Western socio-cultural values but should cater to Muslim learners' socio-cultural and religious realities as ways of discovering and reaching the culture of the target language.

In her paper, Manjarres [20] discussed the difficulties facing the development of intercultural competence in Colombia, a multicultural country. This is partly attributed to the seemingly narrow and often ideological approaches on culture and culture teaching among the discourses of in-service teachers. The researcher offered valuable suggestions such as; intercultural education be incorporated to basic education curriculum, re-examination of the images of the foreign cultures, and that educational authorities should consider the inclusion of a cultural component in the standardized examinations, and so on.

The common thread that sutures the previously-mentioned studies is the emphasis on intercultural education which is firmly rooted on the notion that language and culture are intrinsically linked. In the contemporary world, language education should open a path that leads to mutual understanding among different languages, cultures and ways of reasoning. However, in the literature review, it was found that there is a dearth of studies regarding the integration of IcLL in Philippine ESL Classrooms. Despite the government and educational agencies' strong desire to keep pace with the ASEAN Integration, a need to shift from Communicative Language Teaching to IcLL, and in response to the challenge of global education, it has

been observed that IcLL has not been fully incorporated in ESL classrooms especially in the provinces. Given this assumption, the researchers were prompted to look into the extent of integration of IcLL principles in two higher educational institution in Region 2, Cagayan Valley, Northern Philippines. IcLL theoretical underpinnings, necessary tasks and instructional strategies are expected to be integrated in courses such as Purposive Communication, Advanced Oral Communication, Philippine, World and Contemporary Literatures, and Writing in the Disciplines which are offered among the students. Additionally, it is hoped that this study shall provide supportive factors so as to facilitate the process of learners' intercultural learning.

This article examines the extent of integration of intercultural language learning in ESL classrooms. In doing so, the study framed its focus on intercultural language learning (IcLL) which connects the study of culture to language and linguistics learning and sees them as integrated and holistic. Liddicoat, *et al.* [21] emphasized that IcLL involves developing with learners a clear understanding of their own culture and language in relation to an additional culture and language. It must be emphasized that culture should be integrated into other language skills and not a separate skill. This means that right from the very start, language teachers should start teaching culture at the very beginning of language teaching. The IcLL as an approach operates on five principles: active construction, making connections, social interaction, reflection and responsibility. Liddicoat, *et al.* [21] outline these principles in Table 1.

Table 1. Principles of IcLL [21]

Principles of IcLL	Description
Active construction	Learning involves the purposeful and active construction of knowledge within a socio-cultural context.
Making connections	Learning is based on previous knowledge and requires challenges to initial conceptions that learners bring. The challenges lead to new insights through which learners make connections, to reorganise and extend their existing framework of knowledge.
Social interaction	Learning is social and interactive.
Reflection	Learning involves becoming aware of the processes underlying thinking, knowing and learning through conscious awareness and reflection.
Responsibility	Learning depends on learners' attitudes and dispositions to learning.
Active construction	Learning involves the purposeful and active construction of knowledge within a socio-cultural context.
Making connections	Learning is based on previous knowledge and requires challenges to initial conceptions that learners bring. The challenges lead to new insights through which learners make connections, to reorganise and extend their existing framework of knowledge.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Procedure

In order to investigate the extent of integration of the concepts and principles of IcLL in Philippine ESL classrooms, this article employed qualitative approach. Specifically, they used quasi-statistics or frequency and percentage count. To collect quantitative data, the authors conducted a survey among language teachers in the chosen schools to elicit their perception as to the extent of integration of the IcLL principles in their language classes.

2.2. Setting and participants

The study was carried out in March of the school year 2018-2019 among the language teachers who are teaching in two universities in Region 2. There was a total of 40 language teachers who were the primary source of data investigated in this article.

Forty responses were received. Of these respondents, 18 were from a state university and 22 were teachers from a private institution. There were 28 female respondents and 12 male respondents. Nearly half are between the ages of 20-35; while the other half is divided between the 36-50 and 51-65 age groups. Half of the respondents are also graduates of a masters' degree; while only 6 are Ph.D. graduates and 14 have an undergraduate degree. In terms of number of years in service, 37% of the respondents have been teaching for 5 years or less. The same percentage of respondents have worked in the field for a period of 11-15 years. Only three from the respondents worked in the academe for 26-30 years.

2.3. Instrument

The article made use of a self-made survey questionnaire to elicit perception of the language teacher as to the integration of IcLL principles in their language classrooms. Statement prompts were based on the principles of IcLL by Liddicoat, *et al.* [21]. These statements aim to look into the IcLL principles employed in the respondents' language classroom and the activities used in the instruction of IcLL. The questionnaire is

divided into three parts. Part 1 determines the profile of the respondents as regards title or position, institutional affiliation, address, gender, age, educational attainment, years of teaching, and language/s spoken. The second part which accounts for the extent of ICC integration is 25-item questionnaire using a four-Likert scale as in: 1 (Strongly disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Agree), and 4 (Strongly agree). To determine the extent of integration of ICC, the scale was used as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The extent of ICC integration and its equivalence

Scale	Response	Qualitative description
1.0-1.49	Strongly disagree	Very low extent
1.5-2.49	Disagree	Low extent
2.5-3.49	Agree	High extent
3.5-4.00	Strongly agree	Very high extent

To answer the second research question, a checklist was devised so as to determine the activities conducted by the teacher so as to cater to IcLL instruction in the ESL classes. A roster of classroom activities was provided for the teachers to check. Since the researchers employed a self-made questionnaire, the reliability of the survey questionnaire, written in English, was determined after having the questionnaire pilot-tested to five language teachers who were not part of the actual data. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire after the pilot study was .826. After this, the questionnaire was administered among teachers of two higher education institutions in Nueva Vizcaya and Cagayan. Purposive sampling was employed which catered to at least 20% of the total number of language teachers per higher education institution. The data have undergone tabulation and statistical treatment upon which, interpretation and analysis followed.

2.4. Data collection and analysis

The researchers contacted the participants personally and asked for their consent to participate in this study. The hardcopy of the survey questionnaire was delivered to the participants, and they waited for the accomplished questionnaire. Answers to the survey were then tabulated and analyzed using descriptive statistics.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 3 summarizes the extent of integration of the five principles of IcLL in the language classes as perceived by the language teachers. It is evident from Table 3 that the principles of active construction and social interaction are integrated to a very high extent as perceived by the language teachers with a rating of 3.5 and 3.62 respectively. On one hand, domain active interaction encompasses tenets concerning the purposeful use of language in a range of tasks where students discover and create meaning in interaction with people, provision of time to formulate questions about the target culture, selection of tasks that simulate students' interest on language and culture, appreciation of other cultures, and giving of time to notice the differences between learners' own culture and the culture of the target language which is English. On the other hand, the domain social interaction covers learners' engagement in interactive talk and questioning with others, recognition that social interaction is central to communication, provision of opportunities to interact or socialize with the native speakers of the target culture, allotment of time for students to interact with one another, and allowing students understand that they live in a culturally-diverse community.

Table 3. Extent of integration of the IcLL principle in higher education institutions (HEIs) English as a second language (ESL) classes

Principle of IcLL	Mean	Qualitative description
Active construction	3.5	Very high extent
Making connections	3.48	High extent
Social interaction	3.62	Very high extent
Reflection	3.48	High extent
Responsibility	3.49	High extent

n=40

Following the principle of social interaction, Liddicoat, Papademetre, *et al.* [21] maintain that culture is learned and explored through communication with others. This means that social interaction allows the learner to notice and experience difference between the target culture and language forms and their native

culture and language forms during communication. When after having noticed the difference, they are allowed to discuss and try out possible responses. These authors [21] define active construction as referring to the principle that learners need to create their own knowledge about the culture as part of the development of a personal perspective on both their own culture and the culture they are learning. This means that learner's themselves need to be equipped with the necessary abilities to notice differences, reflect on the nature and impact of these and develop personal solutions to intercultural issues. Here, the role of the language teacher is to allow the difference to be noticed, explored and reflected on rather than presenting the culture as a complete and new body of information. The data indicate that the teacher respondents highly adhere to these two IcLL principles. It can be speculated that the high extent of IcLL integration among the ESL classes under study is the level of education of the learners where students of tertiary education, in preparation for their future professions, need be globally competitive. It is assumed that the language teacher sees the more pragmatic needs of their learners in the contemporary society. The present study supports the findings of Estaji and Rahimi [12] on the extent of inclusion of IcLL and positive perceptions of educators toward such pedagogical practice. The same positive view on IcLL as an important component of a language teaching curriculum was echoed in the study of Boonmoh and Banjongjit [13]. However, the findings of the present study run contrary to that of Cheng 2012, cited in [12] who found that ICC reflects little role in the teaching practices of Taiwanese EFL teachers.

The other three principles: making connections, reflection, and responsibility were perceived to be integrated to a high extent with a rating of 3.48, 3.48 and 3.49 respectively. In intercultural language learning, Liddicoat, *et al.* [21] maintain that the principle of making connections encourages learners to make their own connections between their existing culture, language and knowledge and the new stimuli they meet in the classroom. They contend that this can only be done if they stand on a comparative perspective in which the new language and new culture is contrasted with what is already known to them. This principle also emphasizes the need to highlight the first cultures of the learners. As to the principle of reflection, students are encouraged to respond, whether positively or negatively, to the culture they are experiencing. This also means that they need to reflect on the consequences of choices about their communicative behavior in light of their new knowledge gained. Finally, the integration of the principle of responsibility reflects the awareness of the teachers that the learners have the responsibility for their own learning. Overall, the findings reveal that the language teachers seem to be highly cognizant of the interplay between language education and culture and claims to integrate culture into their pedagogical practices as an avenue to enhance intercultural competence. The finding supports the works of [12, 5, 13].

The last part of the questionnaire fleshes out the answer to the question concerning classroom activities employed by the teachers in transmitting the target culture. Table 4 shows the list of activities in a descending order as regards frequency:

Table 4. Activities employed by the HEI language teachers

Activities	Frequency
Discussions	38
Lecture	38
Writing tasks (journals, critical incidents reflective essays)	27
Oral reports	27
Role plays	26
Small group tasks	26
Simulation/skits	25
Collaborative learning activities	25
Review of readings	23
Debate	23
Media and theatre tasks	22
Interaction/interviews with persons of another culture	21
Observational tasks	19
Exploratory tasks	14
Case studies	9
Fishbowls	9
Panels	7
Fieldwork (site visits, drop offs, field trips)	1

Table 4 summarizes the list of activities used by the language teachers as they expose the language learners to the target language. The activities above are listed in the order of popularity with the number of responses indicated.

It is evident that all the respondents generally adhere to the use of the traditional method of teaching which are the use lecture and discussions. Though considered traditional, these classroom activities allow

students and teachers to explore on what Corbet (n.d.) calls ‘rich points’ of inquiry and discussion, which may allow for adjustments and even re-alignments of the learners’ L1 and L1 culture and the target language culture. 27 respondents show importance to the cultivation of the writing and speaking skills of the learners by employing various types of writing and speaking tasks like journal writing, critical essays and reflective essays and the use of oral reports. Also, such activities open the lines of communication between teachers and students while providing avenues for reflection and evaluation of personal opinions on a variety of cross-cultural topics [14]. Perhaps in recognition of the need for the students to use the target language in collaborative activities, more than half of the respondents employ activities like small group tasks, simulation or skits and other collaborative learning activities. The findings of the present study are in consonance with that of Boonmoh and Banjongjit [13] that role-playing and simulations are preferred tasks in integrating culture and language in ESL classes. This may be attributed to the nature of role-playing and simulations which encourage the development and practice of a new language, enhancement of behavioral skills, reflective thinking and creativity among students in a non-threatening context [22]. This study also affirms existing literatures discussing the significance of collaborative learning tasks across disciplines, in general, and intercultural communication, in particular. These tasks allow learners to engage in a variety of communication and utilize available collaboration tools and modes while building within themselves values of cooperation and agreement.

It is noteworthy to mention that more than half of the respondents feel the need to make their students socialize and interact with people of another culture by asking the learners to conduct an interview with the native speakers of the language. However, this may pose a challenge to both teachers and students as face-to-face encounters with native speakers are few and far between. However, in the advent of technology, teachers and student can make global connections with speakers of a target culture. It is observed that both universities are equipped with computer facilities and internet, thus, teachers and students have access to these learning resources. Mass media have been contributory to the incorporation of cultural awareness among people. As Rehman [23] puts it, “In some ways, the media are making a very constructive contribution by presenting sympathetic and accurate portrayals and images of distant places and people (p.18).” The same line of reasoning may be applied why more than half of the teachers employ theater tasks in their classes. Most theater pieces are literary materials from foreign authors who use language to depict the cultural life of people belonging to various races. Theatrical tasks seek to foster intercultural learning and appreciation in ESL and EFL classes. These are meaningful learning activities since it targets not only holistic learning but also the performative arena of language learning [24].

All these findings are in agreement with the findings of Tuna and Razi [25] who interviewed EFL instructors as to the integration of cultural elements in language teaching. Most of them suggested the inclusion of activities like: introducing someone from a different culture, use of songs and tasks that reflect the culture of the target language, role-play activities in the classroom and using movies in the identification of the cultural elements of the target language. In their study, videos were suggested as the most beneficial way to integrate culture into their classes. This is also in consonance with the argument that was clearly conveyed by Turkan and Celik [26] that teaching culture should be integrated into the language textbooks and classroom practices. However, they also stressed that when the teaching materials do not include the target language teacher, it is still the primary responsibility of the language teachers to find practical solutions to address this problem. The same results were yielded in the study of Minoia [8] which revealed that students’ exposure to films, news, podcasts and television programs which serve as sources of information about a target culture enhanced the reflective nature and engagement of students in the process of learning their interculturality. Furthermore, Farnia and Raja pointed that students need to develop an understanding that for communication to be successful, language use must be linked with culturally accepted behaviors and attitudes [27].

However, exploratory tasks, case studies, fishbowl and panels are the least employed activities in the classroom. Attributions may be made based on the complexity of these learning tasks and the amount of time spent for their completion. The other activities are not so much explored by the respondents especially the use of fieldtrips. Field trips are a shared social experience that provides the opportunity for students to encounter novel things in an authentic setting. The use of fieldtrips as a strategy in learning has been proven to be effective in exposing the students to new experiences and it is likely to result in affective gains such as more positive feelings toward a topic [28]. However, in the Philippine setting, as triggered by the unfortunate accidents during fieldtrips, the Commission on Higher Education issued a moratorium on out-of-campus learning trips and other similar activities. This was affirmed by the Department of Education in the issuance of a directive temporarily banning the conduct of educational fieldtrips in elementary and secondary schools. Moreover, field trips are costly, thus, school administrators especially from provincial academic institutions do not consider this as a primary learning opportunity among students. These must have been the reasons

why the language teachers surveyed in this study have reported the non-use of educational fieldtrips in their language classes.

4. CONCLUSION

This article is an attempt to examine IcLL integration in ESL classes in two higher educational institutions in Region 2, Northern Luzon, Philippines. Moreover, it aims to contribute to the dearth of literatures in IcLL integration in provincial academic institutions in the country. Anchored on the principles of IcLL and through the employment of survey to elicit responses of the language teachers as to the integration of IcLL principles in language classrooms, it was found that the teachers perceive to integrate IcLL to a great extent. Specifically, the principles of active construction and social interaction are integrated to a very high extent while the principles making connections, reflection, and responsibility were perceived to be integrated to a high extent. As regards classroom activities, the teachers favor the employment of discussions, lectures, writing tasks, oral reports, role plays, small group tasks, simulations or skits and collaborative learning activities in transmitting the target culture. However, case studies, fishbowl method, panels, and fieldwork are the least favored. It must be stressed that this article only looked into which principles of IcLL are integrated in HEI ESL classes and the activities that the language teachers employ in exposing their students to the target language. It would be interesting to find out which cultural elements are integrated in their teaching of the language by investigating the textbooks and other learning materials employed by the teachers in order to have a wider understanding of the issue.

In brief, the findings suggest that the language teachers see the significance of IcLL in the ESL classroom. As regards pedagogy, this article, this study may serve as a baseline in promoting intercultural communicative competence in the language classroom. Due to methodological constraints, the researchers suggest doing a larger scale study with the inclusion of more research respondents. It would also be interesting to investigate the perceptions of students regarding IcLL. Moreover, it is also suggested that other social variables like, age, years of service, educational background and ethnicity be included in the analytical realm. Though a small-scale study, the researcher hopes that this work be a humble contribution to the literature on language and culture, in general, and intercultural language learning, in particular.

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