

**THE IMPACT OF INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE
LEARNING: A CASE STUDY IN THE MODERN LANGUAGES PROGRAM AT A
UNIVERSITY OF QUINDÍO**

FOREIGN LANGUAGE RESEARCH SEMINAR II

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Armenia-Quindío, 2018

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Acknowledgement

To God who gives us the patience, wisdom and vitality to continue the process.

To our parents who provide us the best advice and love.

To our friends and partners who support us to make this research and encourage as much as possible.

To advisor Paola Alzate who shared her knowledge and experience.

To the participants that help us to obtain the needed information.

Dedictory

To **god**, who blesses us with health and faith.

To our mothers, that are always supporting us in every step of our lives.

Abstract

In this project are contained some important aspects that were studied in order to evaluate the different perspectives of concepts such as culture, language, intercultural competence and bilingualism. They were analyzed thanks to the contributions of recognized authors. Those approaches are fundamental in the study because they allow to go beyond and understand why they have to be involved at the time of learning a second language. The objective of this research is to identify how eight students perceive the implementation of culture in a foreign language learning process. In this respect, it was analyzed how the influence of an intercultural exchange is in the second language learners. Also, it was studied the linguistic and cultural impact on those students who have traveled abroad and to compared with those who had not. On the other hand, another factor that was taken into account in this project was to examine the role of the institution as a resource or a support to those students who want to have an intercultural experience.

Key words

Culture, language, intercultural competence, institution, social interaction.

Resumen

En este proyecto se tratan algunos aspectos importantes que se estudiaron para evaluar las diferentes perspectivas de conceptos como cultura, lenguaje, competencia intercultural, bilingüismo, que se analizaron gracias a las contribuciones de autores reconocidos. Estos enfoques son fundamentales en nuestro estudio porque nos permiten ir más allá y comprender por qué tienen que estar involucrados a la hora de aprender un segundo idioma. El principal objetivo de esta investigación es identificar cómo ocho estudiantes perciben la implementación de la cultura en un proceso de aprendizaje de una segunda lengua. No solo se analiza cómo influye un intercambio intercultural en los aprendices de una segunda lengua sino también se estudia el impacto lingüístico y cultural en aquellos estudiantes que han viajado al extranjero y en comparación con aquellos que no lo han hecho. Por otro lado, otro factor que se tuvo en cuenta en este proyecto fue examinar el papel de la institución como un recurso o un apoyo para aquellos estudiantes que desean participar en un programa de intercambio.

Palabras claves

Cultura, lenguaje, competencia intercultural, interacción, institución

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Introduction

Culture is a complex concept that involves different aspects related to a specific human being civilization. Those aspects have particular behaviors, characteristics and knowledge that are transmitted through years. Some of the expressions that stand out in culture include customs, religion, arts, music, rituals and language. In this perspective, language plays an important role in cultural terms since it is the carrier of the culture and it reflects where people belong to. Chomsky states that “*Language embodies the world view of a culture and is unique to the culture that created it. It reflects values and concepts that are deemed the most important by a culture. A language describes the culture it comes from*” (Staff, 2014). That is why language has to be always integrated in culture. Regarding language, it can be defined as the particular ability of human beings to communicate. Language allows people to express their feelings, experiences, needs, knowledge etc.

Worldwide, there are around 5.000 and 7.000 languages that are conformed by different kinds of structures. It is to say that they all comprise different–grammatical, phonological, morphological, semantical and linguistic aspects. They have been studied by different authors throughout years such as Saussure and Chomsky. Those linguists have given significant contributions in terms of language. They also have created some theories regarding language acquisition. When referring to a language acquisition, it is important to point out that it is an essential tool in the educational field, and also it provides enrichment in terms of culture. Taking into account the influence that globalization has in Colombia, it is mandatory for citizens to learn a second language (L2), in this particular case; English. Therefore, through the last years, the Ministry of Education (MEN) has implemented a number of laws and programs in

Public institutions not only in schools but also in universities to promote the bilingualism.

In a similar way, the government has established some policies in order for the universities to develop the curricula to accomplish the requirements proposed and needed. For instance, the resolution number 18583 of September 2017. In the mentioned decree, some articles, that the University programs must achieve, are proposed and focused on the educational field. Some of them are related to the Common European Framework (CEFR), which is the base of the curriculum in second language teaching. Regarding to a specific college which is the University Of Quindío, there is another document which is the Política Académica Curricular (PAC) 2016, which states that a second language must be integrated in all the professional studies. It affords the competitiveness and the position of the University of Quindío in an international context. In fact, in the Modern Languages Program of this university, having a C1 level in the Common European Framework of reference (CEFR) is a requirement to obtain the bachelor degree. Also, the university has created another plan which is PEP (Proyecto Educativo del Programa). This is basically a document that contains the guidelines and the respective policies that allow the development of the program.

In this respect, the University of Quindío, also counts with The Unidad de Relaciones Internacionales (URI). This unity provides some permissions and aids as well as opportunities to be able to carry out exchanges in order to study and work in a foreign country. This organization has some academic agreements such as the ones with *Poitier's University and Work and Travel USA*. However, there are other independent organizations such as *Cultural Care Au Pair* which is in charge of giving young women the opportunity to work during around 12 months or more in The United States and other countries. Referring to was exposed before, some students of the University of Quindío have participated in these given programs either by means of a scholarship

or by independent effort. In that case, these intercultural exchanges are essential in a foreign language learning process due to the impact that is seen not only in personal aspects but also in the professional field.

1. Problem Statement

Considering the current world and the immersed globalization in every single country, including Colombia, it is necessary to establish a look at the learning process of a foreign language and every implication this carries out too. Education is an integral process in a continuous progress in which people have a complete development, especially if it is taken into account the personal, cultural and social realm. It is relevant to stand a remark and an association between language and culture. Language is an important aspect if it is analyzed as a necessary tool for the human being in the communicative field. It is a part of their identity. There are different languages, each of them has a population that are a culture and everything that may be involved or gathered to it such as thoughts, ideas, perceptions, critical arguments, interests, among others.

“Language is not merely something that is spread out in space, as it were a series of reflections in individual minds of one and the same timeless culture” (Sapir,1966:247). Culture is something that is too difficult to define but at the same time it is something that is easily understood if it deals with language. A person may know a little part of a culture just because of the language. The relationship between these two concepts mentioned before is not new in terms of research and interest. There are a lot of authors that have been disposed to make a conscious research and analysis of these concepts and the importance in the process of acquiring or learning a foreign language because of all the implications that it focuses on.

According to Ramírez (2016), it is fundamental to make an emphasis of these terms, and the real significance in the process of learning a second language, and much more in a moment where international interaction, globalization and intercultural exchanges are present and the cultural

component is attached to these practices as an essential part in the development of the process that has been mentioned before.

According to what is stipulated in the General Law of Education (Ley 115 de 1994), education has a lot of purposes and one of them that is relevant is the fact that the learners need to have a proper development of their personality and knowledge immersed in an integral training process; that is to say, not only the learning of specific topics and the intellectual competence, but also the other realms such as ethical, social and cultural. The government has made lots of bets to this through different programs to establish a better process of teaching-learning a foreign language.

One instance that reflects explicitly what is being cited is the fact that National Ministry of Education (MEN), being the principal representative of the National Government on these affairs, in 2004 a project was created by the National Bilingualism Program (PNB) with the purpose of gathering all the principles and statements that the government exposes to the foreign language learning. It basically has a much remarked goal that is the campaign of acquiring another language, in this case English, regarding the communicative competence with the highest standards that could be taken as a reference which are the ones that are exposed in the European Common Framework for international standards. Due to all the globalization, growth and the economic, political and social benefits, this language has been chosen to be taught in the Colombian educational system.

Taking all the background and the statements that were mentioned before, there is a necessity of analyzing and searching the impact of the experience of modern languages students who participated in exchange programs and all the impact of this intercultural practice. Therefore, the following research questions and objectives arise:

1.1 General Question

What is the impact of the intercultural exchange in the foreign language learning process of modern languages students?

1.1.1 Specific Questions.

What assumptions do the students have before going abroad as part of an exchange program?

What challenges do students face while interacting in a foreign context?

What strategies do students apply to overcome the challenges at the time of interacting in a foreign country?

What changes regarding the development of linguistics skills and intercultural competence do students experience after being in contact with a foreign context?

What role does the institution play in the students' exchange experience?

1.2 General Objective

To analyze the impact that has the intercultural exchange in the foreign language learning process of modern languages students.

1.2.1 Specific Objectives.

To identify the assumptions of the students before going abroad as part of an exchange program.

To identify the challenges students face while interacting in a foreign context.

To describe strategies students apply to overcome the challenges at the time of interacting in a foreign context.

To analyze the changes students perceive after being in contact with a foreign context.

To establish the role the institution plays in the exchange process of the students.

2. Justification

Taking into account the intercultural exchanges from part of the students, there is clear evidence that the university where the research takes place does not provide enough accompaniment in the process of an intercultural experience. The University and its international program office provide certain information that could clarify a little what is exposed here. Although the university provides a lot of connections with other educative institutions in a national and international level, it does not guide the students in the process of making an intercultural exchange. Therefore, there is not a proper compromise by the Institution with the impact that the experience could have in its students. Nowadays, there are 119 national agreements that involve several areas, that is to say, that the students could make the exchange not only in public and private educative institutions but also in public and private enterprises.

Regarding the Modern languages program of this University, there is different support by the institution, but not in a complete way. There are 38 students who are currently coursing the 6th and 7th semester of this program.

According to Ramírez (2016), it is important to take into account that this university in its Modern Languages Program there is any action that can clarify the fact the institution gives an accompaniment in the process before, during and after the intercultural exchange.

Therefore, this research is done by fact that by analyzing the impact of the intercultural exchange of modern languages students of such university, there will also be an improvement in their foreign language learning process. In regards to the benefits of this research include different considerations and reviews of different institutions and universities. Thus they must improve the

accompaniment of the students who make these kinds of exchanges. The different perceptions that students acquire while they have such experiences influence not only the language but also the culture in their learning process and all the improvement they had in their intercultural exchanges.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Bilingualism

The concept of bilingualism has been studied in different fields such as: linguistics, psychology, sociology, education among others. The word itself and its meaning have evolved dynamically. Indeed, bilingualism has become a very important factor due to the need of speaking two or more languages in a globalized world. The management of a second language allows people to open doors, to have a better communication with others and to be able to understand cultural differences. One of the most representative authors of this concept is Baker (2001), who stands that bilingualism can be seen as an individual perspective or in a sociolinguistic approach that he distinguishes as societal bilingualism. In this part he analyzes how groups of language speakers behave and change thorough decades. In this respect, he also examines and gives a sociolinguistic perspective and defines sociolinguistics as the study of language in relation to social groups, social class, ethnicity and other interpersonal factors. Baker stands that a central part of sociolinguistics is diglossia, which is the term used to refer to bilingualism, which describes the two languages of an individual.

In practice, a language community is unlikely to use both languages for the same purpose. Some examples are those bilingual countries as Belgium, Canada and Switzerland where people speak two or more languages depending on the region. Regarding the individual use of bilingualism Baker stands that language cannot be separate from the context in which it is used. Similarly, he also adds that communication comprises not only the grammatical structures but also

the circumstances in which the individual is. Moreover, the social environment, where the two languages function, is essential to understand bilingual usage.

In the same way, Grosjean (2010) adds that bilinguals are those who use two or more languages (or dialects) in their everyday lives. However, he also maintains that bilingualism is present in every country of the world in all age groups. The reason is there are bilingual professions, people, laws, nations, books, etc. He affirms that almost half of the world's population is bilingual. In fact, he mentions that the linguistic contact and therefore bilingualism, depends on several aspects. One of them is the distribution in the country, if the different languages are found in specific zones, if it is geographically organized, perhaps is going to be less in contact than if the language circle all occupy the same territory. This author also stands in base of statistics that currently, Russian is the language of trade and business of the former Soviet Union; nevertheless, he affirms the English is the main language in trade and business all over the world. In this respect, due to the growth in the trading field, many people with their families use to relocate in other countries for several reasons; one of them is the need of having better opportunities in economic issues. However, there are some other factors such as politics and religion that influence why people decide to migrate or move to another lands. That is why people become bilingual as well as their descendants in this case children.

Bialystok (2001), explains how is the transition of children when they grow in a bilingual environment and in which countries children are forced to speak at least two languages. Regarding what it was mentioned before, bilingualism has been studied under the sociolinguistic approach. In this case, Heller (2007) analyzes and proposes a view of language as a group of resources that establish social organizational processes, based on specific historical conditions. In her books she explains the concept of bilingualism from an anthropological, economical, and linguistically

perspective. Pointing out the importance of the bilingualism throughout years and why this concept has to be incorporated in the current society.

Due to the relevance that bilingualism has currently acquired, The Council of Europe has created a document known as Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) which was designed to provide a clear, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines. This document is used not only in Europe but also in other continents. In the case of Colombia, in schools this document is applied in the teaching process as reference. It is also established the respective levels that the learners have to complete. The levels proposed are A1 A2, B1 B2, C1, and C2. It comes from the lower to the highest. In this context, in Colombia there is a law that encourages the bilingualism; it is known as Ley Nacional de Bilingüismo. The idea of this law arises with the need of Colombian people to be able to speak another language, in this case English. In the articles the development of the communicative skills in the second language are exposed, these abilities grasp reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Additionally, the Colombian government also created the decree 2450 of 1975, which basically explains the rules about the enrollments, pensions and scholarships. There is another University of Quindío policy which is Política Académica Curricular (PAC). This document also provides the second language training in the students, the B1 level is a degree requirement in any of the undergraduate and postgraduate professional academic programs of the University of Quindío, different from the Bachelor of Modern Languages. In the case of this degree, C1 competence level is required for English. The level of proficiency required for French will be determined by the Bachelor of Modern Languages Program.

3.2 Culture

Another concept, that it is a pillar in the research, is Culture. The term has been developed through years, in which there has been controversy for its pure definition. Manganaro (2009) asserts that Culture it is an important aspect in our lives and it cannot be considered as a specific part of something. The conception that culture includes beliefs, customs, arts, moral, ethics and more is taken as a close concept but it is not the last word. In fact, the author explains that culture is something that can be analyzed from different points of view. As a brain game it can be used depending on the perspective and the side it is seen. By a critical practice, Manganaro studies the concepts of other great authors that give a subjective definition about what culture is, authors such as Tylor, Clifford and Geertz, Greenblatt, not to be in agreement with one specific concept, but to explain that culture itself is loose and large in definition. The author gazes at the significance of the institutional concept that can be organized in society as a control form, after all culture is extremely linked with humans and these compose societies.

Considering another direction, there are some authors that define culture from other perspectives. Kloskowska (1979) explains how important philosophers such as Carl Marx could provide a definition of these term even though it was not part of their authorship. The author, considering Marx's statements, affirms culture in sociology as the main sphere or the main realm which it belongs to. As a part of our lives, culture is a determinant in social aspects in communities. It is not a coincidence that Kloskowska states that the culture concept is used in a wide count of meanings.

She gives two basic culture concepts. The first area she mentions is the anthropological culture. She states that culture is an intrinsically part of human lives. Culture is the result of the whole human activity in which there are creations that reinforce significance and distinctions of

the communities' culture from the physical to the intellectual creation. The results mentioned before could be traditions, customs and knowledge. The second factor has some similarities with the first but she names it as natural culture. The author exposes that culture is the 'artificial environment' in which societies put the bases for evolution and civilization. However, the principal definition of general culture has not been studied enough to give an exactly concept.

Another contribution of culture is developed by Doff (2009), who asserts that culture is related to communication. It has taken into account that this term is not merely about a specific place. Language is gathered to culture when there is an interaction of its components with the information and thoughts that are shared. She mentioned that culture can be seen from different modes. By one hand, it can be analyzed as the geography, the history, anthropology and arts of a society or a group in a major scale as a country. On the other hand, there is a part of culture that is mostly known because it is the daily life and everything it involves such as customs, beliefs and opinions.

In order to reinforce what some authors have explained, it is relevant to take into account the concept and the interpretation of cultural identity with the culture itself. According to Fong and Chuang (2004), culture is the ideas, thoughts, beliefs and behaviors that people have or acquire. At the same time, it gives those groups of people an identity to be different, to be remarkable and to survive in a certain mode. She defines *Cultural identity* as an identification of something that people may share, it is to say, the sense of being part of a cultural or ethnic group that shares the behaviors that are significant them. Basically, it is the social construction that a certain group makes involving several aspects such as language, traditions, customs and the normativity of a seemly behavior.

To understand the phenomenon of cultural identity, it is important to analyze the different stages which it is developed in. According to the author, the first stage is unexamined cultural identity where children are not conscious of what culture or ethnicity is, but they belong to a specific group. They acquire the norms, beliefs, and customs by the fact they are interacting with the group and they do it by a natural approach. After that, they start regarding themselves with more awareness. The stage presented here is the cultural identity search, with the interaction with their atmosphere and environment they start to know that there are aspects that make them different from others. This process may be influenced in a negative or positive approach. Taking into account the way children develop their consciousness about their ethnic, racial and cultural identity. The final stage is called cultural identity achievement. On the final part of this process, children and teenagers are influenced by the organizations or the social group that are near to them. Ethnicity is understood, and identity is finally developed, with the experiences they acquired and the aspects they are going to construct through time.

On the other hand, cultural identity or identities in general are constructions that are formed by the conscious part of our behavior and the influences of the cultural group based on difference. Hall (1996) declares that, as the word expresses, identity is the internal values and characteristics that give us a certain property of authenticity and distinction. It is never outside. To identify the cultural identity, it is necessary to understand firstly what identity is and how it is established. The author asserts that it is not a natural process. Identity is constructed to provide some kind of stability facing the differences that can be observed in another person, group, or society.

3.3 Language and Culture

One conception, that it is important to make emphasis on, is the implicit relation that is presented between language and culture. This is evidenced by Kramsch (1993) who ensures that culture is not an ability that is developed in the language or foreign language learning, but it is developed by the other skills (writing, reading, speaking, listening) that a person acquires. Culture is presented in the background knowledge in the whole process of obtaining a language. However, the author points out that culture, most of the time, is just seen as a mere information and it has not had yet the relevance that it is by itself when teaching-learning a language. The concept is intrinsically connected with the social interaction because of the action area which culture functions in. The communication and the foreign language acquisition have to be developed not only by a grammar structure, but also by a real social environment whose cultural aspects are presented in everyday lives. One aspect, which is relevant to take into account, is the expansion or spread the foreign culture has. Language and culture are connected, thus the process of its teaching and learning depends, in some aspects, on the dimensions and domains the culture provides and its growth.

According to Mahadi and Jafari (2012), language and culture are connected because all the beliefs, customs, thoughts, behaviors or cultural aspects affect directly on language. They assert that language is the communicative tool which human beings use to express all the cultural patterns. The authors aver, in a very punctual statement, that language is the representation of a country, a region or a society and the cultural elements that are presented there. Language plays a fundamental role in the development of a society's culture. By speech people can express their ideas, thoughts and verbal behaviors that can create a specific culture, thus language determines the way it is established. Reinforcing the idea mentioned before, the authors make emphasis on

the fact people connect among themselves through the cultural elements, and the relation with others societies. The process of sharing their identity is produced by language; it symbolizes the cultural essence of a community.

In the same way, Lambert (1974) considers that language and culture has an immense influence on cognitive processes as well as the culture affects the construction of personality. He also explains that is important to examine people's beliefs in connection with the impact of language and culture and try to recognize how such beliefs affects the lives of both ethnic majority and ethnic minority groups. In this perspective, the author exposes that perhaps with the examination of the beliefs system will help to comprehend the relevance of cultural and linguistic background in learning and education.

3.4 Intercultural Competence

Intercultural competence has been a significant concept in the current global word. This term has increased during the last years due to the apogee of experiencing new cultures. Intercultural competence has the ability of using people knowledge and skills to have an effectively communication with the target culture. It also gives the opportunity to open people's minds and improve their foreign language. This important term has been studied by authors such as Byram, Gudykunst, Mody and Spitzberg. These authors have exposed the magnitude that intercultural competence has in our globalized world and the importance that it has in the educational field nowadays.

Byram (1997) asserts that the intercultural competence is the contribution of foreign language acquisition due to it helps people to get in context with fellows. However, it is not the only area which benefits with an intercultural context: history, geography and literature can get

involved with another world and expand their assumptions culturally. Also, the communicative competence is a relevant aspect in the intercultural competence. Therefore, it is not the only device that has to be taken into account to have a real communication since the exchange of information needs to be understood in another cultural context.

Gudykunst and Mody (2002) express that intercultural efficacy is relevant when people have the ability to communicate and share their cultural ideas. He also asserts that people who get in contact with others from another culture can raise their knowledge and their behavior. As a matter of fact, those people can achieve to have better social functions, personal goals and conform to their expectations. In fact, he proposes three basic factors that are important at the time when people get in contact with other culture: ability to deal psychology stress, ability to communicate and the ability to establish relationship.

Spitzberg (1989) insures that the system of communication brings many important aspects that should be connected to each other such us knowledge, right behavior and wisdom. According to this author, those aspects need to be considered when people from different cultures and environments create a relationship during the intercultural communication. He argues that those people from other culture need to play an important role into a new culture. They to have a comparative relation culturally or ethnically.

3.5 Social Interaction

Social interaction is an exchange of knowledge, experiences and perspectives between two or more individuals. This concept has been studied during decades for relevant authors. One of these authors is Turner (1988) who indicates that social interaction is basically the process of study in every individual and their behavior. He asserts that the situation in each person can be influenced

by another one depending on their behavior. Also, if someone does not have a right behavior into a society, then, that individual is not going to have a successful contact. On the other hand, he explains that social interaction is the basis of sociology and every individual's behavior needs to be analyzed into a society. Therefore, Turner stands that sociology is divided in two properties known as micro and macro sociology. Micro sociology studies people's behavior individually, and Macro analyzes the society in general. So, both work together to dissect how people act into a society.

The author also argues that social interaction is basically divided into three processes: motivational, interactional and structuring; and they need to be both separated and interrelated. The motivational process is when an individual fortifies and assembles a relationship with others from another place. The interactional means that people influence each other's behavior. Finally, structuring refers to those actions that the society have been repeated during the years and established in physical space. Those three processes are interrelated due to the motivational profile influence in structuring and interactional activities.

4. Literature Review

4.1 International studies

Alvarez (2010) explains the importance that intercultural communication has nowadays in our L2 learning process. He asserts that this approach is becoming easier and safer for all the students, due to all the possibilities that students may grasp such as the Internet. Alvarez shows the importance that internet has in our teaching- learning process to be successful and to open students' minds toward a more globalized world. Therefore, as a result of this useful strategy this author explains that all people who are learning a new language can have a close relationship with another culture without the necessity of traveling. The author also explains that people from L2 classrooms can look for interesting information or improve their L2 language with people from another culture without visiting a new country. On the other hand, this study shows the importance of getting a close relationship with a foreign culture to have an efficacious result in the students learning process. He proposes that all the L2 students need to have a good social communication and they need to be in context all the time with foreign people to identify the different social components. Consequently, students must have an authentic communicative practice with people from other culture to have a good linguistic level. The author also highlights the conception about the new techniques that the teacher needs to use nowadays to teach a L2.

One of the components is the nocio-funtional approach which stands out the language as a communicative instrument in a modern globalized world. For this reason, the study focuses on the importance that culture and language have to be connected all the time and why students need to be contextualized all the time with people from another culture. Furthermore, Alvarez asserts that

learning another language was very separated from the culture. Thus, the activities during the learning process were much decontextualized with the real world outside the class. Those people who learned a new language had to go out to experience the culture or to stay in the traditional classes.

There are many factors that should be taken into account at the time of learning a new language. Alvarez expresses that those factors must be integrated all the time in L2 classes to have good results in all the students. Accordingly, internet is an efficient tool to get beyond the limits of the classroom and it helps students to have bases to face learning. Alvarez promotes in his search that all the methods, which help the students to connect with the real world and teach them about the culture through the language, must be implemented in all L2 classes without limits.

Reinforcing the study that was explained before, it is necessary to make emphasis on how teachers have to teach culture in the classroom and how they need to put the language in practice depending on the context the students are involved in. Farnia and Suleima (2009) show different ways of how the impact is upon one identity and focus on the importance of teaching the different aspects that can be presented in a culture. For example, to see the way two different cultures use the language to demonstrate gratitude, the comparison and the contrast between both of them. Through their study the authors express that culture is not easy to teach culture due to that teacher can give the students the way how to get in contact with other culture, but cannot give completely information about it. They point out that students need to learn in the classroom certain knowledge about culture but they need to have a close relationship with that culture all the time. On the other hand, they insure that language always has to be joined with culture. Owing to some interaction problems in culture, there are essential elements of language teaching. Farnia and Suleima assert that all the students need to be conscious about the cultural manners of giving address, expressing

gratitude, making requests or agreeing or disagreeing with someone or something. Those authors in this text expose that all modern language teachers need to adapt all the strategies to teach culture through language and the technique they make the things. Those creative strategies have to make students open their minds to be flexible and tolerant with native speakers. Student's interactions with native people would be the best method to have their own meaning and reflect it in the target culture and their own.

In this research the authors show the relevance of the pragmatic language in the classroom. They think that the linguistic fragment has to be taken into account in the classroom in a language teaching. Therefore, the students need to practice with native speakers and get in contact with the culture as much as possible. According to this, the researchers present different types of studies to evaluate the contrast and the comparison of the pragmatic language to analyze the different forms that cultures show or express gratitude. The two different cultures that were analyzed are American and Iranian culture. Consequently, they found in the text that those cultures are significantly different when people give thankfulness or use appreciation strategies. However, they did not find many differences in the use of imposition and repayment. One of the most important conclusion is that the students need to be surrounded with cultural aspects such as linguistic communication and intercultural skills to have a successful process during the target language learning. Besides, those students can learn how to analyze their culture, their values and beliefs with other cultures.

According to Pinar (2016), it is fundamental to be immersed directly with the culture and the country of the language you are learning. On his research, 'Second language acquisition in a study abroad context: Findings and research directions', the author mentions some of the arguments that supports the idea of improving a language when you travel abroad. Pinar (2016) affirms:

The idea that living or studying in the target language country is essential to improve linguistic knowledge and understand its culture is widespread. One reason why study abroad is considered the best context for language learning is the belief that students will be constantly exposed to the L2, and they will receive real input more intensely than in a regular language course in their own country.

It is evidenced the importance of interacting in the context of the target language since it allows not only acquiring the knowledge but also a proper linguistic competence. For instance, interacting with native speakers provides a good level on different skills such as listening and speaking. Besides, it supports the practice of real-life input and the development of a real- context communication.

Pinar asserts that this type of study is not new in the research realm due to the amount of authors who manifest the same idea of studying abroad. There is a considerable statistic of researches that analyze the learning of a language in a different context and culture. The author explains all the benefits that travelling to another country involves and the aim of this purpose. The main benefit, considering the learning process is to obtain a higher linguistic competence. However, during the time, some authors express the consequence of being in a frequent contact in the foreign place. According to Pinar, during the last decades the researches about this field emerge not only the language learning process but also those extra linguistic and communicative competences such as the social interaction and cultural development.

The author asserts the influence of the intercultural conditions in the L2 learning: the influence could be positive or negative. On the research there are four items that express deeper the different situations in which learning a language abroad is the best method. These are: effects of study abroad on linguistic knowledge; individual differences in the study abroad context;

development of intercultural sensitivity during study abroad; and extra-linguistic factors that affect the learning process abroad, which will be discussed in turn.

This research helps to build the idea of improving the foreign language with an intercultural exchange. It exposes the idea or thought of those students or people who decide to travel to another country to improve their L2 and to acquire the cultural competence as well. It is crucial to our research since it provides the proper information about why the exchanges should be promoted.

4.2 National studies

It is important to take into account the context of our country in the intercultural aspect. Analyzing the Basic Standards of Competences in Foreign Language in Colombia, there are some realms which the government and the educational system need to be aware of. According to Barletta (2009), the intercultural competence is a new understanding of the learning process and it has not been considered as properly as other competences. The researcher explains and makes an invitation to reconsider how the intercultural competence has been developed through the last years. She complements the idea remarking to the teachers how important is to teach culture or the interculturality to learn a foreign language.

The study exposes some relevant aspects regarding this new challenge. First of all, the notion of the intercultural competence and how it is gathered to the communicative competence. There is also a comparison that is carried out to identify some distinctions from the new competence and how it is seen in some authors like Byram, the relationship of this competence with the sociolinguistic learning process and culture. Then, the author criticizes how culture is applied in Colombia in educational contexts, the beliefs and practices realized by some teachers in classrooms.

It can be evidenced how the author explains and proposes some new strategies to each the intercultural competence and how the cultural component should be rethought in the foreign language programs in Colombia. In fact, there are some important realms that are exposed to give a better understanding of this concept. Furthermore, to observe how huge this competence is and how it affects the whole process of a language such as the Culture in Context and norms of Interaction. This study also stands how intercultural competence is achieved, and how the educative institutions and universities perceive the culture and its teaching.

As a conclusion, this study benefits the present research because of the critic and the analysis the author presents about the intercultural competence and how this is perceived in the educative institutions. In the document, there is an analysis of the Basic Standards of Competences in Foreign Language in Colombia, thus it is found here a conception or a point of view of the standards, the study that the author did, and also, the different concepts that are proposed in this document that are immersed with the research such as the interculturality or the culture and its relationship with language. Also, it shows us that the topic is well posed because it is a reality that it is presented in our country with national studies.

Beltran Arias (2015) shows different perspectives of some students of the English program at the District University at Bogotá and the English pedagogy program at Mayor University at Santiago de Chile in the diverse realms of their culture which motivate the students to learn a foreign language, in this case English. Thus, the researcher wanted to know, from the students' perspective, the aspects of the culture they belong to that have motivated them to carry out a learning process of this language and establish which of these can be strengthened for the purpose of improving levels of English learning, as a foreign language within the Colombian context and the Chilean one is taking great strength.

To make a proper analysis of the cultural aspects that were exposed in the research, it was necessary to realize some surveys that were carried out with Colombian students of the English Degree of the District University, and students of the English Pedagogy Degree of the Mayor University, in order to know what their perceptions are about the influence of culture on the motivations of students to study English as a foreign language which clearly allowed to know some of the reasons why students chose teaching as their profession. It is also important to take into account the importance of English as a global tool for the communication and the cultural exchange within the different contexts.

All of these aspects show the relevance of this research and the data that was gathered. As an example, one of the results show that students consider their own culture to be less motivating in terms of learning English; on the contrary, in relation to their personal interests and the cultural aspects of the English-speaking countries such as United States or United Kingdom, these are more "interesting, striking and motivating", according to the exposed in the research instruments.

It is very important because it gives a brief introduction to the importance and impact of interculturality in English-speaking countries in the learning of English in foreign language students. Also, it provides some ideas that they can be very useful at the time of doing the proper questions related to our own research. It can be seen that the intercultural exchange done by the students in countries that has the Spanish as the native language does not represent a relative impact in the foreign language process. The precedent statement gives us a very interesting base to analyze the impact of the intercultural exchange in Foreign-speaking countries made by some students of the modern languages degree of the University of Quindío.

Taylor and Morales (2006) propose that people do not necessarily have to travel abroad to develop the intercultural competence. They can develop it with other strategies in the classroom.

The researchers evaluated the process of the students in the classroom and how they can have that intercultural experience. The study was made to create consciousness in what intercultural communication means and also how the culture has to be integrated in a foreign context. In this perspective, the authors explain the importance of adapting to the new culture. Consequently, they decided to ask to the students to choose a subculture which they wanted to be part of. As a result, they found that the students were confident about the different theories of intercultural communication. With this test, they could experience some difficulties at the time to adapt with this new subculture. Therefore, they were forced to develop several strategies to face these difficulties in adaptation that basically are the anxiety, stereotyping, confusion, loss of face, generalization, and miscommunication.

The study explains what culture is, and everything that is related to this conception since it plays a fundamental role on the cultural competence and the proper progress of acquiring a foreign language. The study proposes the implementation of these activities on the real classroom in our country to make the analysis more trustworthy. Some strategies that can be evidenced are the expectations and interactions with culture, language in pairs and groups, independence training, among others. The authors make emphasis on the success of the study based on the performance of some learners. The suitable interaction and preparation of the activities can create a kind of atmosphere that is useful and profitable to understand a foreign culture. Although the intercultural competence is easier to acquire and the learners have an experience related to understand or to interact with a different language (and culture in the same perspective), it is also possible to make a continuous progress by some strategies in the realm of foreign language learning.

This study has several connections to the present research since it deals with the intercultural competence and the relevance it has in the foreign language classrooms. It is evident

that the problematic has already been analyzed and the consciousness by some teachers is already awoken. The experience of an intercultural exchange is something that not all the learners can have, and the association and activities the authors created are some examples that the competence is a factor that must be presented and more appreciate in the educative curriculum. Although the authors' study does not take into account the experience of traveling abroad, it helps to understand with a better perspective the culture and the role it has in language teaching.

Castro and Samacá (2006) show the importance of implementing the cultural aspects in a foreign language learning process. This research was developed within the component of the seminar on Bilingualism offered by Universidad Distrital in Bogotá as part of its Master's program in Applied Linguistics to the Teaching of English. The aim of the research was to collect data from two universities in Tunja and Bogotá comparing how the students determine and interpret the inclusion of cultural aspects in foreign language learning. Due to the importance that globalization has acquired nowadays, the study presents the need of teachers to promote cultural awareness in classrooms. The authors also express that culture can influence on student's social behavior, and personal relationships. As a matter of fact, the implementation of the cultural knowledge helps to prepare children and adolescents to be part of a multicultural world and to develop a number of values in pro of acceptance.

The study remarks that many students either need or desire to be part of a different society, thus they will travel abroad in search of better opportunities. It is evident that globalization is something that affects directly different aspects and areas in a society, including language and culture. To have a proper interaction with a different language it is pertinent to understand not only what a person says, but also the context, the background and the culture.

On the other hand, it can be analyzed not only the fact that a culture is present, but also all the knowledge that a person may share or may acquire from it. There are several aspects like values that are important to deepen such as respect, tolerance and acceptance toward others to understand, with a better perspective, the differences among cultures.

There are a lot of cultures and every single society has a different identity and a method to express language, ideas or habits they belong to; thus it is easy to fall in the mistake of misunderstanding the actions or the ideas other people have or just because of the differences regarding culture. There is a difference between teaching culture based on its definition and teaching culture in a social context; the social perception people have of their own culture. As a conclusion, the researcher made it clear that there are aspects to bear in mind in order to improve the learning/teaching process. The most important aspect is tolerance towards others, their culture and their language; another fact is the respect when there are misunderstandings, avoiding the ignorance of smearing another foreign culture. Cross-cultural awareness is something that should be beyond the classroom.

Strengthening the different studies and researches that are mentioned before, Castro (2009) points out the study tendencies and perspectives she gives about the intercultural education and everything that it is involved regarding the context in our country through the last decades. To establish this research, the author makes a very strict analysis of the different conceptual and disciplinary tendencies that have been the focus in the cultural diversity and the study of the culture by itself since it is no more projected as the purpose of knowing how many ethnic groups there are, but to identify the tendency of emphasizing the relation that there is between language and culture.

The author gives a complete analysis of intercultural education. It interests the argument on how the disciplinary tendency has shifted the different perspectives of cultural diversity. It is evident that culture does not have an important role as much as it should be in classrooms. However, the different Colombian entities, especially the educative institutions, have shown an interest on the focus of the intercultural aspect as it is evident and proposed by different academic and educational sources such as books, articles, governmental programs and different academic spaces that are focused on the culture and how it affects the language. According to the author, there are other authors that show awareness and at the same time preoccupations due to the different perspectives and directions they give to the cultural diversity and how it is a study object that, being modified by the disciplinary and the conceptual tendencies, has been redefined through years.

According to Castro, the culture definition has turned and now, the different academic texts are including the cultural diversity and the social approaches that can be linked to the cultural bases. Colombia has changed, and now there are recognitions to different process such as the social, political, economic and cultural realms of our country. The cultural identity and intercultural education has taken a proper and distinctive importance of construction and exemplification in the classrooms and especially in our societies that it is already a hard work according to the author since the background and the context of Colombia has had different social problems but the diversity, especially the Colombian culture is huge.

This study nurtures the present research because the lack of an intercultural education with a great quality in our country it is not because of the ignorance of the topic, but the lack of applicability of this relevant aspect to the classrooms' context. There are lots of studies, researches in Colombia that express that it is necessary to teach interculturality and the process of teaching

and learning a new language must embrace this type of education. The article is useful to re-think the purpose of the present research but at the same time, it gives an approbation that the intercultural education is something that deserves being studied, and regarding the knowledge and the aspects of a new foreign language, the research becomes more pertinent.

4.3 Local studies

Botero, Loaiza and Galindo (2013) expose three basic concepts which are bilingualism, biliteracy and intercultural competence. These three aspects are essential in the study of the linguistic and cultural contact between countries, communities and people. This study was carried out by three professors from the University of Quindío. They assert that in Colombia, the bilingualism has been considered as a fundamental factor in the development of abilities not only in the economic issues but also as an intercultural understanding. In this respect, in the book is highlighted the bilingualism perspectives and multilingualism in South America. On another hand, the study proposes bilingualism as a linguistic and cultural phenomenon from a sociocultural approach. Another concept that is exposed in the study is biliteracy which is explained based on a case study that analyzes the biliteracy practices of a Franco-Colombian girl not only inside the school but also outside of it. The objective was to examine this concept in a social context apart from the academic area. The third key aspect is interculturality. This term is remarkable in bilingual programs and it is essentially immersed in the linguistic and cultural contact at national and international level.

Regarding the interculturality aspect, the study develops the ideas of some representative theorists that have given important contributions. One of them is Byram (1997:21) who basically stands that foreign language students must be prepared for the ‘social interactions’ focusing on

a critical methodology. In this way, the students can develop attitudes that help to open their mind and have the disposition to analyze different values and cultural practices. The authors also recognize the importance of these positions and they expose the results in an empiric study based in an action research approach. In a broader perspective, the authors mention the most important exponent theorists through history which support the importance of bilingualism and how the concept is related with a number of different aspects.

Their work contains an evident relation to the present study since the authors present a different perspective and contextualization of three basic concepts as are bilingualism, biliteracy and interculturality in an academic field. Their work shows the importance of applying the intercultural approach in the classroom that allows students understand the cultural differences among countries.

5. Methodology

5.1 Approach

According to Hernández, Fernandez and Baptista (2010), the qualitative approach concentrates in the different descriptions of situations, events, interactions and manifestations, among others. This approach is based on methods that are non-standardized; besides, no numerical actions are taken into account, this means the analysis is not statistical. The compilation of data basically consists on the attainment of the perceptions and points of view of the participants, that is to say, emotions, priorities, experiences, meanings and other subjective aspects. In fact, in this approach there is a clear relationship between the participants and the researcher. The collection of data is focused on the understanding of the connotations and experiences of people. The researcher starts to obtain the information in a spontaneous manner through observation and descriptions of the participants; and he / she creates ways to report the data that is being refined as the study progresses. This study is qualitative since the interest is not collecting statistical data; on the other hand, it searches subjective facts. This research seeks to analyze the different experiences of students in another country in terms of culture, language and many other aspects.

5.2 Research design

Hernández, Fernandez and Baptista (2010) states that the design should have a clear strategy or arrangement to answer the main idea in the project. Therefore, if the design has a good structure the researchers will have more possibilities to obtain the desired results. Highlighting the

above, the ethnographic design studies the society and the culture and how individuals behave in different kinds of situations. However, it is divided in two subgroups: Macro-ethnographic and Micro-ethnographic designs. Macro-ethnography is used when the researchers evaluate a big group of people for a long time and interaction occurs when living with the population immersed in the culture until the results are obtained. On the other hand, a micro ethnographic design studies close groups of people in a short period of time. For this reason, the present study is carried out as micro ethnographic due to the fact that it is a case study in which the researchers take a small group of people who have traveled abroad to get the results with the data collection method to get information from the participants to get the results.

5.3 Type of research

According to Sturman (1997), a case study may be a general term that takes in consideration the exploration of the people the research is focused on such as an individual, a group or a specific event. The first one can be analyzed by his/her skills, needs, life situations or life history; the group from different institutions such as the school, a special classroom with students that need special attention, among others, and finally, the phenomenon that the case study examines is any particular event that occurs but with two relevant items: specific place and time. A case study, most of the time, describes an individual case and it analyzes it from the perspectives the research is focused on. Thus, this type of research is implied in the qualitative approach as its nature, but not exclusively.

5.4 Contextual aspects

5.4 .1 Context.

The research is carried out in a public university in Armenia-Quindío, Colombia. It is located in the north of the city. This University is one of the most known in the region. The institution was founded in 1960, but it was until 1982 that it became an institution of departmental status. At the beginning, the institution only had two programs: Agronomy and Topography. After two years of its foundation, in 1962, the university started academic operations. Then, it implemented the Pedagogy career and it started to have its first graduates. In 1964, it graduated its first promotion in Topography and in 1966 the first graduates of Pedagogy. Some years after, the university became an autonomous entity, more exactly in 1967. In 1983, the institution, where the research takes places, suffers a good change that was a determinant to the institution that is nowadays. The university started to implement more careers, and to open face-to-face and distance programs.

Despite of the fact that the earthquake of 1999 affected this university, this event was not an obstacle to continue being of the most representative universities of the region. In 2006, is credited the first academic program: Medicine and it becomes one of the most representative careers of the university. In 2010, the headquarter turns 50 years of being created. After that, two years later in 2012 the Consejo Nacional de Acreditación (CNA) starts verifying the initial conditions for this important process. In 2017, it is given the auto evaluation to the CNA and the academic peers visited the institution which gives it the recognition of an institution of high quality in 2018.

Currently, this university has 7 faculties in different areas such as: Humanities Sciences, Health Sciences, Engineering, Economics and Administrative Sciences, Education, Basic Sciences

and Technology, Science in Agribusiness and distance learning modalities. Nowadays, the university has around 18.714 students. It is formed by 854 teachers, 24 of whom are Ph.D., 233 masters and 239 with specializations. The institution has had about 67.787 graduates since 1964.

The infrastructure is well distributed because of the size of the institution, being the biggest university of the department. There are several buildings according to the faculties and the establishment has adequate tools and laboratories for the programs. It counts with language laboratories for the Modern Languages Program, some physics laboratories to the different engineers, the audio-visual laboratory for the social communication program and so on. Thus, this is a clear example of the capacity and the resources the university provides to its students to have a better academic process. Besides, the establishment not only provides academic spaces but also places where the students can develop an integrity education. In there, there is a soccer field, a basketball court, a volleyball court, the only Olympic pool of the region and the institutional welfare building where the students can practice different credits, as sportive as cultural.

It also counts with a library that provides a lot of resources available for students, teachers and researchers in all realms. The university also has different national and international agreements with different universities and educative institutions. It applies the educative programs of the government to improve the access to people who want to study there like *Jóvenes en Acción* of the social prosperity department and the program ‘Ser pilo paga’ of the National Ministry of Education. Regarding the undergraduate program of this research, it is a program of degree in modern languages, created in 1967 through the agreement of the Superior Council of the University of Quindío number 41. The current curricula of the degree is designed according to the institutional policies established in agreement 018 of December 18 of 2003 and it has a duration of 160 academic credits, they are offered in 2 time slots: day and night.

The curriculum of this degree is organized into six academic activities determined by the following areas

-Basics: English, reading writing in English, Spanish and French.

-Professionals: linguistics, research seminar in FL, culture seminar, theory of knowledge and literature

-Basic pedagogical core: human development, history of pedagogy and educational policies

- Professional pedagogies: teaching methodology in FL, pedagogical practice and informatics

Electives: complementary and professional (bilingualism, translation and French).

In the Modern Languages Program there is only one official agreement with the University of Poitiers in France. The students of this program travel abroad to study and to experience an intercultural exchange. However, the university has other agreements to make cultural exchange as Cultural Care Au Pair, and Work and Travel.

5.4.2 Population.

The chosen population of the research gathers 4 modern languages students that have not traveled abroad and other 4 students who have had that opportunity, naming also a professor of the modern languages program of a university of Quindío whose master's research study focused on interculturality. The majority of the population is studying the highest semesters, there are 3 women who are studying in 8th semester, two men who are in 9th semester and 1 woman who is studying the 10th semester and the professor has a master degree. The average age of the students is between 20 and 28 years, but 1 woman that had the experience is 28 years old and the professor

is -58-- years old. The population is from different parts of the Country. The students that have done the exchange are from different cities, some of which are described as following: 1 man is from Armenia Quindío, 1 woman is from La Dorada Caldas, 1 woman is from Caicedonia Valle, the last woman is from Armenia. On the other hand, the population who has not traveled abroad is the following: 1 woman is from Tulua Valle, 1 woman is from Buenaventura Valle, 1 man is from Armenia Quindío, and the last student lives currently in Circasia Quindío but he was born in Zacatecas, Mexico. The professor is from Armenia, Quindío.

5.4.3 Population selection criteria.

The population for this research, as the characteristics were mentioned above, is gathered by 4 students from the modern languages program with the aim of knowing their experience and their intercultural exchange. They were selected in a moment for being part of the small educative population that has traveled abroad from the Modern Languages Program and they returned at Armenia to finish the last semesters of their career. The professor was selected to be one the most renowned educators of the same program of the same university. She has a big knowledge and bases that are useful to the study since she did a master research in a topic related to the focus of this research, involving the interculturality and the exchanges for being part of the students' enriched experiences.

5.5. Techniques and collecting data instruments

5.5.1 Interview.

There are different kinds of data collection methods useful for the researchers to obtain the expected results. Interviews, surveys feedback or questionnaires are some of the most helpful

strategies for the researchers to analyze one group of people to obtain the desired results. According to Hernandez, Fernandez and Baptista (2010), 'Interview is a meeting to discuss and exchange information between the interviewer and the interviewee. In the interview, through the questions and answers communication and a joint construction of meanings are achieved regarding a topic.' For this reason, interviews can be a good method to this research to analyze specific groups of people who have traveled abroad and those who have not, and this technique is helpful to get all the necessary information for this research. The interview will be applied to a total of eight people; four of them have traveled abroad. The aim of the interview is basically to grasp the information that will be useful to answer the general and the specific questions of the research.

In the research, it is decided to implement this instrument to gather the information with the aim of knowing the perspective of the interviewed people with the main objectives of the research. It is implemented three different interviews. One instrument to 4 people who have not traveled abroad and have not had the exchange experience (Annex 2), the other interview to 4 people who have traveled abroad to have the intercultural exchange (Annex 4), and the last interview to one of the professors of a university of Quindío who has made one research with interculturality and has knowledge about the purpose of the present research (Annex 6).

5.5.2 Survey.

The survey research method can be defined as "the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions" (Check and Schutt, 2012, p. 160). In this case, the people are the students of the modern languages program of the university. In this research the survey is used as a method in order to collect all the information required, to identify the different circumstances of an intercultural exchange not only to the students who have not had an experience

out of the country (Annex 3), but also to those who have had it (Annex 5). There were designed eight questions regarding the different experiences and factors after traveling abroad. The questions give a support to the research to find out the different perceptions and aspects that can be seen in terms of culture, language, life, etc. This type of method research is also a very useful tool to describe clearly and to detail all the situations and scenarios presented in a specific group of people.

5.6 Research Ethics

Hernández, Fernandez and Baptista (2010) stands that social and medical researches involve human beings as participants in different tests, surveys, interviews, and qualitative studies that the participants have some rights at the time of being part of any kind of method in the collection data in a given research. In this context, this author mentions some of the rights to be taken into account: The participants can quit when they want and decide, and also their names are never going to be revealed in any circumstance as well as the information given by them. Hernandez, Fernandez and Baptista consider the respect of the privacy of the participants as a fundamental aspect, so, it is pertinent to have permission if the participant is in agreement to make public some kind of videos, interviews or information. The participants are in total freedom to deny to a question or something they do not feel comfortable with. For this reason, the researchers will assure the ethics in the study, since permission will be obtained to have access to the population and context, will be socialized the objectives with an informed consent (Annex 1). The collected data will not be manipulated at all and names will not be exposed; this is why all subjects will be identified with a given code.

5.7 Timetable

ACTIVITY	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
Obtain permission (informed consent)	X			
Survey – students who have traveled	X			
Survey – students who have not traveled	X			
Interview – teacher		X		
Interview – students who have not traveled		X		
Interview – students who have traveled		X		
Data analysis			X	X
Presentation of results				X

5.8 Budget

Concept	Cost
Photocopies	\$ 15.000.00
Transportation	\$50.000.00
Total	\$65.000.00

6. Data Analysis

6.1 Categories

The categories are the results of the analysis that was carried out to the participants about different conceptions they have regarding language, the role of the university, culture and the assumptions about their experiences.

6.1.1 Students' Linguistic experience in different contexts.

This category arises from the analysis of the different experiences that students have about the development of linguistic competence inside and outside the country. In both contexts, students are in contact with the L2 in which they have the opportunity of practicing and interacting with people who are native and exchange language with them. However, taking into account language is intrinsically connected to culture; the students could not only get information about language but also the intercultural aspects that a language brings along.

6.1.1.1 *Developing intercultural competence in the L1 context.*

Below are shown some fragments that arise from the students' answers who have not traveled abroad.

Extract 1 – Students' interview:

“Well, I think in the same way eh maybe, I don't know having friends that are native, going to places like Salento Cocora and finding a job where you can I don't know, have French conversation with people that are from another country and learn from the cultures”

Extract 2- Students' survey

Taking into account the question: Do you think that living abroad is the only way to improve your foreign language? (Annex 3) The students answered that traveling abroad is not the only method to improve their language level. They could interact with native people or they could practice with the new technologies.

The fact that the students can visit touristic places such as Salento, Circasia and Filandia, gives them the chance to interact with people from different countries. Also, they have had this linguistic and cultural contact in which they have been involved in their jobs at restaurants, stores or as touristic guides, etc. Because of this, they can learn new expressions or words they did not know. However, the students have found other ways to practice what they have learned from L2 language, for instance, on Internet, listening to music, chatting with native people, watching TV shows, etc.

As researchers, it is considered that the results found with the students of the Modern languages Program are very interesting. Since the results show how that the language can be developed in the same country and having an interaction with native people in different contexts. That allows the second language learner to have a direct contact with it. In these terms, Alvarez (2010) is an author who explains the importance that intercultural communication has in the L2 learning process without going abroad. He asserts that this approach is becoming easier and safer for all the students, due to all the possibilities that students may grasp such as the Internet. The author also explains that people from L2 classrooms can look for interesting information or

improve their L2 language with people from another culture without visiting their new country. This researcher mentioned that not only internet is not the only way to go through an intercultural context but also L2 learners can interact with people from another countries to identify the different social and linguistic components.

6.1.1.2 *The cultural exchange and its impact in the linguistic competence.*

The following fragments are taken from a survey and an interview that were accomplished to the students who have traveled to another country.

Extract 1 – Students’ survey:

A survey was made to the students who traveled abroad (Annex 3), the students answered the following question: Do you think you had an improvement in terms of language learning? Which ones? They affirmed that in fact, they enhanced considerably their listening and speaking level.

Extract 2 – Students’ interview

“Yeah, I think, everybody, everybody struggled with language because you don’t realize how wide language is until you get to another country because you think you know how to speak English or things like that but when you get to another country you realized that you don’t know, so I think I struggled a lot with my English part cause it was like I expected I was thinking that I had a well, that I could have like a good conversation or something and it wasn’t that easy, then at the beginning I had a problem in the airport with a police officer then he did not understand me what I was saying then I had to use my body and mimics to express what I was asking to him”

Extract 3 – Students’ interview

“Then to know the country I always wanted to know and go to New York and the second one was to improve my English level and I think I fulfilled both dreams.”

The students who had the opportunity to travel to United States at least for one year, they had some drawbacks with the language. At the beginning it was very difficult to communicate with them since they used some phrasal verbs and cultural expressions, the students had to find strategies to face this issue. The students thought their level was excellent but they realized that they had too much to learn. Most of the students who lived there, stated, that they had an improvement mostly in terms of speaking and listening skills in the L2. They also found linguistics codes in the way they communicate, for example English language go straight to the point while Spanish language goes around one topic.

The perception that as researchers obtained from the answers of the people interviewed was that traveling is essential at the time of learning a new language. Taylor and Morales (2006) asserts that traveling to another country is not the only way to put in practice a second language acquisition. However, the students who have been in a foreign country mentioned that it is better to have that close contact and being immersed in the culture is a good resource. In this context, Pinar (2016) affirms “The idea that living or studying in the target language country is essential to improve linguistic knowledge and understand its culture is widespread”. This author clearly supports that traveling a fundamental at the time of learning a second language.

6.1.2 The role of the educational institution in the development of intercultural competence.

How the institution promotes different programs and support to involve the students who are learning a second language in an intercultural context. Also, the role of the institution during their learning process, how it encourages the students to be in contact with a cultural environment and how it can influence in their linguistic level. Culture and language are essentially connected and all those people who are getting a L2 language have to be immersed in that culture for example sharing with native people, reading about history or listening experiences from people who have traveled abroad.

6.1.2.1 *Building up intercultural competence: the support provided by the university.*

Here are some of the fragments that emerged from the different questions asked to the students in order to know the perceptions of the students about the role of the university in the intercultural exchange.

Extract 1– Students’ interview

“Yes , but little information actually I know only the name but I have not made any research about it or investigated about it because I am not actually interesting on that Because I know that there are some difficulties for me if I want to join that program”

Extract 3 – Students’ interview

“I mean the program supports the fact that people that could go abroad ahm I don’t think they support them financially but I think they eh use some permissions with the director, curricular consul of the program

so they give some permissions to those students who want to go abroad and then they talk to the teachers and sometimes there is a flexibility that is approved by the curricular consul, the directors with the teachers that are in that semester with that student. Ahm so in that sense I think that's one of the supports they give, I think they should support more"

The students assert that the institution is not an entity which helps them to get involved with different intercultural aspects. The lack of compromise of the institutions to stimulate the student's linguistic level, to get in contact and to know about other cultures is very superficial. On the other hand, people interviewed critiqued the institution as fundamental resource to let the students know about good programs to travel abroad such as "cultural care" or "work and travel". They mentioned that the institution just help the students with some kind of permissions to let them to travel abroad but they do not promote those programs to let the students to have that kind of opportunity. Also it was analyzed the lack of accompaniment of the university before during and after the exchange process.

In particular, the university should be a support in the second language learning students. Then, in this sense, the accompaniment of the institution in the process of exchange is essential to make students confident and encouraged to be part of this type of experiences. The University of Quindío counts with a document called is Política Académica Curricular (PAC). In this policy are contained the different criteria or aspects that the institution has to provide in the academic process. It states that the curricular proposal is focus on the integral formation that is to say on a wide knowledge in terms of culture education, ethics, and logic, etc. However, Ramirez (2016) exposes that the university does not provide a proper support to students and it does not count with enough cultural spaces in the program.

6.1.2.2 The importance of the cultural component in the curriculum.

Those are some extracts taken from the different answers that students manifested about the implementation of the cultural component in the curriculum.

Extract 1- Students' interview

“Well, we already have a subject called ‘Seminar of culture’. Although we see some general things about culture that can apply to any community of the world, it is also centered in studying and comprehending American and English culture, and history, in fact. So, well, I think it’s important but I think it should go beyond learning historical facts, it should make us reflect upon our own history, our own customs and it should make us, like, think and compare our lives with the lives of other people.”

Extract 2- Students' Interview

” yes, I think it should be taught in the program, I think ah we, as teachers, we should be immersed in the culture as much as possible and if we cannot go to the country, the foreign country then, we could bring the country to our program, so we I think teachers, could bring like experiences of as you know, bring native people to share their experiences or not only native people from other countries but also Colombians who have gone abroad”

Extract 3 – Students' interview

“Ok, first they have to participate in these kinds of especial days like the English day and the Francophonie and also they can travel to some touristic places in which they can find native speakers and practice with them, and interchange some cultural aspects”

The students expressed in the interview that the institution counts with some activities related to culture at the curricula but they are not enough to supply the needs of the second language learners. On the other hand, the students mentioned that the institution already has a subject called “seminar of culture” which involves the American culture inside the class. Also, they talked about

some other curricular activities to promote culture inside the class such as Francophonie or cultural sketch inside the classroom. However, the institution has to emphasize more in culture during second language learning process. For instance, bringing people from another country or sharing the experiences from people who have traveled abroad.

Taking into account that the cultural component is such a fundamental factor in learning a second language, our perspective is very similar to the results obtained. The institution plays an important role as a resource to perform culture in the process. Therefore, the implementation of curricular activities, as new subjects or intercultural events, would improve the perception of the students at the time of interacting with foreign people. This aspect is essential due to the cultural differences between one country and another. In this context, there is a study from Castro and Samacá (2006) who stand that:

The contact with other cultures will widen our scope and make us more receptive to changes and different views of the world; thus, we also become more creative. All these appreciations may seem to be far away from our students' near future, but the truth is that these facts are here to stay and it is our duty to prepare our students for them.

6.1.3 The influence of culture and its characteristics as a fundamental aspect when interacting and communicating in a foreign environment.

Culture is one of the two pillar in this research since it is studied the different characteristics and the importance of this concept in the second language learning process. Thus, the interaction goes beyond the linguistic competence due to the fact that culture is implicitly immersed in language. That is why, people from a specific culture share different behaviors, beliefs

and customs that can be different or similar to another one and they can be conveyed through communication.

6.1.3.1 *Changes in behavior and identity of the students who experienced a new culture.*

These fragments emerge from the different learnings that the students acquired during the intercultural exchange.

Extract 1- Students' interview

“Exactly, because yeah because I came back to my culture but I did not feel it was my culture anymore.so yeah it was really hard to adapt and it took me about eight months and I actually got really depress if I can say that and yeah I missed the states a lot”

Extract 2-Students' interview

“-of course, people from there are very organized also when you are driving is very organize different form here but I keep saying food from here is better that in the states.”

There were different instruments to look for the answer of the main characteristics students had when they experienced travelling abroad. There is an interview to those students who have traveled outside the country (Annex 4) in which there are some questions in order to have the proper information to answer the main objectives of the research. Considering it is wanted to know how they changed after they had the experience in a different culture, where everything can be different or similar what they are used to. The particular case of this subcategory is to analyze the changes in behavior and specially the identity as Colombian citizens. One of the answers that a student gave, was they had the perspective that their identity was not the same. They expressed

that when they came back to Colombia (their native country and culture), they did not feel the same. They felt that it was an unknown culture. They considered that the adaptation in Colombia was difficult, even though they are from this country. They get used to the lifestyle they had in The United States because people are very organized different from Colombian people. They adapt the changes and their behavior but they pointed out that the food in Colombia was much better.

In the research, it is identified some aspects that are so punctual in how the culture is related to the language. According to Doff (2009), culture is connected to communication. Language is gathered to culture when there is an interaction. The previous subcategory is mostly about the influence of the culture in the identity and also in the interaction when the students traveled abroad. Regarding the answers, the participants had some changes in their opinions or concepts they had about their own cultural identity. The author also asserts that culture is mostly for the daily life actions and it involves the customs and beliefs. The students accepted the culture as their own. According to Fong and Chuang (2004), culture are the ideas, beliefs and behaviors that people acquire. The idea of the students who lived the experience is reinforced by the previous author that asserts that a person can adapt their actions in a particular culture. That is to say, some of the participants changed their thoughts or ideas they used to do in their native country. It is not a coincidence, but it is a part of the adaptation to the things that are new for human beings especially the culture that it is implicit in daily life elements. Hall (1996) also expresses the identity as the characteristics that give a certain property of authenticity and distinction.

6.1.3.2 Cultural differences after the exchange experience.

The students expressed in the instruments used in the research, they found some cultural factors at the time of interacting in the foreign country and they are evidenced in the following extracts.

Extract 1- Students' interview

“Colombia is a really really a very beautiful country is really green so when I went to the states I was like my god I really miss Colombia my country has almost everything so when I came back I think I just like I wanted to appreciate it to live it better to travel inside my country because I traveled a lot in United States but I didn't do it in Colombia so I think I just wanted to enjoy my country”

Extract- 2 Students' interview

“I think it was about the kids its actually that's really cultural because the mothers I don't think they are like Colombian mothers you know, I think they need to be more how do you say like rude, exactly because the mother is like that they don't care yeah, yeah maybe to be more strict actually and the kids they do whatever they want to do, they do they get whatever they want to get, they are all the time trying to get new toys they're really bad kids bad behavior every time everywhere I want this, I want this”

In this subcategory in the research it is wanted to identify some of the cultural differences or similarities, if they are, what are these between the two countries mainly when the students had their experiences. An interview was made to those students who have traveled abroad (Annex 4) and there are some fragments or items that are so interesting on this process. The first answer was mainly about the aspects and the characteristics that are considered as a culture or identity of a country; in this case Colombia when they came back. That student answered that they missed the nature, the places, and the closeness to go from one place to another; especially when they wanted

to going out with friends to do something different after work. They also affirmed that they did not appreciate Colombia enough since they do not take time to visit the beautiful places it has to offer. After they had this experience they showed a different perspective of the culture between the two contexts. The other student answered something particular about the behavior of the people in the foreign country considering this item as a cultural part of that society. They talked about the relationship between the kids and parents, especially mothers. Referring the kids, the person expressed that they behaved so bad because they always did whatever they wanted; it was a shock for them because they were very spoiled and they always wanted new toys. Regarding the mothers, they did not care about their children because they were very flexible they did not care so much about the bad behavior of their own kids.

It is known that culture is different depending on the country, this can affect the way in which people who traveled can see the perspective of a society. According to Hall (1996), the culture identity is constructed in each person that belongs to a particular community. This identity is constructed by the influence of a foreign society. The students identified the differences between certain patterns in behavior from both sides. Considering the case of the students who could evidence the behavior in children being determined by the culture, it is reinforced by the idea of Fong and Chuang (2004) in which they explain and give the understanding of the phenomenon that is called cultural identity. According to them, there are different stages. The first stage is about the cultural identity that children, who in this case are the Americans, are not conscious of what culture or ethnicity is. However, they belong to a specific group that is different to the children from Colombia. That is why that the participant made the comparison. They acquire the different laws, thoughts and traditions established in the foreign country. This is thanks to the fact that they are interacting with a specific group and they do it by a natural approach; that is to say,

they are not conscious about their culture, they only do what the parents teach them. This behavior is accepted given that they considered it as normal and it is part of their culture. Finally, Lambert (1974) considers that language and culture has an immense influence on the construction of personality from childhood to adulthood.

6.1.3.3 Facing cultural challenges and improving intercultural interaction.

The following fragments show the situations and issues that the students faced, and how they solve it.

Extract 1- Students interview

“Yeah, I think, everybody, everybody struggled with language because you don’t realize how wide language is until you get to another country because you think you know how to speak English or things like that but when you get to another country you realized that you don’t know, so I think I struggled a lot with my English part cause it was like I expected I was thinking that I had a well, that I could have like a good conversation or something and it wasn’t that easy, then at the beginning I had a problem in the airport with a police officer then he did not understand me what I was saying then I had to use my body and mimics to express what I was asking to him”

Extract 2- Students interview

“I think the most difficult situation was having to rematch four months into my experience emm, I had some issues with the host family that I had like did not let me to go to college or let me get the driving license or the social security . they said it was not necessary because just I was taking care of the kids so I asked for a rematch and I think it was difficult because I honestly I did not want to come back I really wanted to have the whole experience I was stressed out the whole two weeks that we get have for rematch ,I was always praying that I could get a new host family , luckily I did and it was the best family I could ever had”

In the third subcategory was taking into account one of the main objectives of the research. It is required to know about the different situations, challenges students faced in the foreign country. Also, to recognize how they confront those problems and what were the strategies they used. There was an interview to students who had this type of experience (Annex 4) and they share some of the challenges and issues concerning the cultural and the language aspects. The first fragment was a student that had a communicative trouble. They thought that they had very good English level but in fact they did not understand many expressions people use. For example, the student told that when she was at the airport, a police officer said something to her and she was lost because she did not understand what he meant. The student decided to use her body language to make herself understand, she did some signs and mimics. The other situation that a student shared was mostly about the cultural aspect with the host family in the program that person traveled. The host family did not let her use the car in her free time. The host mom only gives the permission to use it when the student was working. Nevertheless, an American babysitter has the right to use the car without any problem. Therefore, the students decided to rematch with another family as a strategy to have a good experience.

The third subcategory is about the different challenges students had to deal when they had the experience in the foreign country and how they face or look for strategies. It is well known that the culture affects directly on language as Mahadi and Jafari (2012), asserts that a language and culture are connected. The first fragment about the issues of the participants at the moment of communicating is not only related with the L2 level, but the cultural influences that are part of it, like several expressions that are properly of that new culture. Reinforcing this idea, Manganaro (2009), asserts that human beings belong to a specific group of people, and through time they

construct a particular identity which makes people be different from other cultures. For this reason, those people who traveled abroad have to be aware of their own culture and to respect the differences that they find in a foreign context.

6.1.4 Assumptions students have about the connection between culture and language.

This category is the result of the different expectations, thoughts or beliefs found in the students; whether they already experienced in a foreign country, or they are thinking traveling in the future. The students expressed that they have heard some kind of stereotypes about the foreign culture, as well as the different issues presented at the time of interacting directly with the language.

6.1.4.1 *Stereotypes students have before and after the cultural exchange experience.*

Here are some fragments of what people think about an exchange process, negative or positive ideas in a different culture.

Extract 1- Students interview

“My expectations were a little bit different I was expecting maybe something really really different because people before I went to the States well, my experiences was in United States people was talking about like something it can be boring or maybe people are really close mind or well, that they are a little bit cold, some people said that they are not of course but, I think my oh well, also about food, because people was talking about that food was bad and you know may be I talked with people that had a really bad experience I don't know when I get there it was totally different people was really friendly well, some people say about the state I went to California so it was a really different experience people was very friendly, food was really good and I think my expectations were like lower than, well, higher sorry than what I expect”

Extract 2- students' interview

“well, this is my personal opinion, for me, from my point of view, I think it's better to travel to another country after you finish the career because, well I have several plans before travelling abroad, I want to go abroad because I think it is like a necessary experience for any language teacher, you, sometimes you're like, you have to be immersed in that culture and live it; an experience it by yourself. But I think that, in my case it has been better to wait until I finish the career because in the university I have learned, like, a lot of things about that culture about the country, about the language, I almost master the language, so, I think that, if I go abroad someday I will feel more comfortable because I have some knowledge now... so I won't be like, oh my god I'm in the United States and I don't know how to speak English how I'm going to communicate. No, I didn't want to feel, like, lost”

It was asked in the interview the different expectations that students have about the foreign country, in this case, United States. They thought people in North America was very unfriendly, cold, boring. Etc. They were also afraid of having bad experiences due to these differences in personality. Furthermore, it was analyzed the assumptions students may have about traveling abroad as future professionals. Also, it was asked people that they had already had the contact in the foreign country, it was found some thoughts and stereotypes they had and that they changed after the experience.

The assumptions of students before and after going abroad, is relevant in the study because it allows us to identify the different changes in terms of culture or language. Some students have changed their way of thinking, manners or attitudes that they could get from the interaction of a different culture. Even if this change is positive or negative, there is always a perspective after the

experience. For instance, according to Gudykunst and Mody (2002) they mention that people who get in contact with others from another culture can change their knowledge and their behavior. As a matter of fact, those people can achieve to have better social functions, personal goals and conform to their expectations. Kramsch (1993) exposes that culture is presented in the background knowledge in the whole process of acquiring a new language.

Byram (1997) asserts that the intercultural competence is the contribution of foreign language acquisition with another world and expands their assumptions culturally.

7. Conclusions

In this research it was created some general and objective questions in order to analyze and identify the impact of the intercultural exchange. Below it is exposed the answers to each item questioned at the beginning.

7.1 What assumptions do the students have before going abroad as part of an exchange program?

The students of the modern languages program expressed their different expectations about language and culture encounter in the foreign country. One of these presumptions is that they can improve the language, but also that they can have some issues at the time of interacting, the fear not to be understood. Some of them also think that they were going to miss the food and they thought they were going to have a bad experience because of the cultural differences. Another aspect found in the students was their plans to travel abroad after finishing the major. They thought they would have a wide knowledge about possible cultural differences and the level of language that would make easier the communication with the foreign people.

7.2 What challenges do students face while interacting in a foreign context?

The students who traveled abroad went through difficult situations in different contexts. Since the beginning of this experience, the students had a linguistic challenge in which they had to put in practice their language skills. They realized that the level they had in the language was

not enough to engage in a good conversation; to understand and to be understood by the native people. This was because they talked with many colloquial expressions as phrasal verbs or contractions in words. On another hand, those who had the opportunity to live in United States for one year also found some issues when they had to face the cultural differences because the students had to adapt that culture as their own in order to achieve a good experience. The participants did not share some ideas with that culture. For example, the way the parents bring up their kids, the disrespect that children had with adults not only with their relatives but also with unknown people, and the way they buy goods and then they throw them away like the food.

7.3 What strategies do students apply to overcome the challenges at the time of interacting in a foreign country?

Taking into account that the students were immersed in a foreign context, certain difficulties were identified regarding language and culture. The students had to struggle with the language at the time of interacting with native speakers. However, the participants could find different strategies in order to overcome the problems they had to continue having a good exchange, and to apply them for the following situations if they happened again. Considering the linguistic issues, the students they decided to make use of their body language, as signs or expressions that help to be understood with the native people. At the beginning students tried to communicate verbally, but when they realized they were being misunderstood. They achieved to make themselves understand by these body movements, they used their hands to simulate the airplane, cash, to eat, and others help students to overcome that challenge. On another hand, they experienced some cultural confusions, since how it is known if you travel to another country you will be find bunch

of differences in the customs, beliefs, and behaviors among others. In this context, the student started to present certain inconveniences in the coexistence with these people. Given that they had the chance to make a rematch, which is to say change the family with whom they lived in order to find a more comfortable family and have a very enriching experience. Additionally, they asked to their closest friends or acquaintance about their culture in order to know the main differences to avoid some issues.

7.4 What changes regarding the development of linguistics skills and intercultural competence do students experience after being in contact with a foreign country?

The students who participated in an exchange program could be immersed in a very different culture which allows them to develop some linguistic skills, the students stated that they could identify some changes in language as the listening and speaking skills. They considered an improvement regarding these skills. Moreover, when they come back they found very cultural differences with the foreign country; they compare the organization and the laws established in United States. Linguistically, they learned some expressions that they had not heard before.

7.5 What role does the institution play in the students Exchange experience?

The university does not provide the enough support to have a proper intercultural competence. According to the answers of participants, the role of the institution is minimum due to the lack of information and opportunities that they give to the students during their second language acquisition. In fact, the institution counts with some few programs for the students to

have an exchange experience. However, they do not expose or promote them to allow the students to participate on those programs. Moreover, one of the professor on the program mentioned that the institution only gives some permissions in order to accomplish to that programs but they do not provided any economic support which is the biggest drawback for the students to go abroad. On the other hand, concerning the implementation of the interculturality competence in classrooms, the students affirmed that the program develop some cultural events as the Francophonie or subjects as seminar of culture. Nevertheless, the students think that the university should be more interested on carry out those kind of activities, to be more aware of the importance of this concept. Some students asserted that they can be part of those activities but they have to go beyond the curricular to get close to a foreign context. The university and the Modern languages program should be in contact with the students during this process providing them the academic support.

Limitations

There was an obstacle in the research process; this, impeded the progress that was taking place during the semester 2018-2 due to a national strike. For this same reason, a teacher of the program that was going to be interviewed could not be present so it was necessary a teacher change.

Recommendations and Projections

In this research were discovered certain flaws regarding the role of the institution since they do not inform enough the students about exchange programs. It was analyzed that students who are learning a second language have to find their own resources to have an international experience. Although, the institution counts with some curricular activities such as Francophonie, seminar of culture and presentations about the culture of a foreign country. However, there is a clear lack of economic support to allow the students to be immersed in the foreign culture. Thanks to this experience, the students could have, not only a personal enrichment, but also a professional growth. It is suggested that the institution should be a fundamental entity to all those students who want to go abroad and provide any kind of support. This help can be with the accompaniment during the exchange process. Furthermore, the institution could implement more intercultural activities inside the classrooms, and modify the curriculum for the English classes and to create an intercultural environment given that most of the subjects are linguistics.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1 - Informed consent

CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PARA PARTICIPAR EN LA INVESTIGACIÓN

TÍTULO DEL PROYECTO:

The Impact of Intercultural Exchange in Foreign Language Learning: A Case Study in the Modern Languages Program at a University Of Quindío

Su institución educativa ha sido seleccionada para participar en este proyecto de investigación a realizar por los estudiantes Cristian Andrés Guevara González, Yessika Lorena Botero y Manuela Ocampo; y dirigida por la profesora Paola Alzate Ortiz, docente del Programa Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas de la Universidad del Quindío.

Por favor lea la siguiente información y formule las preguntas que considere necesarias, antes de decidir si participa o no en el estudio. Su participación es **absolutamente voluntaria**.

PROPÓSITO DEL ESTUDIO:

TIEMPO DE DURACIÓN: Un (1) semestre

PROCEDIMIENTO: Durante el tiempo que dure el estudio se llevarán a cabo las siguientes actividades:

Encuesta:

Entrevistas: Las entrevistas serán estructuradas y semiestructuradas. Se escogerá un grupo focal de ocho (8) estudiantes.

A través del desarrollo de la investigación, si es necesario, podrán ser incorporadas otras herramientas para la recolección de datos; una característica de los estudios cualitativos.

Todas estas actividades tendrán lugar en la institución.

CONFIDENCIALIDAD: Se utilizarán nombres ficticios de la institución (a menos que no sea inconveniente mencionar el nombre del colegio), profesores y estudiantes para mantener su identidad en el anonimato. Habrá estricta confidencialidad con la información que se recolecte.

DIVULGACIÓN DE RESULTADOS: Contaremos con su autorización y la de la institución para la utilización de videos o grabaciones de audio.

INCOMODIDADES Y RIESGOS: Es natural que sienta incomodidad con la presencia de los estudiantes investigadores en su clase. Esto sin embargo, será pasajero pues estableceremos una relación de cordialidad y colaboración que hará que Usted se familiarice con esta situación. No pretendemos evaluar de ninguna manera su trabajo y desempeño, sino más bien ofrecerle herramientas que posibiliten el crecimiento profesional y personal. Las observaciones o los resultados del proyecto no tendrán incidencia alguna en las evaluaciones que realicen sus superiores, por cuanto existirá absoluta reserva de nuestra parte en este sentido.

Siéntase libre de pedir cualquier explicación o de manifestar cualquier inconveniente que surja en el proceso

PARTICIPACIÓN: Usted tiene todo el derecho de participar o no hacerlo. Si decide hacerlo, puede retirarse en el momento que usted lo considere, sin ninguna consecuencia. De la misma forma, puede negarse a contestar preguntas que no quiera responder.

BENEFICIOS: Los beneficios se verán reflejados en la comunidad académica (docentes y estudiantes) ya que los resultados de este análisis pueden servir como insumo para propuestas de metodología de la enseñanza del inglés, específicamente la habilidad oral.

Usted podrá verificar cualquier información en con la docente asesora del proyecto:

Paola Alzate Ortiz
palzate@uniquindio.edu.co
Programa Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas
Facultad de Educación
Universidad del Quindío.
Dirección: Avenida Bolivar Calle 12 Norte

Agradecemos su autorización para contar con usted como participante en este proyecto.

Fecha de la socialización del presente Consentimiento Informado:

Nombre: _____

Cargo: _____

Firma: _____

Annex 2. Interview - Students who have not traveled abroad

1. Do you think you can have more job opportunities if you travel abroad?
2. Have you ever heard about the program 'Work and Travel'?
3. Have you rejected any proposal to work or study in another country? If your answer is positive give an explanation
4. Taking into account that an intercultural experience does not mean traveling abroad, do you think the Modern Languages program of the University should promote more intercultural experiences to the students? How?
5. How can students have an intercultural experience without going abroad?
6. Do you think it is better to go to a foreign country before or after finishing the career?
7. What do you think culture is?
8. Do you consider it is important to know about culture when you are learning a second language?
9. Have you ever practiced your foreign language with people from another culture? In case you have, tell us about the experience
10. . Do you know how the modern languages program can implement culture in the curriculum?

Annex 3. Survey - Students who have not traveled abroad

1. Do you think that living abroad is the only way to improve your foreign language?
A. yes B. no (why?)

2. Why have you not had this experience?
A. because you are not interesting on that
B. because your family does not have the money
C. because you think it is a bad experience
D. because you have not heard so much about it

3. Do you think that people can improve their pronunciation if they travel abroad during their career?
A. yes, they can improve because they are immersed with the language
B. yes, but the pronunciation depends more on you
C. no, you can improve your pronunciation without traveling abroad
D. no, traveling abroad does not affect the language

4. Why have you not participated with the university programs to have that experience?
A. Because the university does not provide any support
B. Because I do not know the information about it
C. Because I do not want to do it
D. Because I do not have the economic resources

5. Do you think if you travel to another country you can have a better foreign language?
A. yes, I would have it
B. no, traveling abroad does not help to improve language level
C. maybe, it depends on me
D. none

6. Are you planning to travel abroad when you finish your career?
A. yes B. no (why?)

7. In your opinion, what is the impact of the intercultural experiences that the University offers?
Choose only two options.

- A. It enriches the language learning
- B. It is a good experience, but the access is hard
- C. It helps a lot, not only in language, but also in the cultural perspective
- D. It is a bad idea, you do not learn so much
- E. The culture and language of the foreign country are hard to get used to, better not do it

Annex 4. Interview - Students who have traveled abroad

1. What expectations did you have before having your experience abroad?
2. How long did you stay in the foreign country?
3. What was the main thing you missed from Colombia while living abroad?
4. How did you feel when you came back to Colombia? Support your idea
5. Did the perspectives about culture or language change when you came back?
6. What was the most difficult situation you experienced in the foreign country?
7. Would you like to live in that country? Why?

Annex 5. Survey - Students who have traveled abroad

1. Which of the following cultural aspects did you find different in the foreign country?
 - A. Social interaction
 - B. Religion
 - C. Traditions
 - D. All of the above

2. What was the reason for traveling abroad?
 - A. To work
 - B. To study
 - C. To travel
 - D. None of the above

3. Did you have any positive or negative expectations before you traveled?
 - A. Positive (why)
 - B. Negative (why)

4. Do you think you had an improvement in terms of language learning? Which ones
 - A. Grammar
 - B. Listening
 - C. Reading
 - D. Writing
 - E. Speaking
 - F. None of the above
 - G. All of the above

5. Did you have any trouble with expressions or cultural shock in the foreign country?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

If the answer is yes, what kind of trouble you had _____

6. Did you find some aspects you would like Colombian people had?
 - A. Definitely yes
 - B. Absolutely not

7. In general, how do you consider people treated you when they talked to you?
 - A. Kindly

- B. Apathetically
- C. Rudely
- D. Lovely

8. Do you consider your personality have changed after the experience in the foreign country? How?

- A. Little
- B. A lot
- C. Nothing

Annex 6. Interview – Professor

1. Culture and language are intrinsically connected, should culture be taught to acquire a better understanding of a language?
2. If we learn a language, do we learn a culture?
3. How is the process of learning a language related with interculturality?
4. Do you consider interculturality is important to be taught in the Modern Languages Program?
5. What do you think about the support of the Modern Languages Program to exchange processes of students?
6. Do you consider Modern Languages students should do more intercultural exchanges? Why?