

The Intercultural and the Literary: Trimming down Prejudice in the Context of EFL Text Interpretation

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Abstract:

The current work brings to light the recent claims inciting for weaving foreign language culture within the very tissue of language learning. The paper claims for the positive impact of intercultural knowledge on alleviating the rate of negative prejudice about native speakers and easing lines of mutual understanding. A questionnaire and an interview were used to explore their views about points related to culture, literary readings, and prejudice formation. The findings showed that FL students attach import to cultural knowledge and to its weight on literary understanding. The results showed that FL students hold negative prejudices originated in many factors. The interview results demonstrated that students are not that flexible with the prejudices they have, at the same time they are conscious that the latter are inherited and are not fixed rules. The findings proved that students discuss the issue of prejudice in class debates whenever the occasion permits.

Keywords:

Culture, intercultural competence, literary competence, literary texts, prejudices.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Reading has always been a fertile ground of research because it is mingled within every aspect of human life. Considerations about the ways the reading activity should be approached varied from one epoch to another in line with the innovations in the field of linguistics, applied linguistics, and at times literary theory. The latter helps partially explaining the phenomenon of reading though in line with a special type of texts namely the literary. Arriving to the level of appreciating a literary work entails the reader to be acquainted with special abilities that are added up with the vital styles and strategies of reading to trim the readers' dealing with particular meanings (McNamara, 2007). In the context of EFL, training students on strategies of reading is very essential especially if the intention is to generate competent individuals in their field of specialty. Training students on strategies of reading relies mainly on instructors' methods, techniques, and classroom practices while reading styles relate for the most part to students' personal inclinations. Whenever there is no room devoted to the teaching of this skill, literature sessions provide a fertile ground to boost EFL students' reading abilities and coach them on the right ways as to how to delve in the text and read between the lines what the words could potentially convey (Alghonaim, 2020). Amidst the eternal constraints that students feel vis-à-vis a foreign literary text, in this regard, are the cultural boundaries in which the text sees light that either assist or impede understanding and consequently interpretation. The intercultural factor is every so often abandoned by both sides in the learning continuum; instructors and learners, reasons for this are varied sometimes they are incarnated in time restraints at other times they are traced back to an absence of focus on the cultural element in the teaching syllabus.

What is fascinating in reading a FL text is that even when the reader does understand the literal meanings and identify with the printed words, inferential implications leave room for a multiplicity of visions in themselves linked to further extra-textual motives (Küçükoglu, 2012). Obviously, readers are not tabula rasa since they enclose a collection of

intermingled considerations that are originated in social, cultural, affective, and psychological influences (Dewey, 2001). Particularly, when readers are faced with an alien cultural aspect they tend not to attach it due import at worst condition they tend to judge it negatively rather than assuming a tolerant stance. These types of experiences are so manifest in FL classes where teachers do not focus or do not have time to think through the cultural aspect of the FL. Specifically, they reflect the collection of biases readers bring to the reading experience and that participate in the negative transfiguration of the image they have about the native speaker. The latter phenomenon has a lot of short comings on the overall proficiency of FL learners because the cultural component is integrated within the very tissue of the linguistic experience. Coming to grips with the context of the literary text is favoured by the amount of the reading aptitude on the part of the reader, in this case the FL learner; it is known that the literary discourse represents a non-simplified form of language that needs special treatment from the reader and special training on strategies of analysis and critical evaluation so that the maximum of meanings are made manifest. Under any circumstance, the reader should be introduced to ways of dealing with what is culturally different from their own so that they cope with change and learn how to adapt to it in flexible ways (Lazar, 1993). Each reading event and community of readers brings forth novel meanings whence the active facets of the reading act. Even when one is focused on multiple readings of the same text for the sake of extracting the maximum of information, this step might be insufficient for further analysis of the text. That is to fully enjoy the content of the literary text, the reader needs to be acquainted and trained on ways of projecting their understating in new contexts. Part of good response to the text entails departing from negative judgments about the work, the events, and the characters' behaviours. The latter reflective symptoms are just a minor part of the overall reader response to the literary text; Rosenblatt (1938, 1988) indicated that an inventory of factors intervene in shaping a good critical response amidst which is the cultural neutrality of the reader when responding to the text. Further claims suggest that learners' active commitment with the text allow them to search for

solutions to the dark spots of some events in processes of transaction with the text in doing so they cannot go without integrating their personal experiences in the formulation of novel texts in different perspectives as a reflection about the text. Basically, there is a looming danger in not observing the repercussions of prejudices and biased extrapolations on boosting FL interest in the activity of reading in general and in reading in the FL. In this context, a prejudice is a postulation or conjecture about a socio-cultural behaviour or about individuals' comportments that are aligned with their cultural background. Those subjective assumptions are originated in the persons' affiliations and affinities to their groups of origin as a result of not delimiting the scope of this membership, people fall in erroneous judgments of the Other. If not well controlled, this phenomenon risks to be generalized to educational settings leading to irreversible long-term results especially in FL classes where students are exposed to large amounts of alien information about otherness. Hence, field specialists need to attach this blemish due import in order to attain smoothly the already set objectives.

2. The Notion of Prejudice

The concept of prejudice is not novel in the field of FL teaching. Before being explored in the field of language teaching, prejudice is a word that is originated in anthropological studies to refer to any behaviour that corroborates the memberships' values and that subjectively intervenes in shaping negative judgmental postures about specific issues. Abrams defined prejudice as: "bias which devalues people because of their perceived membership of a social group" (2010, p. 3). Prejudice has more prospects to persevere and expound in contexts where individuals issuing from poles-apart backgrounds come together; the settings of the meeting may differ these can range from simple real encounters to highly formal contexts like the ones offered by FL literary productions. Several connotations can be attached to the term prejudice and all of them develop quickly in contexts of inconsistent set of creeds where individuals consider themselves as positively different from the other, where individuals regard their respective identities in the lenses of their groups of belonging, and the result is the

discriminatory touch that occurs between those conflicting categories.

Contemporary research around prejudice tends to concentrate rather on the notion of conflict that surrounds the concept. Indeed, the term is a pendulum that accommodates two disagreeing motives on both sides. The latter factors contest for primacy one of them begs for emotion expression while the other is an inclination towards prejudice reduction. As it might go, the first seeds of prejudice formation were incarnated in the first collection of views ascribed to immigrant groups and that were mainly based on criteria related to race, colour, and most importantly religious affiliations. Crandall and Eshleman described prejudice: “as a negative evaluation of a social group, or a negative evaluation of an individual that is significantly based on the individual’s group membership” (1996, p. 237). Of course these processes are the result of inherited societal judgments that are transmitted and absorbed without being questioned, and this accounts for the existence of multiple versions of prejudice amidst which race, gender, and sexual prejudice. In an inquiry conducted by Johnson (2013), the author led an experimental study in the form of an indirect out group exchange through the medium of FL literary text reading. The findings of the study displayed a general tendency, on the part of Arab-Muslim students, towards accepting the other mingled with feelings of empathy and lower doses of negative judgments. Participants who were rather impressed by the narrative knew how to transport and delineate their feelings so as to exhibit decreased levels of negativity towards foreigners. Indeed, some studies in the field of psychology trace back part of prejudice formation to varying degrees of motivation. In this regard, some studies proved that reading brings about emotional sympathy and stimulates intrinsic motivation to know more about hitherto seen as unaccepted cultures (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2001).

3. Language and Culture: The Tie

As a technical term that has besieged the domain of FL teaching, culture has enjoyed a multitude of definitions ever since the initial academic debates around the concept. In the domain of FL teaching, teachers; theoreticians; researchers in academic circles and language learners ascribe

diverse conceptions to the term. It has been a productive ground of investigation for a broad range of academic fields in the example of ethnography, anthropology, media and communication studies and literary disciplines to cite but a few. The most widespread grasp of culture maintains that it is the reflective mirror of a social group's distinguishing features in conjunction with its trends in food, artifacts and common social norms and values. It might be argued then that due to the heterogeneous nature of the world, it is no easy task to agree upon one definition of culture. Owing to its complex nature, culture is: "one of two or three most complicated words in the English language" (Williams as cited in Storey, 2014, p. 01). At the beginning of these debates, there was a clear cut between two types of culture notably small c culture which represents the social shared common values, and big C culture which stands for works of art relative to a specific social group (Garton & Graves, 2014). Consequently, culture was traditionally approached from a historical perspective stressing only fixed facts. Tylor pioneers in putting forward a first basic definition of culture claiming that: "culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (as cited in Moore, 2012, p. 5). In Tylor's definition, culture reflects discernible objects d'art, the distinctive moral codes and values of a given social group, and essential fundamental beliefs. It is a clearly vibrant anthropological view that focuses on the general features of the human beings. In reflecting upon Tylor's view of culture, Tomlinson (1991) argued that this complex whole refers to the totality of life experiences; that is culture is there to account for the entirety of a particular group experiences. Other trials in explaining the term rely on culture in relation to attitudes towards the foreign community. The premise is that culture is more than an inventory of conventional habits (Rosaldo as cited in Hinkel, 1999); it expounds to the world that hosts us and the reality that surrounds it (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2004). Faiq penned that: "culture involves the totality of attitudes towards the world, towards events, other cultures and peoples and the manner in which the attitudes are mediated" (2004, p. 01). Like so, it is deeply anchored in the belief system which is

supposed to be a shared feature within members of the same group. Culture hence; cuts across different disciplines but broadly speaking it encompasses both the humanistic and the anthropological sides with considerations of bearings on perceptions towards the FL community.

The seamless nature linking culture and language has lately been a point of interest for FL educationist. Partly, this connection is described in terms of a thorny construct that is traced back to the complexity of human cognitive processing when they communicate. Basically, language cannot stand apart from the socially inherited habits that weave the fabric of people's daily life (Thanasoulas, 2001). In Hall's perspective (as cited in Risager, 2007), it is thanks to language that meanings are constructed and that individuals share a common interpretational code for understanding the world. That is language functions as a representational scheme of a group's specific ways of perceiving. Language decrypts the underlying group specific cultural truths; it is burdened with bits of culture; it is indeed the backbone of culture. Internalizing aspects of one's native culture and adopting them while respecting foreign cultural features is part and parcel of the learning process. A firmly settled claim around the interconnectedness of language and culture is traced back to the work of Sapir and Whorf who both advocated that the structure of a language affects the way its speakers perceive the world; it is a highly tangled link that one cannot grasp one of them without the other. In Sapir's perspective, human beings: "are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society" (Wardhaugh, 2010, p. 230). Conversely, culture feeds the structure and functions of language (Matsumoto & Juang, 2007). Hence, language is not only restricted to uniquely reveal cultural realities. Kramsch (1998) described this connection in terms of group's identity, by definition speaking a given language and collectively using its lexemes, accents and discourse models entail a solid identification with its members. This intersection calls for teachers to consider a parallelism as to what concerns the teaching of the FL together with its culture. At least, this might minimize the tension generated out of cultural contact.

4. Literature Teaching through Cultural Lenses

A wealth of literature was written about the integration of culture within language teaching, literary productions and works of literature in this vein were classified as big C culture (Byram & Hu, 2013; Byram, 1997). Hence, dealing with works of art did not imply an analysis of the cultural content but rather the focus was shed just on knowing about the work. In Frey's words: "the cultural model views literature as a source of facts or information about culture (in general and in particular) and a literary text as a product" (2009, p. 1). Besides exemplifying the authentic use of linguistic and grammatical structures, literary texts are there to offer a ready-made picture for the way native speakers conduct their daily life. Kramsch (1993) acknowledged the powerful role of literary texts in reflecting the author's specific points of view and addressing particular readers and not others. Still for others including literature teaching within the curriculum is obligatory since literary texts are produced thanks to the linguistic code. With the advent of grammar translation approach, literary texts have been exploited to train students on grasping grammatical competence (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Under this premise, the text and its content remains out of focus. However, this state of affairs changed with the introduction of the communicative approach that focuses on the sociocultural appropriateness of the message. Literary texts emerged on the scene again but with a significant change in terms of function. Literature thus became an invaluable tool that stands as an authentic reference for the intricate details of native speakers' social realities (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). That is the analysis of the literary text now gives priority to depicting the way native speakers' society functions. Soon after, the focus of FL philosophy shifted to the intercultural dimensions of the interaction. Teaching the literary text within this paradigm focuses on skills of analyzing, interpreting and creating new schemes thanks to intercultural teaching. By and large, fused within the intercultural philosophy of FL teaching, the literary text should aim at realizing responsiveness, assuming new perspectives and penetrating into the unfamiliar.

5. The Method

A qualitative and a quantitative research tool were applied to vary ways and nature of the findings. Thus, the researcher relies on the use of a questionnaire and a structured interview to check the respective opinions of students towards precise points related to concepts of interculturality, text interpretation and prejudice through literary lenses. The study took place at the level of the University of Mila. The major objective of the work was to explore the perceptions of 3rd year students of English about the notion of prejudice and related concepts like culture and the effects of its integration through literary reading in alleviating negative prejudices towards native speakers.

6. Discussion of the Results

The data gathered through the questionnaire distribution are displayed in the forthcoming tables.

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I consider culture as secondary in FL learning	20	1	4	2.10	1.071
The cultural element does not guarantee FL exchange understanding	20	1	4	2.25	.910
I think that basing the FL syllabus along cultural lines accelerates proficiency development	20	2	5	3.70	1.031
considering the intercultural factor in the FL class has many benefits	20	1	5	3.60	1.188
adopting an intercultural view is practical and efficient in creating smooth lines of comprehension	20	1	5	3.80	1.056
integrating intercultural attitudes vis-à-vis FL materials is fair both for FL and native cultures	20	3	5	4.15	.745
Valid N (listwise)	20				

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Part (1) of the Scale

The six statements of part (1) deal with respondents’ stances about the role of the cultural element in the facilitating interchanges with the FL material. The results show that the mean value ranges between 2.10 and 4.15 indicating that there is a disparity in respondents’ selection; they do not all agree or disagree with the items and for most of the time they assumed a rather neutral stance towards some statements. The Std for the six items in part (1) ranges between 0.74 and 1.18 which hints to a general homogeneity

in respondents' selections. Generally, the results of this section indicated that respondents were aware of the importance of assuming an intercultural position towards all that related to the FL. However, respondents were impartial towards the idea that proficiency can be accelerated if they assume an intercultural stance in their learning course; that the intercultural element can have many benefits and that it assists the process of comprehension.

The forthcoming table is a delineation of the results gained from the second part of the questionnaire. The section deals with general standpoints towards reference to aspects of interculturality while reading a FL literary text. The value of the Std ranges between 0.82 and 1.12 which ushers to high levels of consistency in respondents' selections. The mean value as well vacillates between 2.50 and 3.95 indicating that the average answer ranges between option (2) and option (3) in the scale. The results estimated that respondents recognized broadly that there exists a strong link between the factor of culture and the FL literary text understanding. Even when the mean approaches the value (4) in more than three statements, still the level of neutrality is high. This can be interpreted with reference to the norms followed in literature courses where often the teacher focuses on the main text meaning proffered by literary critics. Nonetheless, students seemed to welcome the idea of reading the text from an intercultural stand.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
i believe that the literary text is a perfect reflection of the FL society	20	2	5	3.95	.887
literary analysis facilitates lines of intercultural understanding	20	1	5	3.75	1.118
it is not necessary to refer only to the FL culture to interpret the text	20	1	4	2.50	1.147
it is vital to teach FL students how to read the FL text from an intercultural stand	20	1	5	3.90	.968
i think that more courses should be devoted to train students on critical text interpretation	20	1	5	3.95	.826
Valid N (listwise)	20				

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Part (2) of the Scale

The next table represents the statistical data of the 3rd part of the questionnaire. In this section, respondents are supposed to reflect upon different ideas related to the notion of prejudice and the role of the literary text in decreasing negative prejudices. The value of the mean ranges between 3.55 and 4.20; the average answer vacillates between varying degrees of agreements and neutrality. In the same way, the value of the Std oscillates between 0.69 and 1.31 indicating to general levels of consistency in respondents' selections. By and large, the above data showed that the major portion of students agreed with the content of the statements. Consequently, the results indicated that FL students at this level are cognizant that prejudice is risky especially when it comes to learning about foreign cultures. Another point that the data showed is that prejudice interferes in reading the FL literary text.

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
prejudice is always negative and cannot be moderated	20	2	5	3.65	.813
intercultural training helps decreasing negative judgements about others	20	3	5	4.20	.696
i should not be permissive with cultural difference	20	1	5	3.55	1.317
literary interpretation can be used to gradually perfect prejudice formation	20	1	5	3.95	1.050
i think that positive prejudice increases motivation to read FL literature	20	1	5	4.10	1.071
Valid N (listwise)	20				

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Part (3) of the Scale

Correlations			
		I consider culture as secondary in FL learning	i think that basing the FL syllabus along cultural lines accelerates proficiency development
I consider culture as secondary in FL learning	Pearson Correlation	1	-.496*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.026
	N	20	20
i think that basing the FL syllabus along cultural lines accelerates proficiency development	Pearson Correlation	-.496*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	
	N	20	20

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4: Correlation Data between Item (1) and (3) in Part (1) of the Scale

The above data showed a relatively strong negative correlation between respondents' perceptions about the secondary status that might be accorded to culture and their perceptions about the weight of basing the syllabus in line with cultural lines on proficiency development. That is, making reference to culture in the FL syllabus will have positive effects on ameliorating its current status ($r=-.50$, $p>.026$).

Correlations			
		the cultural element does not guarantee FL exchange understanding	integrating intercultural attitudes vis-à-vis FL materials is fair both for FL and native cultures
the cultural element does not guarantee FL exchange understanding	Pearson Correlation	1	-.524*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.018
	N	20	20
integrating intercultural attitudes vis-à-vis FL materials is fair both for FL and native cultures	Pearson Correlation	-.524*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.018	
	N	20	20

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5: Correlation Data between Item (2) and (6) in Part (1) of the Scale

The results showed a relatively strong negative correlation between respondents' perceptions about the idea that the cultural element is of no benefit in ensuring FL interchange understanding and the fair impact of integrating intercultural attitudes on both cultures on the continuum. That is, making reference to culture in the FL syllabus will have positive effects on ameliorating its current status ($r=-.52$, $p>.018$).

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.288
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	137.728
	df	120
	Sig.	.128

Table 6: The KMO and Bartlett's Test for the Scale's Factor Analysis

Sixteen question items that investigate the contribution of interculturality in Trimming down negative prejudice through literary text analysis were factor analysed using principle components analysis with varimax rotation. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .29, a bit under the commonly recommended value, and Barlett's test of sphericity was not significant ($X^2(120)=137.728$, $p<.001$).

Using the scree plot and eigenvalues >1 to determine the underlying components, the analysis yielded six factors explaining a total of 81.92 per cent of the variance in the data.

Factor 1 was labeled 'the weight of reconsidering the aspect of interculturality' because of the high loading of the following items: The cultural element does not guarantee FL exchange understanding, it is not necessary to refer only to the FL culture to interpret the text, I believe that the literary text is a perfect reflection of the FL society, and I should not be permissive with cultural difference.

Factor 2 was labeled 'the weight of cultural teaching on prejudice enhancement' because of the high loading of the following items: I should not be permissive with cultural difference, I think that positive prejudice increases motivation to read FL literature, and I think that more courses should be devoted to train students on critical text interpretation.

Factor 3 was labeled 'culture and prejudice flexibility' because of the high loading of the following items: Adopting an intercultural view is practical and efficient in creating smooth lines of comprehension, and prejudice is always negative and cannot be moderated.

Factor 4 was labeled 'culture in proficiency development' because of the high loading of the following items: I think that basing the FL syllabus along cultural lines accelerates proficiency development, and I consider culture as secondary in FL learning.

Factor 5 was labeled ‘literary analysis, the intercultural, and prejudices’ because of the high loading of the following items: Literary interpretation can be used to gradually perfect prejudice formation, integrating intercultural attitudes vis-à-vis FL materials is fair both for FL and native cultures, and literary analysis facilitates lines of intercultural understanding.

Factor 6 was labeled ‘negative prejudice reduction’ because of the loading of the following items: Considering the intercultural factor in the FL class has many benefits, and intercultural training helps decreasing negative judgments about others.

As far as the interview results are concerned, the interviewees’ answers varied considerably as well. The Following is a delineation of the collection of answers.

1. *How would you define culture?*

60% of respondents referred to culture as the set of conducts, traditions, and day to day behavioural patterns of a given community. 40% indicated that culture for them represent the amazing works of art mainly.

2. *Are you curious to know about FL culture?*

65% of respondents stated that they are interested in knowing about others’ cultures. 35% were not having serious interest in learning about others’ cultures but were conscious that they are in the need to do so in a growing world of accelerating technological development. Some of them declared that because they are exposed to information about foreigners through various mediums, including the learning materials, they esteemed it is essential to acquire some intercultural knowledge. Otherwise, they feel satisfied with learning basically grammatical points about English language.

3. *Do you think that cultural knowledge is important to be flexible in FL text reading and understanding?*

70% of respondents stated that cultural knowledge is essential if one targets a more comprehensive understanding of the text being read. This category claimed that every written work has a sociocultural background that accounts for most of its estimated meanings. 30% of respondents, however; agreed that literal understanding of words, sentences, and general discourse is sufficient without complicating things with reference to cultural

basics.

4. *Would you tolerate definite cultural difference while reading or would you rather develop prejudices about it?*

55% of interviewees declared that in general cases they find it difficult to tolerate very distant from their cultural behaviours, however; they were aware of the fact that they should tolerate the difference, read about it, understand it, then just be objective about it. 45% of respondents were severe and firm about some cultural reference especially with what relates to sociocultural and religious points. For them, these should not be included or taught because simply everyone is satisfied with their convictions, it would be better if emphasis is shed on other criteria of text analysis.

5. *How would you define the term prejudice?*

20% of respondents related prejudice to preconceived unchangeable ideas about others; in this context those sharing different worldviews and practices. 45% of interviewees related the term prejudice particularly to negative standpoints about certain unacceptable behaviours that put in danger the person's sociocultural organization. 35% of respondents believed that prejudice refers to negative evaluation of others' behaviours.

6. *Do your teachers orient you as to how to be objective while interpreting certain culturally different scenes in the FL text? (this question relies on the experience related to respondents' previous experiences at university)*

60% of respondents stated that their instructors gave them shallow comments as to how to deal with their prejudices. According to them, they stopped at the level of asking them what they do think about certain text events that may contain in occasions certain cultural difference but the discussions did not focus mainly on prejudice or ways of dealing with rigid viewpoints students hold. By contrast, 40% of respondents explained that some of their previous instructors stopped at this point where they initiate with them debates about their prejudices and tried to understand why and from where they did form them, and whether or not they were ready to alter them. Examples of modules they gave included oral expression, and at

times literature sessions.

7. *According to you what are the reasons for developing negative prejudices about others?*

30% of respondents stated that reasons for developing prejudices are originated in society and socially transmitted ideas. 15% of respondents stated that family education is the reason behind developing prejudices. 10% of respondents attributed prejudice to school educational practices and 30% of respondents stated that part of prejudice is linked to religious teachings.

8. *Do you often tackle the issue of prejudice formation in your class?*

30% of respondents explained that whenever they have the chance they tackle issues related to biased judgments about others in speaking sessions and in literature courses. 70% of respondents stated that they prefer not to enter into issues related to prejudice formation.

9. *What techniques do you refer to, apart from learning the FL culture, to get over prejudices about foreigners?*

10% of respondents maintained that they refer to media tools in the example of works of cinema, songs, series, magazines, and broadcasting shows. 20% of respondents declared that they refer to the internet with all the horizons that this may open; some interviewees said that they exploit the internet materials to go through brief readings where they get in touch with the FL cultural facts. 70% of respondents stated that they exploit social media to learn about the FL culture especially with the spread of the internet.

10. *How can literary texts help enhancing the quality of your prejudices?*

60% of respondents stated that normally literature is a real picture of the community in question; for this class authentic reflections about the FL society and having serious plans to analyse the text is one way to bring to light negative prejudice problems. Some of them added that literature mirrors some facets that one cannot discover through other learning sources. 40% of respondents declared that they deem literary texts as difficult and not easy to approach, however; they refer to them as one way of understanding how native speakers think and conceive of things.

The above findings ensured that FL students are aware of the import

intercultural training holds in the realm of FL class. However, students agreed that culture intervenes in the overall understanding of authentic exchanges. However, students were almost impartial about the idea that intercultural competence is a booster of proficiency enhancement. In line with this, students were mostly neutral about the idea that culture integration has beneficial impact on developing their level. Paradoxically, the results showed that students are conscious about the positive shortcomings of referring to both native and target language culture in weaving lines of comprehension and bringing fairness to both cultures in question. Equally, students observed that culture and literature are part and parcel because literature reflects the FL sociocultural traits. Although the mean values turned around neutrality, the findings showed a general tendency towards considering reference to intercultural knowledge to realize critical unbiased text analysis. Nonetheless, the outcome data ensured that FL students are still suspicious about the prejudices they had about certain sociocultural points about the FL society. Still, they seemed aware about the nature and the origin of these biased judgments. Although, students were firm about their fixed prejudices, they recognized the beneficial aspect of positive prejudice on motivation to read and analyse FL literature.

7. Conclusion

With the fast spreading technological developments that impose cultural rapprochements between peoples; the pressure is doubled on FL instructors. In this context, language studies is just one field that can collaborate with other disciplines to forge solutions to let down with negative prejudgments. Having students observe closely the logical existing sociocultural difference will help them develop autonomous learning and boosts their sense of curiosity to know about the other. Manifestly, the religious and sociocultural differences and the courage to change one's pre-established opinions are no easy to realize; however, the process of developing tolerance towards others is a gradual one and cannot be introduced abruptly. One way to overcome negative judgments about native speakers is to have FL students adopt new perceptiveness in what

they read, help them realize that there are no unique interpretations for the text. Indeed, exploiting the intercultural horizons to breed positive prejudices about Otherness is also one way of triggering confidence and bringing about more interest about the text content and the people it does reflect. In order to help FL students moderate their judgments and alleviate their negative prejudices, instructors can make reference to literary analysis. In this vein, designing classroom strategies that make reference to democratic expression through personal text interpretation and underneath this devoting time to let students discuss objectively related cultural issues they deem unacceptable in their culture. In this sense, they can become more involved and feel responsible for findings ways to experiment with the different through referring to their personal experiences. Findings ways to deal with negative prejudices has become a primary concern because it intervenes positively or negatively in the final shape of learners' proficiency. Bringing students to face their prejudices through literary analysis permits them to learn about their own cultural facts in relation to the one mentioned in the text and to create a neutral horizon of tolerance. In short, the findings suggested the need to reconsider the bright side of bringing together culture and literary reading analysis to enable students to fathom an international character said practical in relieving negative judgments about others.

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