

Exploring the Intercultural Competences of High School
Students: A Case Study of Traditional Classrooms in a
Minimal-Cultural-Gap Context

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I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, George and Nidal.

You are my rock, you are my anchor.

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Abstract

Intercultural education is one way of responding to the current political and social realities resulting from globalization, migration, and political and economic crises. It puts emphasis on educating young people and equipping them with the necessary skills to counter radicalism and embrace diversity. The present dissertation investigates interculturality and intercultural education from a new perspective and in a previously unexplored context: traditional classrooms in minimal-cultural-gap communities. This study points out several research gaps in intercultural research and criticizes contemporary approaches to intercultural development and assessment. It re-conceptualizes interculturality and intercultural education upon the basis of findings from this study, which reveal a different perspective of interculturality and draws a picture of the implications, complications, and challenges of conducting intercultural education in such educational and sociocultural settings. The research study further presents recommendations for scholars and policy makers working in the field of intercultural education.

Key words: Intercultural competence, intercultural citizenship, cultural identity, minimal-cultural-gap, traditional teaching, reflective activities, high school students, English as a foreign language.

Resum

L'educació intercultural és una manera de respondre a les realitats polítiques i socials actuals resultants de la globalització, les migracions i les crisis polítiques i econòmiques. Aquest tipus d'educació posa èmfasi en educar els joves i dotar-los de les habilitats necessàries per contrarestar el radicalisme i adoptar la diversitat. Amb aquest estudi s'investiga la interculturalitat i l'educació intercultural des d'una nova perspectiva i en un context inexplorat: les aules tradicionals en comunitats amb mínimes diferències culturals. L'estudi revela mancances en la investigació intercultural, critica els enfocaments contemporanis del desenvolupament i l'avaluació de la interculturalitat i reconceptualitza la interculturalitat i l'educació intercultural a partir d'unes conclusions que revelen una perspectiva diferent de la interculturalitat així com les implicacions, complicacions i reptes de l'educació intercultural en entorns educatius i socioculturals d'aquest tipus. L'estudi presenta recomanacions per a recercadors i responsables polítics que treballin en el camp de l'educació intercultural.

Paraules clau: competència intercultural, ciutadania intercultural, identitat cultural, “minimal-cultural-gap”, ensenyament tradicional, activitats reflexives, educació secundària, anglès com a llengua estrangera.

Resumen

La educación intercultural es un modo de responder a las realidades políticas y sociales actuales resultantes de la globalización, las migraciones y las crisis políticas y económicas. Este tipo de educación pone énfasis en educar a los jóvenes y dotarlos de las habilidades necesarias para contrarrestar el radicalismo y adoptar la diversidad. Con este estudio se investiga la interculturalidad y la educación intercultural desde una perspectiva nueva y en un contexto inexplorado: las aulas tradicionales en comunidades con mínimas diferencias culturales. El estudio revela carencias en la investigación intercultural, critica los enfoques contemporáneos de la interculturalidad y reconceptualiza la interculturalidad y la educación intercultural a partir de conclusiones que revelan tanto otra perspectiva de la interculturalidad como las implicaciones, complicaciones y retos de la educación intercultural en entornos educativos y socioculturales de este tipo. Se incluyen recomendaciones en el campo de la educación intercultural para investigadores y responsables políticos.

Palabras clave: competencia intercultural, ciudadanía intercultural, identidad cultural, “minimal-cultural-gap”, enseñanza tradicional, actividades reflexivas, educación secundaria, inglés como lengua extranjera.

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1. INTRODUCTION

“The main hope of a nation lies in the proper education of its youth”

Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus

“With guns you can kill terrorists, with education you can kill terrorism.”

Malala Yousafzai

1.1. Background

Intercultural or international education, as it was once called, has been taking place naturally throughout history. Scholars who sought knowledge and education have often travelled to study the different cultures and learn from the expertise of other civilizations and other nations. Grand educational institutions and universities were established during the Middle Ages, which saw a number of education-seekers coming from all nations, learning the lingua franca of the time and region, and engaging with fellow scholars from different cultural backgrounds. Education has taken huge leaps ever since, as modernization rapidly changed people's lives. For instance, formal education became obligatory, and intercultural contact became more frequent as a result of globalization, which has brought people in more contact with each other than any time before in the history of human kind.

As a result of modernization and globalization, travel has become easier and faster, and face-to-face communication has become attainable through a simple click in a digital application. Information is available online and live broadcasting allows people to see what happens in the different parts of the world as it is happening. Furthermore, online gaming is bringing young people, and also adults, in contact with others from across the planet within the comforts of their own homes, using English as a *lingua franca* to communicate, plan and strategize, make new friends, and even swear at each other. At the same time, worsening economic crises and continuous wars have led to huge waves of migration and immigration, resulting in dramatic demographic, political, economic, and sociocultural changes in host societies all over the world. This digital and geographical proximity of people from different cultural backgrounds, along

with the different forms of intercultural interactions that come with it, have frequently resulted in cultural clashes.

These cultural clashes can range from simple misunderstandings to extreme xenophobic behaviors. We cannot turn a blind eye to how some of these cultural clashes are manifesting themselves in acts of terrorism and hate crimes. For example, the rise of nationalism and the far right in one part of the world, like in the USA, Europe, or Brazil, is just as alarming and as dangerous as the rise of radical sectarian fanaticism in other parts, like in the Middle East and Africa. Also, the anti-immigrant sentiments observed in many host countries around the world, are as drastic as the anti-West sentiments in other countries. As a result of such conflicts, there has been a growing wake-up call affirming that people need to be prepared to deal with the cultural clashes taking place today, and any other cultural challenges that might present themselves in the future. Governments and educators do recognize the important role of education in equipping young people with the necessary skills to counter radical brainwashing and to embrace diversity and harmonious living. Each may have their own view on how to achieve this, but in the end, it all comes down to educational practices.

Intercultural education and education for intercultural citizenship are both ways of responding to those political and social realities resulting from globalization, migration, and political and economic crises (Osler & Starkey, 2015). However, they are also ways of understanding how changed times bring about social and cultural changes. It is important to acknowledge that the increased number and the various forms of intercultural interactions in our modern day do not only result in cultural clashes, but they also result in cultural changes. Such cultural changes are a natural phenomenon, as societies constantly evolve through time. Yet in recent times, it is obvious to observe how cultural change is not only taking place at a group level, but it is also affecting individuals within these groups. A better connected world accelerates cultural change, since the fast growing human and technological networks offer multiple ways of transmitting knowledge. People traditionally inherited knowledge from their local communities; however, now-a-days, people make their own choices for change, either socially or individually, by choosing which knowledge is best for them (Bentley & O'Brien, 2017).

For instance, the number of people self-identifying as global citizens or identifying with more than one culture is on the rise as a result of globalization and the expanding human networks. We can clearly notice the rise of multiculturalism, for example, in children of mixed marriages, children of immigrants, those who live in diverse cities and multilingual regions, those who travel, live and work abroad and experience other cultures, and also those who read and learn about others and break away from the traditional conventions of their own social and cultural groups. Such people are constantly developing a personal cultural identity that is unique to their individual self, that fits with their own views and values in life, that consists of many pieces of the different cultures they were exposed to, and that encompasses the global human culture.

Our realities are changing, our societies and cultures are changing, we ourselves are also changing, and it is time that intercultural education starts to help people maneuver through these changes in order to avoid stereotyping others and minimize extreme cultural clashes. Intercultural education and education for intercultural citizenship have never been as much needed as they are needed today in order to help us not only better understand ourselves and each other, but also better understand the dynamics of cultural change in this fast moving world. Intercultural education, as we know it today, is the product of scholarly work and educational policy changes that have been taking place during the past 40 years or so, yet it still faces some criticism, as there is still much work to be done in order to better understand interculturality, the process of interculturalization, and the consequences of current efforts in intercultural education.

1.2. Purpose and Significance of Study

Coming from a war-torn and culturally conflicted region, it is no wonder that peaceful coexistence is always at the back of my mind. I have experienced many forms of bigotry from others, for my nationality, for my skin color, for my gender, for my convictions, and for my own opinions and life choices. I chose to work on intercultural education for my PhD thesis, because I want to take part in the current efforts in making the world a better and safer place for all. This thesis is my contribution to the field of intercultural education, and hopefully it will open the door for me to influence others and contribute to positive change in the world.

As I embarked on my research study, I began by reading some of the available literature on intercultural education. There and then, I was able to see the many gaps in intercultural research. Later on, I started reading the recent criticism related to the conceptualization and implementation of intercultural education, and it turned out to be closely related to my own critique of current efforts and modern conceptualization of intercultural education, and also similar to the conclusions I had already come by. However, what I rarely found were studies based on such criticism, which attempted to fill in the gaps in intercultural research and present a different view on intercultural education in practice. It is one thing to call for change in conceptualization and implementation, and it is another thing to actually see it done in practice and learn from its implications.

The main reason for conducting this study was not only to fill in some of the gaps in research and contribute to the understanding of intercultural education, but also to highlight the importance and the need to look at intercultural education from a different perspective and in different contexts that are rarely explored. This study aimed at examining intercultural education in a different and understudied context in order to find out whether findings from this study would support or negate the current theories, practices, and critiques of intercultural education, and to showcase any new data that has been missed by others in this field. Basically, the significance of this study lies in its uniqueness, as it is probably the first of its kind to explore intercultural education in traditional classrooms in a minimal-cultural-gap context, and also the first of its kind to present descriptive analysis not only of the students' intercultural competences, but also of the factors influencing students' interculturality and intercultural learning.

1.3. Overview of Subsequent Chapters

This study is structured in five chapters: introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion and conclusions. This introductory chapter presents the status quo in regards to globalization, cultural changes, and cultural clashes resulting from increased digital and face-to-face human interactions. It further highlights the significance of intercultural education and intercultural citizenship education as ways to promote acceptance of diversity and peaceful coexistence. It presents an overview of the purpose and significance of this study, and it introduces an overview of the chapters of this thesis.

Chapter 2 presents a review of literature on concepts, theories, and empirical research on interculturality and intercultural education in modern times. It traces the emergence of intercultural education from teaching culture in foreign language classrooms all the way to intercultural citizenship education. The chapter presents and discusses available and relevant models for developing and assessing interculturality. It also presents studies on the development of interculturality in the different educational contexts as well as methods and tools for assessing interculturality. Chapter 2 also looks closely at the recent criticism of intercultural education in regards to concepts, practice, and assessment. At the end of the chapter, the research gaps are discussed in detail, and two research questions are proposed.

Chapter 3 describes the context and methodology of the study. The chapter starts with the justifications for choosing Palestine as the study context, and it continues to introduce the educational and socio-political context of Palestine and the school that participated in this study. The following section introduces the study's participants, which were some of the schools' students, their English language teacher, and myself as the researcher. After that, the chapter presents a detailed account of the intercultural activities carried out with the students as part of the study project, the data collection tools used in this study, and the timeline of project implementation and data collection. The chapter closes with a description of the data analysis procedures employed in the study.

Chapter 4 is the largest chapter in this thesis as it presents detailed analysis of the data collected and the results. The chapter is divided into two parts. Part 1 presents background data on students, which was collected from them and the school before the beginning of the project's activities. Part 2 presents an analysis of students' emerging intercultural competences. It begins with an overview of the number and type of each emerging intercultural competence, and continues to present evidence and analysis of these competences one by one, starting with intercultural competences related to the category of knowledge, followed by those related to the category of attitudes, then skills, and finally values.

The fifth and final chapter presents a discussion of the results in relation to existing literature, and it highlights new findings that this study managed to capture. The first section of the chapter is devoted to discussing the first research question related to students' intercultural competences, while the second one is devoted to discussing the findings related to the second research question as regards to context and factors influencing students' intercultural competences. These two sections also present my own conclusions and recommendations in regards to each of the discussed findings. Following, the chapter describes the challenges and limitations faced while conducting this research, and it also presents recommendations for scholars and policy makers. The chapter closes with my personal remarks on interculturality and intercultural education.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a review of available and relevant literature on theories, concepts, and empirical research on interculturality¹, intercultural education, and intercultural citizenship education. It also presents recent critique of certain intercultural concepts, models and approaches. This review was conducted in order to (1) obtain a comprehensive understanding of the multidimensional concept of interculturality, (2) identify gaps in intercultural research, and (3) create a conceptual framework for this study that aims to investigate intercultural education in a previously unexplored sociocultural and educational context.

2.1. The Emergence of Intercultural Education

a) From Teaching Culture to Teaching for Third Place Culture

Culture has always been a vital aspect in language learning; however, the concept of culture in education has varied during the decades. In the 19th century and up to the second half of the 20th century, culture in education was entirely about teaching "*the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity*" (Williams, 1976, p.90). Basically, culture in education was merely the knowledge of works of literature, social institutions, and historical events (Kramsch, 2001). In later years, the work of anthropologist Edward T. Hall and his colleagues showed the complex ways in which "*culture is communication and communication is culture*" (Hall, 1959 as cited in Kramsch, 2001, p. 201). This pushed linguists to try and define culture from an educational perspective, at a time when the communicative approach to teaching languages was being developed and promoted.

With the communicative approach to language teaching taking prominence in the 1980s, cultural competence became central to mastering a language (Canale & Swain, 1980; van Ek, 1986). The communicative approach suggests that mastering a foreign language requires knowledge of more than linguistic competence (Hymes 1972), as it also requires sociolinguistic competence (Canale

¹In this thesis, the term interculturality will be used as an umbrella term to describe one's intercultural qualities, abilities, and characteristics. Other terms such as intercultural competence and intercultural sensitivity are used here to maintain the original term given by the authors and the scholars who use them.

& Swain, 1980) and sociocultural competence (van Ek, 1986) among other competences. Nonetheless, up until the early 1990s, culture in language education was still treated as a set of facts to be learned about the target culture, as the main objective was to immerse the learner into the target language society in order to facilitate the acquisition of target language and increase the success of becoming a member of the target language community (Weninger & Kiss, 2013).

During the years of communicative pedagogy, the concept of culture in language education started shifting from concrete (e.g. products, art, history) to abstract forms of culture (e.g. lifestyle, values, and ways of thinking) (Kramsch, 2012); however, communicative pedagogy was still native speaker and target culture focused, which is a notion that was criticized by many scholars such as Byram (1997) and Kramsch (1993, 1998). For instance, Byram (1997) criticized the idea that language learners should model themselves on first language speakers, mainly because it *"ignores the significance of the social identities and cultural competence of the learner in any intercultural interaction"* (p.8). The native speaker model sets objectives that force learners to abandon their own identity and adopt another one when their linguistic and sociocultural environments change.

Instead, Byram (1997) suggested redefining foreign language teaching objectives to include an intercultural component to communicative competence. He stated that teaching a foreign language should aim to help students *"see and manage the relationships between themselves and their own cultural beliefs, behaviors and meanings, as expressed in a foreign language, and those of their interlocutor's, expressed in the same language -or even a combination of languages"* (Byram, 1997, p.12). That is to say, foreign language speakers need not adopt a different cultural identity and ignore their own in order to be able blend in new cultures and interact with people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, but they need to understand how their own cultural identity affects their code of conduct and how their interlocutor's identity influences his/her code of conduct.

In the same sense, Kramsch (1993) suggested a language pedagogy in which learners can *"create a culture of a third kind in which they can express their own meanings without being hostage to the meanings of either their own or the target speech communities"* (pp. 13-14). She introduced

the concept of *third place* culture, a term she defined as a place "*that grows in the interstices between the cultures the learner grew up with and the new cultures he or she is being introduced to*" (p. 236). This perception was further supported by many scholars (Lo Bianco, Liddicoat, & Crozet, 1999; Byram, 1997; Crozet & Liddicoat, 1999; O'Dowd, 2003; Guilherme, 2002; and more) who argued that foreign language learners need to develop a cultural position that mediates between the target culture and their own culture. They also argued that learners are no longer expected to reject their own culture and take on target culture, because it simply involves replacing one form of monoculturalism for another (O'Dowd, 2003), and this simply ignores the sophisticated communication repertoire and linguistic and cultural profiles of bilinguals and multilinguals (Crichton & Scarino, 2007).

b) Intercultural Competence and the Intercultural Speaker

Ultimately, the rejection of the native speaker model as a target for foreign language learning guided scholars to re-conceptualize the role of foreign language speakers and to introduce the concept of an *intercultural speaker* to replace it; a term first coined by Byram and Zarate (1994) while working on a project for the Council of Europe aiming at evaluating sociocultural competence. They proposed a model of four objectives or competences, which included: *savoir-être* (attitudes and values), *savoir-apprendre*, *savoirs* (knowledge/knowing that) and *savoir-faire* (skills/knowing how) (Byram & Zarate, 1997, p.12). These competences laid the foundation for Byram's own framework of intercultural competence, which will be discussed in the following section of this chapter. However, in short, Byram (1995) defined the competent intercultural speaker as "*someone who can operate their linguistic competence and their sociolinguistic awareness [...], in order to manage interaction across cultural boundaries, [and] to anticipate misunderstandings caused by difference in values, meanings and beliefs.*" (p. 25).

The idea of intercultural competence is not exclusive to Byram; as a matter of fact, many scholars and sociolinguistics researchers in the last three decades have expanded the notion of communicative competence to incorporate a cultural or intercultural component (Alred & Byram, 2002; Bennett, 1993; Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002; Deardorff, 2006, 2009; Fantini, 2000; Lo Bianco et al., 1999; Kramsch, 1993,1998; Lazar, Huber-Kriegler, Lussier, Matei, & Peck, 2007; Zarate, Gohard-Radenkovic, Lussier, & Penz, 2004, Dervin, 2016;

Abdallah-Preteuille, 1999, and many others). Scholars have used a variety of terms and definitions to describe interculturality such as *Cross-cultural Competence* (Kramsch, 1993), *Intercultural Sensitivity* (Bennett, 1993), *Global Competence* (Gudykunst et al., 1994), *Intercultural Communication Competence* (Chen & Starosta, 1996) and many more. The multiplicity of definitions and terminology argue for one principle notion, which is the need for adopting an intercultural stance in foreign language education to help learners develop cognitive, affective, and behavioral abilities to prepare them for any intercultural encounter.

Crozet and Liddicoat (1999) stated that intercultural competence involves the acquisition of resources to be able to deal with interlocutors of different backgrounds, which is a view shared by many. For example, Meyer (1991) defined intercultural competence as "*the ability of a person to behave adequately in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures*" (p.137). Bennett and Bennett (2003) similarly defined it as "*the ability to communicate effectively in cross-cultural situations and to relate appropriately in a variety of cultural contexts*" (p.149). Other definitions included the notion of negotiating cultural identities. Both Byram (1997) and Kramsch (1993) stressed that intercultural communication is a negotiation of cultural identities. Also, Chen and Starosta (1999) further stressed the same notion as they defined intercultural communication competence as "*the ability to effectively and appropriately execute communication behaviors that negotiate each other's cultural identity or identities in a culturally diverse environment*" (p. 28).

In 2006, Deardorff conducted the first study to reach a consensus on intercultural competence among intercultural scholars and higher education administrators. The study identified elements of intercultural competence as well as assessment methods agreed upon by both groups. The top rated definition among administrators comprised three common elements; which were "*awareness, valuing, and understanding of cultural differences; experiencing other cultures; and self-awareness of one's own culture*" (Deardorff, 2006, p.247). Whereas the participating scholars chose to incorporate a communicative element to their definition, they generally agreed on the definition provided by Deardorff, in which intercultural competence is defined as "*the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes*" (Deardorff, 2006).

It is crucial to note how the notions *effective* and *appropriate*, in the various definitions of intercultural competence, acknowledge both *etic* and *emic* perspectives of self and other (Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006). The real challenge in intercultural education is to help learners recognize their *etic* stance, while at the same time attempting to uncover the *emic* viewpoint of their host, interlocutor, or *the other* (Fantini, 2009). According to Gudykunst and Kim (1992), intercultural encounters are affected by both *external* and *internal* contexts. *External* context is about the social meanings of human interaction, and it refers to the setting where the interaction takes place. Whereas *internal* context refers to the cultural meanings that people themselves bring into an encounter. Any two individuals participating in a meaning-making intercultural encounter may interpret the same representations in different ways based on their cultural background. Therefore, misunderstandings might occur during intercultural interactions if individuals fail to interpret people's actions, words, and patterns of thinking.

In sum, intercultural competence is about; firstly, what Byram (1997) calls *critical cultural awareness*, which means the ability to step back from one's own cultural background and critically identify the original cultural reasoning behind beliefs, actions and behaviors. In other words, the fact that other cultural groups might not share the same codes, manners, and behaviors, requires a certain critical intercultural knowledge or awareness, as Cortazzi and Jin (1999) put it: "[an attempt] *to understand their reasons for their actions and beliefs*" (p. 217). Secondly, intercultural competence is also about what Bennett (2004) refers to as *constructive cultural marginality*, which means that learners construct their cultural identities at the margins of two or more cultures and central to none. That is to say that intercultural competence is not merely the ability to compare and contrast one's own culture to the target language culture, but it is rather the ability to create for oneself a comfortable *third place* between one's source language culture and the other languages cultures (Crozet & Liddicoat, 1999).

2.2. Models for Developing and Assessing Interculturality

Several models for developing and assessing interculturality have been designed and put into practice. Most of these models assume that individuals need to develop certain characteristics and skills to be interculturally competent, and by the assessment of those characteristics and

skills, one's level of interculturality can be measured. The following section presents an overview of the available intercultural models, followed by a detailed description of three widely used models. Nonetheless, criticism of existing models will be discussed later in Section 2.5.

a) Overview of Available Intercultural Models

Griffith, Wolfeld, Armon, Rios, and Liu (2016) provided us with a comprehensive and detailed analysis of 26 intercultural models, which have been in use in the past three decades to develop and assess interculturality. Previously, Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) had reviewed 22 intercultural models for developing and assessing interculturality, stating that they all display considerable similarities in theory, yet they present extensive diversity at the level of specific conceptual components. The scholars grouped these components under four broad categories: motivation, knowledge, outcome, context, and skills; and they listed them accordingly with some components overlapping in more than one category. This overlap was a result of the different definitions given to the same component in the different models.

Under the category of *motivation*, they listed 25 components (e.g. involvement, managing self-esteem, patience, commitment), while under the category of *knowledge*, they listed 64 components (e.g. cultural self-awareness, knowledge of culture-specific information, knowledge of interaction rules, (socio)linguistic awareness, cultural identity images). Under the category of *outcome*, they listed 39 components (e.g. task accomplishments, satisfaction, intimacy, behaving and communicating effectively and appropriately, coherence, adaptation and integration, effective participation, effective communication). Under the category of *context*, they listed 11 components (e.g. environmental situation, globalization, host contact condition, integration, internationalization, marriage, and minority).

The broad category of *skills* was divided into subcategories. Under *skills as ability to use certain behavior*, they listed 33 components (e.g. ability to interpret, ability to listen, ability to adapt to other cultures, ability to establish interpersonal relationships). Under *skills as competence*, they listed 32 components (e.g. awareness of cultural differences, coding and decoding, flexibility, adaptability, verbal and non-verbal communication, social skills, and strength of personality). Under *skills as attentiveness*, they listed 57 components (e.g. empathy, friendliness, non-

judgmental reaction, acceptance, affinity). Under *skills as composure*, they listed 25 components (e.g. emotional control, initiation, persuasiveness, autonomy, ability to deal with psychological stress). Under *skills as coordination*, they listed five categories, which are evaluation and acceptance of feedback, head nods, interaction management skills, interruptions, and message orientation. Under *skill as expressiveness*, they listed 27 components (e.g. self-disclosure, smiling, ability to be understood or clarity, body non-verbal behavior). Under *skills as contextual competences*, they listed seven components (e.g. conflict management, hetero-social contact, relations with authority figures).

In total, the 325 differently defined components only serve to highlight the multitude of definitions and understandings of interculturality and its constructs. It further shows the complexity of assessing interculturality, as each model assesses interculturality based on its own set of components, which differ from one model to the other. As a result, each developmental model assesses different aspects of interculturality, which has been at the center of recent criticism as will be discussed in Section 2.5. Table 2.1 presents a short summary of some of the widely used models in intercultural research, as the following section discusses three of those models in detail.

Table 2.1: A summary of widely used models of interculturality.

Developed by	Constructs/Dimensions	Description
Bennett, M. (1986)	Intercultural Sensitivity.	Development of intercultural sensitivity through six stages: denial, defense/reversal, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration.
Koester, J & Olebe, M. (1989)	Intercultural communication effectiveness: Display of respect, orientation to knowledge, empathy, interaction management, task role behavior, relational role behavior, tolerance for ambiguity, and interaction posture.	Behaviors that a non-expert, nonnative English speaker can reliably assess as effective or not in a cross-cultural setting.
Lambert, R. D. (1994)	Global competence.	World knowledge, foreign language proficiency, cultural empathy, approval of foreign people and cultures, ability to practice one's profession in an international setting.
Fantini, A. E. (1995)	Intercultural communicative competence.	1) The ability to develop and maintain relationships, 2) the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with minimal loss or distortion, and 3) the ability to attain compliance and obtain cooperation with others.
Fantini, A. E., Arias-Galicia, F. & Guay, D. (2001)		
Chen, G. M. & Starosta, W. J. (1996)	Intercultural communication competence: Intercultural sensitivity (affective process), intercultural awareness (cognitive process), and verbal/nonverbal skills.	Ability to effectively and appropriately execute communication behaviors in a culturally diverse environment.
Byram, M. (1997)	Communicative competence/Intercultural competence.	Knowledge of others; knowledge of self; skills to interpret and relate; skills to discover and/or to interact; valuing others' values, beliefs, and behaviors; and relativizing one's self. Linguistic competence plays a key role.
Kim, Y. Y. (2000)	Host communication competence.	One's adaptive capacity to suspend/modify old cultural ways, learn/accommodate to new cultural ways, and creatively manage dynamics of cultural difference/unfamiliarity and accompanying stress.
Deardorff, D. K. (2006)	Intercultural competence: Requisite attitudes, knowledge and comprehension, skills, desired internal outcomes, desired external outcomes.	The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
Arasaratnam, L. A. (2008)	Intercultural communication competence (ICC): Cultural empathy, experience, interaction involvement (conversation awareness), global attitude, and motivation.	ICC is a direct function of cultural empathy. Motivation for competent communication is influenced by experience, interaction involvement, and one's global attitude, as well as prior experience with intercultural communication.

Note: Adapted from Griffith et al. (2016).

Intercultural competence and intercultural sensitivity are often used in literature to describe interculturality. However, it is important to understand how the concept of intercultural competence and intercultural sensitivity are parallel in aims and objectives, yet still differ theoretically and in practice. According to Medina-López-Portillo (2004), intercultural competence refers to the external behaviors that individuals manifest when operating in a foreign cultural context, whereas intercultural sensitivity refers to the developmental process that dictates the degree of an individual's psychological ability to deal with cultural differences. Despite the diversity and multitude of available models that are currently in use in intercultural research, it is clearly evident that Byram's *Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence* (1997) and Bennett's *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity* (1993), alongside Deardorff's (2006) *Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence* are the most widely used in contemporary research, especially in studies associated with higher education and foreign language education. These models will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

b) Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

Bennett's *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity* (DMIS) was created as a framework to explain the observed and reported experiences of people in intercultural situations (Bennett, 1993). It basically describes how people react to cultural differences. The model came about by observing that students who engaged in intercultural encounters (whether study abroad, intercultural workshops, etc.) confronted cultural differences in somehow predictable ways. Using grounded theory, Bennett organized observed students' reactions into six stages of increasing sensitivity to cultural differences. Each stage is indicative of a particular worldview, and it is associated with certain types of attitudes and behaviors. Yet, Bennett and Bennett (2003) stress that this model is not one to show changing in attitudes and behaviors, but rather a model to explain the development of cognitive structure.

Bennett and Bennett (2003) asserted that an intercultural mindset and an intercultural skillset are required to achieve intercultural sensitivity. They referred to the mindset as one's awareness of operating in a cultural context, which entails self-culture awareness, knowing how to use cultural generalizations without stereotyping, maintaining attitudes of curiosity and tolerance to ambiguity, and motivation to seek out cultural differences. As for the intercultural skillset, they

referred to it as the ability to analyze interaction, predict misunderstanding, and fashion adaptive behavior, which entails expanding the repertoire of behavior beyond what is considered appropriate behavior in one's own culture to alternative behaviors that might be more appropriate in another culture. Ultimately, this model suggests that knowledge, attitudes, and skills must work together in order for the development of intercultural competence to occur.

Through its six stages, the DMIS model charts the internal development of individuals from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism in an intercultural encounter. The first three DMIS stages are ethnocentric, which means that one's own culture is experienced as central to reality in some way. The second three DMIS stages are ethnorelative, which means that one's own culture is experienced in the context of other cultures (Bennett, 1993). Figure 2.1 explains the stages of the model and how individuals see the world and react to cultural differences at each one of those stages. Bennett (1993) claims that as individuals gain increased awareness and acceptance of cultural difference, a shift occurs from ethnocentric to ethnorelative in a linear development across these six stages.

Development of Intercultural Sensitivity					
Experience of Difference					
Ethnocentric Stages			Ethnorelative Stages		
<i>Denial</i>	<i>Defense</i>	<i>Minimization</i>	<i>Acceptance</i>	<i>Adaptation</i>	<i>Integration</i>
One's own culture is experienced as the only real one	One's own culture is experienced as the only good and superior to other cultures	Elements of one's own culture are experienced as universal	Other cultures are included in experience as equally complex but still different	One attains the ability to shift perspective in and out of another cultural worldview	One easily move in and out of different cultural worldview

Figure 2.1. Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (1993)

c) Byram's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (*Savoirs*)

On the other hand, Byram (1997) proposed a comprehensive multidimensional approach to intercultural competence that deals with explicit components consisting of attitudes, skills, knowledge, and critical awareness. Byram's *Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence* not only offers objectives for each of the components, but it also suggests assessment methods for each one of them. The model hypothesizes a threshold level for intercultural competence, which is basically the level of minimum needs to having the ability to function as an intercultural speaker. However, he further argues that an intercultural competence threshold is not fixed, since it is likely to differ according to context depending on which components are emphasized and which objectives are prioritized or even excluded from each component. The model, as explained in Table 2.2, has been widely employed in foreign language classrooms, and it has been frequently referenced in the literature on intercultural learning and in several publications issued by the Council of Europe. (e.g. Byram et al., 2002; Barrett, Byram, Lazar, Mompoin-Gaillard, & Philippou, 2013; Byram, Neuner, Parmenter, Starkey, & Zarate, 2003)

Table 2.2: Byram's (1997) Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence.

Attitudes (<i>savoir être</i>):	Attitudes of curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own.
Knowledge (<i>savoirs</i>):	Knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country.
Skills of interpreting and relating (<i>savoir comprendre</i>):	The ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one's own.
Skills of discovery and interaction (<i>savoir apprendre/faire</i>):	The ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real time communication and interaction.
Critical cultural awareness (<i>savoir s'engager</i>):	The ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

Byram's (1997) model focuses on learners reaching a certain thresholds rather than acquiring complete and perfect competence. Byram et al. (2002) argue that it is not possible to acquire or anticipate all types of knowledge that one might need in interacting with people from diverse cultures, since these cultures are constantly changing, and countries consist of many different cultures, and also any language could be used as a *lingua franca*. They further argue that everyone's own social identities and values develop and change throughout their lives with each

new experience they live and each time they become a member of a new social group. In sum, intercultural competence is never a completed process, learners need to be aware of the need to adjust their mindset and behavior, they also need to learn to accept and understand people who are different from them.

A close look at Bennett's and Byram's models show a great similarity in concept and target. However, when it comes to application, differences arise. Garrett-Rucks (2012) conducted a study utilizing both models and found some discrepancies after data analysis. Although she found supporting evidence of Byram's (1997) threshold hypothesis, she found contradictory evidence to Bennett's linear developmental hypothesis. In her study she found continual fluctuation between ethnocentric and ethnorelative thinking in students. So, at times, learners would have been categorized as demonstrating developed intercultural attitudes by Byram's definition, but were considered to be ethnocentric thinkers according to Bennett's model (p.25).

She concluded by suggesting that perhaps Bennett's model is more suitable for an immersion context, or to measure long-term changes in an immersion environment, whereas Byram's model is better suited for instructed foreign language environment, where teachers are constrained in time by the academic calendar and curricular obligations. In fact, by reviewing the research studies published in the past 15 years or so one can clearly notice that Bennett's model has been mostly, yet not exclusively, used in research on study abroad programs (e.g. Engle & Engle, 2004; Medina-López-Portillo, 2004; Harve, 2013; Levine & Garland, 2015; Sandell & Tupy, 2015; Brendel, Aksit, Aksit, & Schrüfer, 2016), while Byram's model has been mostly used in classroom-based research studies (e.g. Hoyt, 2012; O'Dowd, 2003; Belz, 2003; Helm, 2009; Carrillo Cabello, 2012), yet Alred and Byram (2002) did actually use it for study abroad studies.

Byram's model (1997) evolved from his previous work on cultural studies in foreign language education, in which he indicated that language and culture ought to be taught in an integrated fashion (Byram, 1988). This was the key reason for subsequent criticism of his 1997 model. As Risager (2007) indicated, Byram offered an intercultural communicative model without presenting explicit discussion on the relationship between language and culture. Others like Houghton (2010) criticized it for not placing enough emphasis on transformation and identity

development. Nonetheless, Byram's work evolved through the years and moved towards intercultural citizenship education (Byram, 2008a, 2013; Byram, Perugini, & Wagner, 2013; Alred, Byram, & Fleming, 2006) putting his notion of how language teaching could leading to political action into practice through a new model for intercultural citizenship education that will be discussed in Section 2.6 of this chapter.

d) Deardorff's Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence

Deardorff's (2006) *Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence* is one of the relatively recent models. Her model was based on a study she conducted that aimed to find a consensus on intercultural competence in terms of definition, development, and assessment. Based on her conclusions, she presented a model which suggests that the development of intercultural competence moves from personal level (attitudes) to interpersonal/interactive level (outcomes), and that the degree of intercultural competence depends on the degrees of attitudes, knowledge/comprehension, and skills achieved. See Figure 2.2.

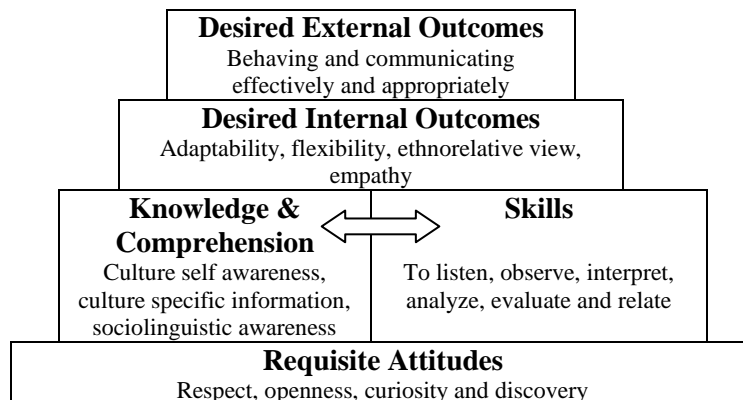


Figure 2.2. Deardorff (2006) Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence.

In conclusion, although appropriate behavior is the ultimate desired outcome, which is emphasized in all definitions and models of interculturality, scholars insist that it cannot be achieved without basic cognitive and attitudinal competences. Deardorff (2006) described behavior as the desired external outcome resulting from the acquisition and development of certain knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Bennett and Bennett (2003) also stressed that no behavior exists separately without thoughts and emotions, as interculturality requires an intercultural mindset and skillset. Byram's model (1997) puts emphasis on certain skills,

knowledge, and attitudes to achieve intercultural competence, adding to them a certain critical awareness, which is essential to continue progressing interculturally. All these components are of equal importance; yet both Byram's and Deardorff's models perceive *attitudes* as a fundamental foundation to developing intercultural competence.

Another important aspect of interculturality that Byram emphasizes, but does not directly consider as a component in his model, is values. In his own work as well as in his collaborative work with others, he and his colleagues argue that intercultural competence is deeply connected to one's social identity, including values and beliefs, and that intercultural encounters are basically a negotiation of social identities that are constantly changing throughout one's lifetime. (Byram, 1997; Byram et al., 2002) This brings us to another important point that Byram's and Deardorff's models presuppose. Both models affirm that learners can enter these models or frameworks at different levels, as they can have different threshold levels of each of the components of intercultural competence. In other words, in developing learners' intercultural competence, one needs to realize that learners enter the classroom with different experiences of the world and different perspectives of life. Therefore, we cannot expect them to be at the same level of intercultural competence, and certainly, we cannot expect them to grow interculturally at the same rate (Moeller & Nugent, 2014). As a result, developing intercultural competence in the classroom is seen as an ongoing process (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006; Davis & Cho, 2005; Tylor, 1994).

2.3. Developing Interculturality in Educational Contexts

All scholars agree on the idea that interculturality can be developed. Reviewing the available research studies on that matter, it became clear that scholars and practitioners have attempted to develop learners' interculturality utilizing various approaches and teaching methods. However, the great majority of the available studies were conducted under similar and limited contexts (see research gaps in Section 2.5 of this chapter). The following section presents some of these studies and explains some of the approaches, contexts, and methods used to develop and assess learners' interculturality. In general, those studies can be grouped under three major approaches: study abroad programs, telecollaboration activities, and in-classroom instructed activities.

a) Developing Interculturality Through Study Abroad Programs

The idea of developing learners' intercultural competences stemmed from communicative approach to foreign language teaching; hence, the *other* has been initially defined—and still continues to be defined—as someone who speaks another language, and the culture of others has been—and still is—limited to the definition of national culture. Considering this logic, the bulk of research on intercultural competence has focused on study abroad programs (e.g. Alred & Byram, 2002; Engle & Engle 2004; Medina-López-Portillo, 2004; Hammer, 2012; Pogorelova, 2016; Pogorelova & Trenchs-Parera, 2018; Harve, 2013, Roller, 2012; and more).

Results of such studies have shown that studying abroad can indeed have a positive effect on learners' interculturality. Such studies have also indicated that the longer the duration of the stay is, the better effects it has on students' interculturality (e.g. Medina-López-Portillo, 2004; Engle & Engle 2004; Pogorelova, 2016). Nonetheless, Jackson (2011) argues that being present in a host culture does not necessarily ensure that learners will actually seek out intercultural encounters and engage in intercultural communication that could enhance their interculturality (Bennett, 2009; Zarate, 2003) or expand their identity (Block, 2007; Byram, 2008b; Jackson, 2010, 2011). Furthermore, border crossing might even have a negative effect on people and it could often leave them scared, according to Block (2002), who suggests studying the complex and fragmented stories of people's change, whether positive or negative, after such experiences abroad.

In a study by Jackson (2011), which examined and followed up with over a 100 sojourners, critical reflection has proven to be effective in developing learners' intercultural competence and understanding their own identities. He concluded that short-term sojourn could indeed have a significant impact on participants if critical reflection and experiential learning are combined into the program of studying abroad. He also asserted how the personality of the participants could further affect the development of their intercultural competences depending on how receptive and committed they are to personal expansion and intercultural development. Jackson (2011) recommended individual and group reflections before, during, and after a sojourn, and encouraged educators to help learners make meaningful connections between their intercultural encounters and the course content. Correspondingly, in studies where students received either

pre-departure seminars (e.g. Harve, 2013) or were asked to reflect on their experience and intercultural encounters while being abroad (e.g. Pogorelova, 2016), results showed that students achieved significant changes more than those who were only given pre-post testing (e.g. Alalwi, 2016; Engle & Engle 2004). For example, in her research, Smith (2013) reported a 6.7 points difference in score between students who took a cultural course before leaving and those who went abroad without taking a preparatory course.

As for studies comparing the development of learners' intercultural competence at home versus through study abroad programs, there were some contradictory results. Soria and Troisi (2014) reported that on campus encounters and activities yielded better results in students' intercultural competence scores than studying abroad. On the other hand, Anderson and Lawton (2011) reported more gains for students studying abroad compared to those studying on campus. Nonetheless, it is hard to give a clear-cut answer on this matter, more research is needed. It is also important to note that the type of activity or on campus/in-course instruction is a major factor in the development of learners' intercultural competences and has to be carefully and purposefully designed and implemented. There is no way of knowing whether different on-campus courses may yield different results than the ones presented by Anderson and Lawton (2011). Furthermore, both studies employ quantitative measures in assessment, which may not accurately reflect students' intercultural changes. A study by Roller (2012) indicates that the analysis of qualitative data yields slightly different results than quantitative data. In her study, there were no significant changes reported through the use of a quantitative tool, while the qualitative analysis of students' responses showed modest changes in their intercultural competences.

b) Developing Interculturality Through Telecollaboration Activities

The second most employed approach for developing interculturality is through telecollaboration. Scholars who studied telecollaborative activities argue that it creates an authentic language learning environment, for example O'Dowd (2007) stated that "*telecollaborative activities have the potential to support the development of students' intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in a way that traditional culture learning materials would not be able to achieve*" (p. 146). Yang and Chen (2014) also provided the same argument and suggested that videoconferencing

approximates real-life learning contexts by allowing students to use a language for the same purposes that they will use it outside school.

Belz (2003) identified the main characteristics of foreign language telecollaboration to be "*institutionalized, electronically mediated intercultural communication under the guidance of a languacultural expert (i.e. a teacher) for the purposes of foreign language learning and the development of intercultural competence*" (p. 2). According to Furstenberg, Levet, English, and Maillet (2001), telecollaboration also places the emphasis of such exchanges on developing learners' intercultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence, in addition to developing their linguistic competence. As O'Dowd (2018) explains in his latest reviews on telecollaboration programs, educators have used a variety of tasks to develop intercultural approaches to telecollaboration. Some tasks require students to work together with their international partners to produce websites or presentations based on comparisons of their cultures. Other tasks require learners to do an analysis of parallel texts, that is the same text or the same movie in two languages—the languages of both groups. Another type of tasks, O'Dowd adds, is the application of ethnographic interviewing in synchronous online sessions.

However, just as the previously mentioned activities indicated, telecollaboration, similar to study abroad programs, assumes that *otherness* lies in difference of language and nationality, since such approach tends to connect students from one country to another (e.g. Belz 2003; O'Dowd, 2003; Helm, 2009; Juan-Garau & Jacob, 2015; Chuang, 2014; Martin, 2013; Schenker, 2012; Cushner Edelstein, 2015; and many more). As stated by O'Dowd (2018), telecollaboration is a tool focused on developing learner's ability to interact with members of the target language culture. So far, I have not come across any well-known study that connects classrooms within the same country. It would be of great benefit to students, especially in countries with multiple ethnicities and linguistic differences, such as Spain, Belgium, Cyprus, or Israel/Palestine. Nonetheless, telecollaboration in language classrooms usually has language exchange as a main purpose of interaction alongside intercultural competence, which would explain their definition of the *other*, and their focus on target language culture. Most often such studies utilize activities that do not go beyond lifestyle comparisons and everyday communications, traditions, feasts, or

daily routines (e.g. Chuang, 2014; Martin, 2013; Schenker, 2012; Liaw & Bunn-Le Master, 2010, and others).

It is worth mentioning that there is another form of telecollaboration that does not involve exchanges with students from another country, but rather online discussions between students in the same classroom. For example, these two studies by Liaw (2006) and Helm (2009) utilize online technology in EFL classrooms to develop learner' intercultural competence through e-forums and e-diaries. Such approach allows students from the same classroom to have online discussions on certain cultural topics related to their own and to other cultures, and reflect on this experience. Afterwards, the researchers analyzed students' discussions and reflections looking for any indication of developed intercultural competences as well as any development in communicative and linguistic skills. Their findings varied, but both studies showed evidence of learners' emerging intercultural competences. Garrett-Rucks (2012) and Carrillo Cabello (2012) also used online classroom discussion to develop learners' intercultural competence. Unlike the previously mentioned studies, which only focused on the telecollaborative task; in these studies, online forums were one activity among others done in the classroom. So, basically, they employed two teaching approaches, complementarily; online discussions and in-classroom instructed activities, which brings us to the third context of developing interculturality.

c) Developing Interculturality Through In-classroom Instructed Activities

The third approach for developing interculturality that is commonly found in literature is the implementation of special courses or in-classroom instructed activities that do not involve the use of any form of telecollaboration. This approach comes in two forms, either as a special course on culture and intercultural communication, or as a single or a set of activities within an existing course. For example, Sandell and Tupy (2015) explored intercultural sensitivity through an intensive cross-cultural course for undergraduates. They used the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) as a pre-post test to measure changes. The first semester they got negative results, so they adjusted the course and achieved better developmental results the second time. Turner (2009) also explored the intercultural competence of her students through a cross-cultural management course that she designed herself. She used reflective essays to check for any changes in intercultural competences. De Leon (2014) measured development of students'

intercultural competence through a community service course at an undergraduate level. A pre and post Cultural Quotient Scale (CQS) and Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) were used to measure any changes in students' intercultural sensitivity. Aside from Turner (2009), who reported failure in her study as she could not bridge the gap between local and international students attending her class, the others reported success in developing certain aspects of interculturality in their students.

On the other hand, the other in-classroom approach to developing learners' intercultural competence, which involves one or more activities within an existing course, is more widespread. Since intercultural education stemmed from foreign language education, it is still centered on foreign language classrooms. However, scholars and institutions (e.g. Cardetti, Wagner, & Byram, 2015; UNESCO, 2014; NCCA, 2005) encourage the implementation of intercultural education within the various taught subjects such as geography, history, music, arts, etc. However, there is still very little research published on intercultural activities in non-language classrooms. A study by Costa, Saial, Castro, and Pita (2009) shed a light on promoting interculturality in Portuguese History classrooms. The activities they presented provided a good example of how intercultural education could be well-integrated into History classes.

Shepard (2018) also undertook intercultural education in History classes of seventh graders in the USA. He successfully integrated intercultural activities aiming at confronting Islamophobia in his Ancient Civilizations classroom, and reported positive attitudinal changes in his students. On a different subject, Prediger (2004) discussed how Mathematics classes have some intercultural aspects. She explored Alan Bishop's assumptions that all formal mathematics education produces cultural conflicts between the children's everyday culture and the culture of mathematics. She provided evidence from existing empirical studies that supported that assumption, and provided arguments and evidence on how mathematical language can be a foreign language where intercultural misunderstanding could occur, resulting in students experiencing foreignness in Mathematics. Based on the evidence she discussed, she suggested the conceptualization of Mathematics teaching to include an intercultural process.

A variety of methods, tools, and activities have been explored and recommended by experts and researchers to be utilized in developing learners' interculturality in classrooms (see Table 2.3 and Table 2.4). For example, in her research, Krajewski (2011) utilized a project method for developing intercultural competence among international students in Australia. She paired diverse university students and ask them to conduct interviews and write up a report about the cultural life in their city. Her own observations and feedback from her students, in a form of questionnaire, shed some light on the dynamics of intercultural encounters and how students handled cultural differences, stereotyping, and conflicts. In a similar study, Hoyt (2012) asked her American undergraduate students to do ethnographic interviews with French speakers as part of a French language course. Using a questionnaire as a pre-post test, she found out that students have developed in the areas of knowledge and skills of discovery and interaction (based on Byram's saviors). Hoyt (2012) was not the only one to use ethnography as an activity for developing intercultural competence, as it has been used by many others such as Jin (2015), Reimann (2010), and López-Barrios (2012).

Table 2.3: List of methods suggested for the development of interculturality in education.

<p style="text-align: center;">Navaitiene, Rimkeviciene, and Racelyte (2013)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Huber and Reynolds (2014)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Cognitive (collecting knowledge) method Self- insight method Behavioral method Experiential method Attribution method Experience Activities Comparison Activities Analysis Activities Reflection Activities Cooperative activity</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Experiential learning Project work Cooperative learning Experience Activities Comparison Activities Analysis Activities Reflection Activities Action Activities</p>

Table 2.4: List of tools/activities suggested for the development of interculturality in education.

Navaitiene, Rimkeviciene, and Racelyte (2013)	Huber and Reynolds (2014)	Martinelli and Taylor (2000)
Verbal or written description Role play, simulation or drama Theater, poetry and creative writing Ethnographic tasks Watching short films Presentations Still image making On-line communications Projects work Concept mapping Use of media Reflective Diaries	Activities emphasizing multiple perspectives Role plays, simulations and drama Theatre, poetry and creative writing Ethnographic tasks Use of films and texts Image- making/still images in class Social media and other online tools	Discussion, argument, and confrontation Simulation games Role plays Problem solving Research and presentations

A recent study by Feng (2016) explored the explicit teaching of intercultural competence to business management students. The students had to do an assignment as part of the course, which required them to search for an intercultural experience in their surroundings and reflect and report on it. To measure change, Feng used the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES; Mendenhall, Oddou, & Osland, 2012) as a pre-post test as well as students' reports. Interestingly, in this study, women achieved better results in terms of the development of their intercultural competence as measure by the IES. Previously, Jacobson, Sleicher, and Maureen (1999) conducted a study in which students were also asked to report on their new cultural and life experiences in a new country. The study targeted international students taking an English language course. There was no evaluation of intercultural competence; however, the work of the students which was collected in a form of portfolio was classified as either passive or active understanding of new culture.

Finally, two interesting studies have also managed to employ various classroom activities to successfully develop students' intercultural competence. Georgiou (2011) utilized writing activities as a tool to developing her students' intercultural competence. She also used themes such as stereotyping, interracial marriages, and immigrants' lives. Her results showed that students developed deeper understanding of intercultural issues through reflection. She based her

results on her diary as a teacher, and her students' written productions. The other study is by Shah-Gordon (2016). The researcher used multiple activities for the classroom, such as role playing, reflective exercises, frame games, and out of classroom activities. In the activities, she included topics related to generalization, stereotypes, cultural difference, and values. As for the assessment of intercultural competence, she used the IDI for pre-post testing, interviewed the teachers, and analyzed students journals and a survey. Although results showed overall gains, still 22 out of 48 students showed no change, while six students showed regression.

2.4. Methods and Tools for Assessing Interculturality

Interculturality is defined by the several components comprising each intercultural model, and in order to assess one's interculturality, these components have to be measured somehow. Many of the studies described in the previous section utilized tools to measure and assess learners' interculturality. Scholars and experts agree that interculturality can indeed be assessed; however, assessment varies depending on the definition and components of interculturality. It also depends on the purpose of assessment, whether it is diagnostic, placement, or achievement. Other scholars like Barrett (2016) emphasize the need to recognize that although assessment is possible, it is impossible to assess every single aspect of interculturality due to the complexity and multidimensionality of these competences.

Various methods have been suggested and utilized in assessing interculturality. Deardorff's (2006) study listed a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods or tools to assess interculturality. She provided two lists ranked by usefulness of method, one list provides methods recommended and ranked by institutions and administrators, and another list of methods recommended and ranked by the scholars who participated in her study. She also recommended more methods in another one of her publications (Deardorff, 2011). Ecke (2012) and Skopenskaja (2009) also provided lists of tools and methods to assess interculturality. See a summary of all these methods in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5: List of methods and tools suggested by scholars and experts to collect data for the assessment of interculturality.

Deardorff's (2006) Administrators' List:	Deardorff's (2006) Scholars' List:
Student interviews Student papers/presentations Observations Student portfolios Pre-post testing Adapted self-report instruments Commercial self-report instruments	Case studies Interviews Mix of qualitative and quantitative measures Qualitative measures Narrative diaries Self-report instruments Observation of students by others - tutor or host Judgment by self and others Assessing specific indicators for each component of intercultural competence Triangulation
Deardorff (2011):	
Learning contracts (having student set their own objectives) E-Portfolios Critical reflection Performance Surveys and inventories such as self reporting instruments Student interviews Focus groups	
Ecke (2012):	Skopenskaja (2009):
Traditional tests of knowledge about culture Task-based and product-based assessment Simulation games Analysis of critical incidents Discourse completion tasks Portfolios Diaries/reflective journals Student interviews Self-assessment and peer-assessment	Role Playing and simulation Case studies and problem solving of critical incidents Teacher observations Portfolios, containing the following: - Cultural log as journal of cultural background and experiences - Self-evaluation diagrams/questionnaire - Student observations - Reflective essays - Recordings of interviews conducted by students

Assessment of intercultural competence can be direct or indirect. Direct assessment is more likely qualitative in nature, while indirect assessment tends to be more quantitative. A direct approach to the assessment of interculturality involves performance assessment (Byram, 1997; Ruben, 1976), portfolio assessment (Byram, 1997; Pruegger & Rogers, 1994; Jacobson et al., 1999; Ingulsrud, Kai, Kadowaki, Kurobane, & Shiobara, 2002), and interviews (Deardorff, 2006;

Fantini, 2006; Straffon, 2003). Such assessment includes activities and tools that elicit individuals' ability to display intercultural competence in their behavior in real time situations (performance assessment like role playing and team work, etc.), or in collections of reflective and written productions (portfolio assessment including essays and journals, etc.), or in one-to-one conversations with interlocutors or assessors (interview assessment).

Advocates for performance assessment and interviews recommend it because it reveals the individuals' ability to use any acquired intercultural competence in real time situations (Sinicrope, Norris, & Watanabe, 2007). Regarding portfolio assessment, Jacobson et al. (1999) argue that learning is not always quantifiable, and that it may be best represented by self-selected work. In such way, learners would be able to reflect on their evolving progress; thereby increasing the potential for learning and growth. Byram (1997) also recommended portfolio assessment as it could provide an estimate of learners' threshold level or dimension of attitude, skills, knowledge, and critical awareness. In the same sense, Pruegger and Rogers (1994) suggest the use of content analysis of personal documents. Both suggestions are similarly reflected in what scholars suggested in Deardorff's (2006) study, which is to develop specific indicators for each component and dimension of intercultural competence and to find evidence of each indicator. Furthermore, since the development of intercultural competence is non-linear as many have suggested, with possible periods of regression (Garrett-Rucks, 2012), continuous assessment of intercultural competence is a recommended course of action, and portfolios offer learners and assessors the opportunity to see patterns of growth and decline.

Indirect assessment of interculturality includes a variety of quantitative tools. Table 2.6 shows several studies that attempted to collect, categorize, analyze, and evaluate the multitude of tools to measure interculturality. Some of these tools are free, while others are commercial and very expensive. Some can be administered online, and some are offered in paper and pencil format. Each tool measures different components/dimensions of interculturality based on the definitions provided by those who developed the assessment tool. The vast number of tools corresponds to the wide range of models and conceptualization of interculturality (Griffith et al., 2016).

Table 2.6: Studies on tools for assessment of interculturality.

Names of Researchers	Year of Publication	Tools Reviewed
Fantini, A. E.	2006	The study listed 86 tests that have been used since 1928 to assess interculturality.
Sinicrope, C. & Norris, L. & Watanabe Y.	2007	The study reviewed six tools, which are: Behavioral Assessment Scale for Intercultural Competence (BASIC) Intercultural Sensitivity Inventory (ICSI) Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI) Assessment of Intercultural Competence (AIC)
Fantini, A. E.	2009	The study listed 44 tests and tools in use to assess or diagnose intercultural competence.
Matsumoto, D. & Hwang, H. C.	2013	Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Scale (CCSS) Cultural Intelligence (CQ) Intercultural Behavioral Assessment Indices (IBA) Behavioral Assessment Scale for Intercultural Competence (BASIC) Intercultural Adjustment Potential Scale (ICAPS) Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC) Intercultural Sensitivity Inventory (ICSI) Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ)
Matveev, A. V. & Merz, M.	2014	The study reviewed nine assessment tools, which are: Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) Intercultural Communication Competence Instrument (ICCI) The Intercultural Adjustment Potential Scale (ICAPS) Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) Culture Shock Inventory (CSI) Intercultural Sensitivity Inventory (ICSI) Intercultural Competence Profiler (ICP) The Intercultural Readiness Check (IRC) Intercultural Competence Questionnaire (ICQ)
Griffith, R. L. & Wolfeld, L. & Armon, B. K. & Rios, J. & Liu, O. L.	2016	The study is a comprehensive report containing a review of 32 tools and tests detailing reliability and validity results of each test.

According to Griffith et al. (2016), the types of response items in the available assessment tools take the forms of either likert scale items or multiple choice items, and less commonly, implicit association tests and Q-sort methodology, situational judgment tests, and simulation based measurement. The vast majority of these tools are self-reported assessment tools. A review of the

gaps in quantitative assessment tools is presented in Chapter 3, Section 3c. Nonetheless, the major problems or gaps can be summarized in three points. First, such tools were designed targeting adults or young adults, and may not be suitable for adolescents or young learners. Second, the great majority of tools assume that learners are living in a diverse context, i.e. studying abroad or working and living in a host country, and they do not consider those who live in less culturally diverse communities or countries. Third, these tools assume that learners understand the concepts presented in the questionnaire and are able to accurately answer them. As Arasaratnam and Doerfel (2005) stated, this particular issue may not affect the results of post study abroad or post in-home course/instruction, but it could very much affect the results of pre study abroad and pre in-home course/instruction.

Prominent scholars in Deardorff's (2006) study recommended a mixed-method approach to intercultural research, since quantitative and qualitative data from indirect and direct tools may reveal different aspects of learners' interculturality. Pruegger and Rogers (1994) compared indirect and direct assessment tools in their study. The indirect tool they used (Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Scale) did not reveal any changes in cultural diversity and sensitivity after an experiential treatment; however, the data from the analysis of personal documents showed some effects of the treatment. Thus, researchers who experimented with both tools suggest that mixing qualitative and quantitative tools could reveal more layers to learners' interculturality and intercultural growth than only using an indirect quantitative tool (Pruegger & Rogers, 1994; Fantini, 2006; Saffron, 2003).

2.5. Recent Criticism of Intercultural Education

Criticism of intercultural models has been around for many years, as scholars always proposed new models and new concepts as counter arguments to existing models. However, in the past decade, scholars in the field of intercultural education started to look at interculturality from critical and ethical perspectives. This presentation of this criticism does not aim at introducing new models or new concept, but rather to encourage all those involved in intercultural education to look at some of the major problematic areas in the conceptualization and in the implementation of intercultural education. The following two sections discuss some of these

problematic issues facing intercultural education, which several scholars from around the world have touched upon and criticized in the past two decades.

a) A Critical View on Existing Models of Interculturality

In a recent years, many scholars (Abdallah-Preteille, 2012; Holliday, 2010; Risager, 2011, Zotzmann, 2016; Borghetti, 2017; Dervin, 2016; Dervin & Gross, 2016; and more) have criticized the recent models of interculturality, and suggested the re-conceptualization and the re-definition of interculturality and its constructs, including the definitions of *culture* and *the other*, for a more realistic and more ethical approach to developing and assessing interculturality. Borghetti (2017) presented a comprehensive paper summarizing the major problematic issues with the application and assessment of intercultural competence in recent years, arguing that, although assessment of intercultural competence is somehow possible and necessary, but it might not be appropriate from an ethical perspective. Her paper focuses on four problematic areas in available models of intercultural competence, which are important to mention here as they relate to the conception of this research study, and will be further discussed in the final chapter.

The first problematic area is the weaknesses of the existing models of intercultural competence with respect to assessment. Borgetti (2017) touched upon three issues regarding the existing intercultural models. To begin with, she argues that the majority of existing frameworks do not provide a definition of *culture*, thus leading to ambiguity when attempting to assess constructs such as *curiosity about different cultural practices* or *willingness to respect diversity*. Adding to this, the lack of understanding of the concept of culture that is represented in an overemphasis of cultural differences (Dervin & Gross, 2016), the treatment of culture as a fixed entity (Abdallah-Preteille, 2012), and the focus on nation as culture (Dervin & Liddicoat, 2013; Kramersch, 2012) have tremendous effect on the conceptualization and assessment of interculturality, which will be discussed in the following section. Secondly, Borghetti (2017) states that the majority of models present their constructs as separate, and consequently the assessment of one construct or one component in relation to the other is yet to be established. Lastly, many frameworks separate intercultural competence from communicative competence, and it is yet unclear whether and how language proficiency should be assessed within intercultural competence. Regarding the same point, Dervin and Liddicoat (2013) declared that the removal of language from the focus on

intercultural education could trivialize the intercultural project. McConchy and Liddicoat (2016) further explain that each language one learns influences the other, and operating with more than one language is indeed intercultural, since language affects perception and cultural interpretation; thus controlling the actions that accompany language use in any communicative interaction. In short, the first point can be summed up in one sentence: Since each model presents different constructs and different understanding of concepts, the question ought to be asked is: "*are we looking for the right things at the right balance? or has anything important been left out?*" (Messick, 1996, p. 246 as cited in Borghetti, 2017, p. 9).

The second problematic area is the relationship between intercultural competence and interculturally competent performance. The question Borghetti (2017) posed here is whether the available frameworks are assessing competence (internal outcome) or performance (external outcome). Many models do not explicitly differentiate between the two, and often describe competence as including features that clearly refer to competent performance. Therefore, when adopted as a framework of reference for assessment of intercultural competence, these models pose a problem of misevaluation. In general, assessing both competence and performance is tricky. Borghetti (2017) argues that, on one hand, assessing internal outcomes could pose an ethical question as it implies inferring what learners think and feel, but, on the other hand, assessing external outcomes could be misleading as it is relatively easy for an individual to achieve external outcomes without having fully achieved an internal one.

The third problematic area Borghetti (2017) discusses is the context-based and relational nature of intercultural competence. This means that context is significant when measuring intercultural competence. Roles and expectations are constructed in an interaction, and one's performance in an interaction greatly depends on his or her interlocutor's attitudes and verbal and non-verbal actions. It also depends on the contexts; that is the culture, relationship, place, and function of the interaction. For example, a person should not be judged to be lacking a certain competence, if his or her interlocutor is not interested in the interaction or is rude and showing bad intentions. Generalizing competence to individuals can be problematic, "*since a person cannot but manifest different levels of IC in different situations, depending on the contextual factors involved*" (Borghetti, 2017, p. 13). Dervin (2016) and Abdallah-Preteceilli (2012) also criticized testing

intercultural competence without considering the context of the interaction. They both affirm that assessment of intercultural competence depends on the existence of *the other* and it should also include how the type of *other* may affect one's intercultural competences during the interaction.

The fourth problematic area is the affective dimension of intercultural competence. Assessing the affective dimension of intercultural competence can pose an ethical challenge, Borghetti (2017) says, since it implies evaluating private feelings and identity-related personal characteristics. She says that it is unquestionable that some attitudes are catalysts to the development of intercultural competence; yet she wonders about the extent of authority assessors should have in expressing evaluations or their opinions when someone's identity is at stake. For example, how fair is it to negatively judge a person simply because he is shy or because she has anxiety? Borghetti (2017) suggests the adoption of alternative forms of assessment, such as portfolios, arguing that they could help reduce this ethical challenge, since portfolios manage learners' privacy more carefully by allowing them to freely express themselves without the pressure of face-to-face examination. She further suggests formative assessment by teachers, who have already established a relationship with the students and know their personalities, since very often learners' personality and nature are directly connected to their attitudes and behaviors. She continues to warn against high-stake tests of interculturality out of fear that they might drive learners into the direction of a pre-established and preferred personality.

In short, Borghetti (2017) poses some serious caveats regarding the formal assessment of intercultural competence based on the available models of interculturality. When an *intercultural personality* is set as a learning objective —as it has become common in educational institutions, then it has to be measured somehow, and in order to assess it, it must have clear constructs. These pre-set constructs could be forcing learners into a recipe-like personality, and seriously ignoring their individual identities and life experiences. She argues that assessment in general could be an efficient way to monitor, improve, and renew teaching by introducing changes. However, these changes and educational reforms ought to include modification in curricula and teacher training, as Guilhereme (2002) has also previously proposed, and not just modifications in assessment methods, since teachers are being asked to evaluate something they do not teach, and are not trained to evaluate either. She concluded that intercultural education will not improve

in soundness, unless professionals, teachers, and students work together to set an agenda for the development of intercultural competence. She further suggests moving to a more formative assessment that includes tools such as portfolios and autobiographies, which integrate various assessment measures such as expert, peer-, and self-assessment that will make assessment more participatory and reduce the power imbalance between assessors and assessees.

b) Re-conceptualizing Culture, Intercultural Competence, and *The Other*

In the previous section Borghetti (2017) pointed out two important issues that require further discussion, which are the concept of culture and the context of interaction. Even though the concept of culture and the approaches to teaching culture have changed in the past decades with the spread of communicative language teaching, it is still heatedly debated in both language education and intercultural education sectors. The debate over the concept of culture has been going on since the beginning of cultural anthropology and sociolinguistic studies (e.g. Boas, 1911; Mead, 1928; Hall, 1976; Geertz, 1973; Hymes, 1974; Byram, 1988; Kramsch, 1991; and more). Lately the debate has been opened again as intercultural education is becoming more and more trendy. Recent criticism of the concept of culture is considered an important step in the process of reviewing how intercultural education ought to be conceptualized, as it also affects the concept of *otherness* and ultimately influences the understanding and analysis of intercultural interactions and interculturality.

The idea of culture as national culture has been particularly pervasive in language education and also in intercultural education (Dervin, 2006; Virkama, 2010; Kramsch, 2012; Dervin & Liddicoat, 2013). According to Kramsch (2012), even though teaching culture has shifted focus to include abstract forms of culture like everyday life practices, the convention of "*one language = one culture*" (p. 66) is still maintained, with certain focus on the typical, sometimes stereotypical, cultural practices of the dominant group of native speakers that is the most salient to foreign eyes. Ly and Rygg (2016) have also touched upon the same point as they criticized communication textbooks, especially business communication textbooks for presenting learners with lists of dos and don'ts that are written from an *etic* perspective and that also reduce the concept of culture to nation culture, and sometimes a regional culture (e.g. Asian culture), without any regard to the heterogeneity of culture in any given country. Many scholars also insist

that culture is heterogeneous, stating that *otherness* exists in one's own community (Byram, 2008c) as a variety of cultures co-exist within any given society (Kramsch, 1998) in terms of differences in experience, age, gender, ethnicity, language and dialect, and so on. Strauss and Quinn (1997) termed culture as *fuzzy* indicating that it cannot be limited to geographical boundaries, since culture is constructed from people's shared experiences.

Atkinson (1999) further asserts that the idea of a pure culture that is limited to a nation-state or a linguistic code (e.g. German culture, Arabic or Hispanic culture) is misleading and also dangerous. Nonetheless, in many cases in intercultural research and intercultural education, building up facts about target culture and comparing nation cultures is still a widespread trend. Section 2.3 of this chapter already presented and discussed some of these studies. Similarly, Kramsch (2012) had previously discussed and criticized such intercultural approaches, stating that researchers and educators treat culture as a set of characteristics belonging to a native member of a nation who speaks the national language and shares the national culture, ignoring the heterogeneous nature of culture. She further argues that teaching about a fixed national culture is challenged by a *lingua franca* like English, which knows no national boundaries and involves an incredible variety of cultures and subcultures.

This treatment of culture as limited to national culture could be again attributed to the definition of culture in intercultural research. Dervin's (2006) review of literature showed that culture is frequently defined as *shared habits, beliefs and values of a national group*, which is a perception that defines and limits intercultural interactions to people from different nationalities. In other words, a different nationality is seen as a pre-condition to an intercultural learning situation, which completely ignores the diversity of nations. Dervin (2006) insists that all communications are intercultural, even the ones taking place in an intra-cultural context. Guilherme (2010) takes it one level up by further suggesting that cultural exchanges do not only happen between individuals from different cultural backgrounds, but also within the same individuals as he or she attempt to find their way through their multiple identifications and life stories.

Furthermore, such focus on comparing national cultures creates another problem of overemphasizing differences. Dervin and Gross (2016) stated that in a global world,

commonalities cut across countries, religions, and languages, and thus, all need to be included in intercultural education. Abdallah-Preteille (2012) had already suggested a humanistic approach to intercultural education that focuses on process and interactions that unite individuals and groups and define them in relation to each other rather than their difference from each other. Similarly, Dervin and Liddicoat (2013) suggested moving away from overemphasizing national or ethnic cultural differences as seen from an objectivist perspective towards a more (inter)subjective focus on the learners themselves. Such notion has been at the core of the debate on the nature of *culture* and *otherness* in intercultural education, with more and more scholars (Abdallah-Preteille, 2003; Guilherme, 2002; Holliday, 2010; Kramsch, 1998, 2012; Dervin & Liddicoat, 2013; Virkama, 2010 and more) agreeing and arguing that intercultural education has surrendered to a problematic perception of culture as a fixed static entity ignoring that it is dynamic and constantly changing in nature.

Abdallah-Preteille (2006, 2012) stated that the concept of culture as a structure or as a system has become ineffective as it refers to a static entity or a mere categorization of other. She suggested that culture as a *system* should be replaced by culture as *action* or as an *interaction*, and proposed the term *culturality* to replace *culture*, so as to better represent the flexible and constantly changing nature of cultures. Arguing for her point of view, she stated that individuals are not merely a product of their culture, but that they construct and develop their own personal culture using different strategies, and in relation to the needs and circumstances of the interaction. She stressed the notion that cultures ought not to be understood as independent entities, rather ought to be contextualized in terms of social, political, and interaction-based realities. Correspondingly, Kramsch (2012) suggested seeing culture as a *dynamic discursive process*, where individuals construct and reconstruct their own culture by negotiating meanings during interactions. She argued that social realities are constructed minute-by-minute in an ongoing discourse, where meanings emerge in a non-linear ways during interactions, and where native and non-native speakers are likely to see their cultural horizons changed and their own culture reconstructed in the process of trying to understand *the other*.

Kramsch (2012) and Abdallah-Preteille (2012) agree that individuals select their cultural information according to their interests and the fluctuations of their interactions, as learners are

often seen constructing their own and others' subject positions through the questions they ask and topics they choose or avoid talking about in an interaction. Other scholars (Virkama, 2010; Holliday, 2010; Kumaravadivelu, 2008; Canajarah, 2012) also present the same argument suggesting that culture is not an entity that pre-exists communication, but rather a category that individuals draw upon when they co-construct meanings in instances of intercultural communication. Therefore, going back to what Borghetti (2017) said, *culturality* and intercultural competence depend on the context of interaction, as they manifest themselves differently according to the time and place of the intercultural interaction, and most importantly the type of interlocutor. As Gee (2000) had previously put it, "*The 'kind of person' one is recognized as 'being', at a given time and place, can change from moment to moment in the interaction, can change from context to context, and of course, can be ambiguous or unstable.*" (p.99). This complexity of self has been recently discussed by Dervin and Gross (2016), who argued that the prefix *inter-* in intercultural indicates a *mélange* of reactions and transformations that involves a complex self and a complex other, which are full of contradictions, instabilities, and discontinuities.

Such scholars adopt a non-essentialist view to culture. They view culture not as an entity, but as Virkama (2010) described it, as cultural fragments and elements which manifest themselves in different ways and take different meaning in different context. In a sense, "*people are not only passive products of their social and cultural environments, but they actively shape their worldview and give meanings to their experiences from their own perspective, creating a unique understanding of their own and others' cultures and of identity and difference*" (Illman, 2004, p.19 as cited in Virkama, 2010, p.44). This only serves to support the argument that people do not necessarily fit into fixed cultural frames, but rather create and develop their own cultural frames based on their own affiliations, and these frames are not constant either, as they manifest themselves differently depending on the affiliations and meanings that are being negotiated in the different occasions or contexts. In the words of Abdallah-Preteille (2006), "*every individual has the potential to express him/herself and act not only depending on their codes of membership, but also on freely chosen codes of reference.*" (p. 478). On this matter, Virkama (2010) presented a good example, she mentioned the perplexity of educators when a Muslim student refuses to eat pork at school lunch, but is seen drinking alcohol after school. Such notions

have lead scholars to reject intercultural education based on factual knowledge about cultural differences, as they do not prepare people to meet the complex patterns of the culture of others.

Understanding this complexity of *self* and *other*, Kramsch (2012) affirms that learning about a foreign culture and understanding others cannot be achieved without learning about one's own discursive practices. Several models do actually emphasize self knowledge, and the understanding of the socialization process and how one is a product of that socialization process, as Byram (1997, 2009a) once put it. However, the mainstream in intercultural approaches still focuses on tolerance and acceptance of interculturalism rather than the development of the interculturality of self (Liddicoat, 2009). On that matter, Ferri (2016) pointed out how an intercultural approach that equals acceptance of cultural differences to tolerance, and lack of acceptance to intolerance, without considering the context and the power relations between the clashing cultures, is seriously problematic, and may I add, dangerous. As the acceptance of cultural differences disassociated from their contexts presents an ethical dilemma, especially when using cultural difference as a defense mechanism to justify misunderstandings, conflicts, or even crimes like honor killings (e.g. Sheybani, 1987; Chiu, 2006).

In short, recent intercultural approaches have been criticized for heavily depending on the interpretation of culture for effective communication, as the concept of culture has been also criticized for being too descriptive, objectifying and categorizing of others. Abdallah-Preteille (2012) stresses that intercultural education should shift the focus from culture and cultural differences to "*the other in a specific context and in a specific network of relationships*" (p.135). Perceiving interculturality as a process and not as a condition or target, she insists on the need to find research tools that allow for the investigation of that process, focusing on the context rather than the signs, arguing that the most important concept in intercultural education is not really culture, but the *construction of otherness*, and the recognition of the singular individual in this small globalized world. Thus, "*the goal of intercultural education is to learn how to read and understand cultural elements that are ambiguous, because of the ways in which the interlocutors maneuver them*" (Abdallah-Preteille, 2012, p.136).

Dervin (2006, 2016) also suggests focusing on the process of interculturality rather than the end target, arguing that individuals develop intercultural competence rather than become interculturally competent, since competence is not something acquired for good, but affected by one's experiences and context of interaction. Arguing from the same critical perspective, Virkama (2010) suggests the move from learning about fixed cultural facts or cultural differences to learning about the *how* and *why* of culture. She provides an excellent example on this matter. She suggests that, for example, instead of stating that Muslim women wear a scarf, it would be much interesting, and may I add, more correctly informative, to ponder why some Muslim women wear it, while others do not, and what is being expressed by the wearing and the non-wearing of the scarf.

On a final note, many contemporary scholars (Virkama, 2010; Zotzmann 2016; Dervin, 2010, 2016; Holliday, 2010; Risager, 2011, and many more) have argued that intercultural education is never a neutral practice, especially in the way *the other* is defined. Zotzmann (2010) criticized the way intercultural education focuses on a uniformity of outcomes that marginalizes others and disregards the importance of diversity. Abdallah- Pretceilli (2003) also criticized the emphasis on overcoming cultural diversity and argued for appreciating the value of diversity. Dervin and Liddicoat (2013) similarly rejected intercultural education that promotes uniformity or when one group imposes their own superior values and cultural understanding on another group, instead they called for an intercultural education that contributes to the education for diversity. These scholars and many more have sent out several alerts warning researchers and practitioners from falling into an essentialist interpretation of the other that results in *hierarchal othering*, citing how *otherness* is a postcolonial term used to describe persons or other people who are considered culturally different, and such notion carries within it power hierarchies.

Both Virkama (2010) and Dervin (2016) cited Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) to illustrate this issue. Said's work demonstrated how an essentialist view became a popular discourse in describing knowledge of others and other cultures, which led to the representation of the Orient as passive, mysterious, and inferior; thus allowing Westerners to see themselves in positive terms. In the end, a non-essentialist perspective ought to be adopted to better understand the meaning of other and who the other is. The other is indeed important, since people define themselves and

their identities based on the existence of others; therefore as Dervin (2016) argues, *the self* and *the other* should not be studied separately, but as a connected and complex unit with major regard to power relations between interlocutors, not only in terms of East versus West, but also in terms of the various identity markers such as age, gender, race, dialect, religion, and so on.

2.6. Shifting from Education for Intercultural Competence to Education for Intercultural Citizenship

Over the past 25 years or so, according to Byram (2014), the definition of intercultural education has shifted from teaching about target culture to teaching intercultural competence, which has now evolved to include teaching for intercultural citizenship. Arguments in favor of including an intercultural citizenship dimension in language education have been presented in recent years in an attempt to lead language education in a more suitable direction that takes into consideration the contemporary changes in the world (e.g. migration, globalization, technology, etc.) and the evolving nature of intercultural competence and intercultural citizenship (Osborn, 2006; Byram, 2008a; Porto, 2014; Byram, Golubeva, Hui, & Wagner, 2016; Byram et al., 2013; Yamada & Hsieh, 2016; Barrett, 2016).

a) Defining Intercultural Citizenship

It is worth noting that the term intercultural education was initially used to refer to the education of children of migration (Byram, 2014). Similarly, the term *intercultural citizen* or *world citizens* was coined as part of immigration policy where the term *citizen* is not equal to the term *national* (Starkey, 2015). It was as a response to this distinction between a citizen and a national, that scholars such as Byram, Starkey, and many others (e.g. Alred et al., 2006; Guilherme, 2002; Byram, 2008a; Banks, 2008; Osler, 2005; Byram et al., 2013; Barrett, 2016; Starkey, 2015) found it necessary to redefine citizenship education and intercultural education to become education for intercultural citizenship, which promotes respect for diversity, intercultural dialogue, and solidarity among people, as well as the development of a multilayered intercultural identity (Byram, 2009b; Starkey, 2015). These scholars have been advocating for (democratic) intercultural citizenship education to compliment not only civic education, but also language education and intercultural education. Each one of them views the subject from their own

educational disciplines; yet they all agree on and acknowledge intercultural competence as the core component of intercultural citizenship.

In his book *From Foreign Language Education to Education for Intercultural Citizenship*, Byram (2008a) presented a new approach to intercultural education that involves citizenship education, taking into consideration recent criticism on intercultural competence approaches. Byram's approach still focuses intercultural communicative competences, and it is still limited to foreign language classrooms, but with the inclusion of citizenship education, he puts further emphasis on civic action in the community. The approach he proposed has the following characteristics:

- 1) It focuses on acquiring knowledge and understanding, not only information, about other people who are not necessarily native speakers, as well as acquiring knowledge about oneself.
- 2) It focuses on developing attitudes of curiosity and critical questioning and introduces concepts of critical cultural awareness and social justice instead of a focus on tolerance.
- 3) It focuses on teaching-and-learning of skills of inquiry, from which learning about oneself and others evolve, and the skill of comparison which helps create a *mutual gaze* that enables learners to see themselves as others see them and not only learners gaze at others.
- 4) It focuses on out-of-classroom engagement by taking some type of action in the real world outside.
- 5) It considers *self* and *other* as individuals in their sociocultural groups, which includes age, gender, ethnicity, etc. and not only national and linguistic aspects of these cultural groups.

While working on a project² for the Council of Europe about democratic culture, Barrett (2016) proposed a framework of *Competences for Democratic Culture* (CDC) that he considers a model of intercultural citizenship. Barrett (2016) acknowledges that the framework was developed through the analysis of existing schemes of democratic and intercultural competence. The analysis resulted in a collection of 101 competences that were later revised through a set criteria that led to the identification of 20 core competences, which were later refined after feedback

² <https://www.coe.int/en/web/education/competences-for-democratic-culture>

from experts from the 47 member states of the Council of Europe. These competences were divided into four major categories: values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge and critical understanding. Figure 2.3 shows a diagram summarizing the 20 core competences of the CDC framework.

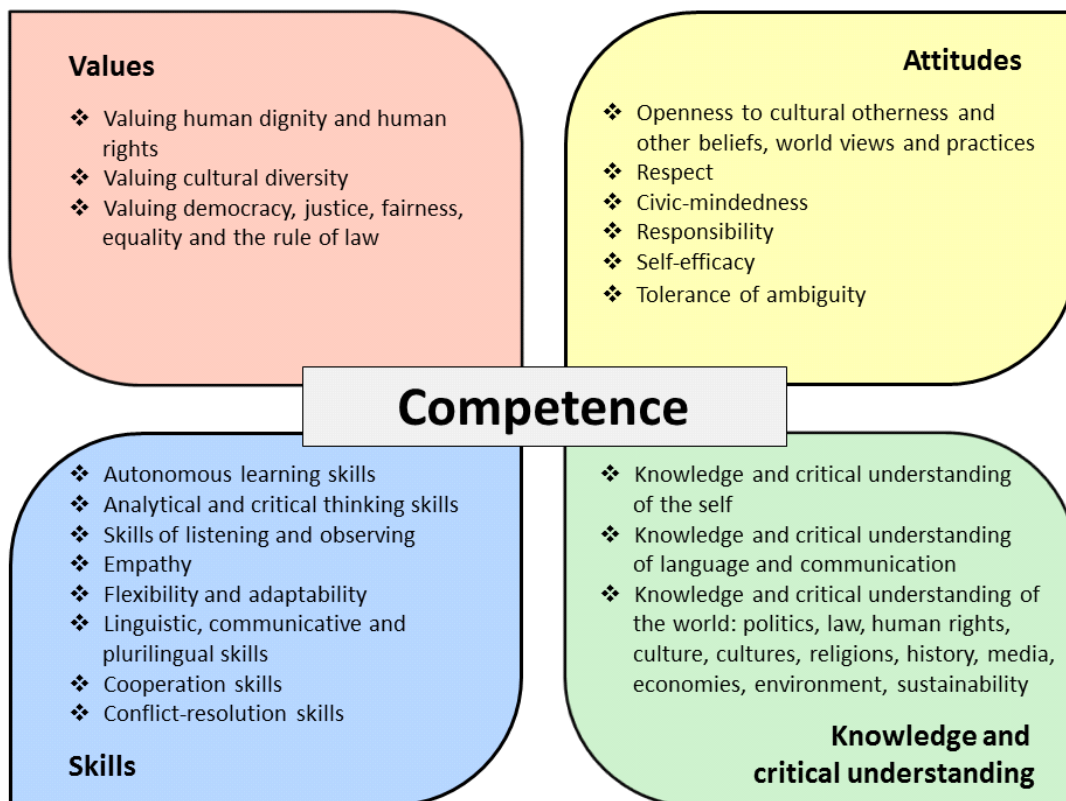


Figure 2.3. The components included in the CDC framework (Barrett, 2016).

Such approaches and models aim to help learners develop certain qualities that have been identified and associated with an intercultural citizen. According to a report by Oxfam (2006), which was included in Barrett's analysis, an intercultural or global citizen is someone who "*is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen, respects and values diversity, has an understanding of how the world works, is outraged by social injustice, participates in and contributes to the community at a range of levels from the local to the global, is willing to act to make the world a more sustainable place, takes responsibility for their actions.*" (p.3). Likewise, Barrett (2016) stresses two values without which an individual cannot

be considered an intercultural citizen, which are valuing equality and valuing cultural diversity. He defines a competent intercultural citizen as *"someone who believes that every individual human being (irrespective of their specific cultural affiliations) is of equal worth, has equal dignity, is entitled to exactly the same set of human rights, and ought to be treated accordingly [and is also] someone who believes that other cultural affiliations, cultural variability and diversity, and pluralism of perspectives, views and practices ought to be positively regarded and appreciated"* (Barrett, 2016, p. 4). This brings us to another important dimension of interculturality and intercultural (citizenship) education, which is identity.

b) Defining Identity, Cultural identity, and Intercultural Identity

According to Osler (2005), *"[c]itizenship is essentially about belongings, about feeling secure and being in a position to exercise one's rights and responsibilities. Education for democratic citizenship therefore needs to address learners' identities and to promote and develop skills for communication and participation"* (p. 4). Citizenship, identity, and interculturality are three interconnected concepts, for citizenship is part of our cultural identity, and one's identity informs his/her interculturality. Cultural identity focuses largely on cultural values and practices, the ways in which one regards the ethnic or cultural groups to which one belongs, and relative prioritization of the individual and of the group (Schwartz, Zamboanga, Weisskirch, 2008, p. 636). As Adler (1977) defined it: Cultural identity is *"the symbol of one's essential experience of oneself as it incorporates the worldview, value system, attitudes, and beliefs of a group with which such elements are shared."* (p. 230).

Basically, a cultural identity is the values and feelings we share with the cultural or sub-cultural groups (e.g. age, occupation, gender, sexuality, nationality, etc.) we belong to or come in contact with. It is crucial to note that individuals have multiple cultural identities, since an individual can belong to more than one community (Yamada & Hsieh, 2016), and these cultural identities are dynamic and change over time as they are always constructed and reconstructed through communication and intercultural interactions (UNESCO, 2013). Byram (2008b, 2009a) asserts the same notion that a cultural identity is constantly modified by new experiences, stating that interactions can develop new social (cultural) identities or bring out hidden ones. He also states that during an interaction, some identities may be dominant while others ignored, depending on

the interaction and the interlocutor. In essence, a cultural identity is co-constructed between people. As Bauman (2004) said, an identity exists because there is another identity that can be compared to it. Therefore, one's identity depends on the existence of another identity, and one's different and multilayered identity manifests itself differently in accordance to the other identity present at the time of interaction.

However, what affects one's identity differs in each part of the world as it depends on the values of their cultural surroundings. Christoph (2016) argues that the presentation of values as perceived by the different cultures is affected by the authors/scholars biases and experiences, thus resulting in definitions of a collective cultural identity from an *etic* stance. She continues her argument by citing how different peoples/nations/regions stress different values that are sometimes particular to their own culture. From a Western point of view, she cites Hofstede's (2009) five dimensions, which describe basic value orientations of societies that one needs to be aware of in intercultural situations. These are *Identity* (individualism vs. collectivism), *Hierarchy* (power relations), *Gender roles*, *Anxiety* (in uncertain and unexpected events), and *Gratification* (seeking and fulfilling desires). Yet she continues to argue that non-Western scholars stress and add other values considering them to be essential in certain societies. For example, for the Hindus in India, the cast system, which is particular to this society, is a social value that affects their identities. For African scholars, it is the *Ubuntu* philosophy³, which they claim to shape their identity, as a particulate value to African nations. Thus, it is important to note that, when studying a culture, one must understand that each country, region, or community has its own set of strangely quilted cultural identities, which comprise of both local and collective values, and differ sometimes from one city to another and from one community to another despite close proximity sometimes.

So, if cultural identities are created as a result of shared values and loyalties to cultural groups, then what kind of values does a global or intercultural identity entail? Trotta Tuomi, Jacott, and Lundgren (2008) identified a set of values shared by intercultural citizens, such as, (1) commitment to social justice and equity, (2) respect for cultural diversity, (3) concern for the

³ The word *ubuntu* is part of the Zulu phrase *Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*, which literally means that a person is a person through other people. *I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am.*

environment, (4) a sense of identity (multiple identities), (5) empathy for others, (6) taking responsibility for their actions, and (7) motivation and willingness to influence change in the world (locally and globally). In that sense, having a global identity signifies a sense of loyalty and belonging to humanity. However, people's loyalties are as complex as their identities, and there is still a debate on which type of loyalty will manifest itself in the different situations, especially when it comes down to national versus global loyalty.

A large scale study by Ariely (2012) covering 63 countries from across the world suggested that a country's level of globalization is not related to national identification, but it is negatively related to nationalism/patriotism, and the willingness to fight for the country and ethnic conceptions of membership in the nation. In other words, those with low levels of globalization tend to show more loyalty to their own national and ethnic identities, whereas those with high levels of globalization can show various levels of national and global identification. Other studies (e.g. Trenchs-Parera & Newman, 2009; Newman, Trenchs-Parera & Corona, 2019) showed similar results, as they presented arguments in favor of the notion that a national identity does not stand in opposition to a global one. However, some scholars such as Türken and Rudmin (2013) argue that in contexts where one is forced to choose between one and the other, cosmopolitans would choose loyalty to the wider world, transcending their local and national boundaries. So, does this mean that teaching for a global identity reduces learners' identification with their national culture? To answer this question, Della Chiesa (2012) clearly stated that critical awareness is the key player, pointing out that local citizens with a sense of critical awareness can selectively filter and translate global forces in a way that develops their own national culture to include loyalty to a global one. After all, a global identity is in fact a multilayered identity that incorporates a national one (Trotta Tuomi et al., 2008). The distinction between a national identity that competes with the global one and a national identity that complements a global one can be clearly understood through the words of the former French president Charles De Gaulle who said: *"Patriotism is when love of your own people comes first; nationalism, when hate for people other than your own comes first"*.

To sum up, in education for intercultural citizenship, an emphasis is put on developing a global identity and a sense of loyalty to humanity through teaching about human rights and current

world affairs (Starkey, 2015), and developing learners intercultural competencies through various intercultural topics and activities (Byram, 2008c, 2014). While civic education transmits a particular view of national identity and culture (Starkey, 2015), intercultural citizenship education enables reflection on learners' plural identities and promotes and develops skills for communication and participation, respect for diversity, and various critical skills including skills of intercultural evaluation, self-reflection, and self-evaluation (Osler & Starkey, 2005). Education for intercultural citizenship "*accepts that learners celebrate multiple identities as well as loyalties and belongings at a range of scales, such as those relating to families, neighborhoods, cities, nations and continents, or, indeed at the global level, to their fellow humanity*" (Osler & Starkey, 2015, p. 32).

UNESCO (2014) stresses the same notion of acknowledging the multiple levels of identity (personal, local, national, and global), and also puts much emphasis on connecting the local and the global to identify commonalities across space, time, and cultures. Furthermore, such connections ought to be made within the same country or community as well, since *otherness* does not strictly mean those of a different nationality or those who speak a different language. *Otherness* is defined by one's own cultural background, which is multidimensional, it includes aspects such as age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and nationality, disability, socioeconomic status, religion and convictions, history, geopolitics, customs and traditions, language and dialects, and cultural productions (Awad, 2014). Byram (2008a) further affirms that an important characteristic of education for intercultural citizenship is learning about *otherness* in one's own country, like linguistic, ethnic, and sectarian minorities in one's locality. Guilherme (2002) also points out that greater similarity in cultural background (race, gender, language standards, age, social and economic status) does not guarantee effective communication and, may I add, harmonious living, just as greater cultural distance does not necessarily mean less effective communication or interaction.

In an end note, assessment of intercultural citizenship still follows qualitative and quantitative measures and tools similar to the ones used in the assessment of intercultural competence (Barrett, 2016). A quantitative tool like the *Global Citizenship Scale* has been developed by Morais and Ogden (2010) after reviewing relevant literature on intercultural citizenship, and it

was tested to measure for reliability and validity by Thier (2016), but he claims that his results were inconclusive to confirm that this tool could be useful for measuring the global citizenship of high school students. Nonetheless, as discussed in Section 2.5 of this chapter, and as Barrett (2016) also asserts, it is impossible to assess every aspect of individuals' intercultural citizenship due to the complexity and multidimensionality of the construct of intercultural citizenship. He further stresses upon the conclusions of other scholars stating that some aspects of intercultural citizenship are hard to measure, and concluding with a firm notion that scholars and educators need to recognize that there is no ideal form of intercultural assessment, as each has its own advantages and disadvantages.

2.7. Research Gaps in Intercultural Education

This review of literature explored interculturality in its various aspects. The field of intercultural education is wide as the concept is derived from various disciplines, like anthropology, social psychology, and sociolinguistics. The focus of this review was on the evolution of interculturality from an educational perspective; thus concepts such as culture, intercultural competence, cultural identity, and intercultural citizenship were discussed from the point of view of educational and sociolinguistic scholars and researchers. Available literature on this topic is enormous, yet it does not take one long to notice the many gaps in research. Although many of the problems and challenges of intercultural education have been discussed in Section 2.5, there are still many gaps in research that have not yet been pointed out in existing literature.

There are a large number of studies on developing and assessing intercultural competence, yet the setting of those studies is nearly always the same. The available literature shows that intercultural education has been defined and studied extensively in Western countries. In fact, scholars like Dervin and his colleagues have recently criticized models that contain embedded Western values and are being presented as the ideal way to being intercultural. Nearly all available studies were conducted in Western countries, with a small portion conducted in modern countries in the Far East like Japan and Hong Kong. So far, I have not come across any well-established study that presents data from other regions to support or negate the existing models and definitions of interculturality. Furthermore, I have not encountered any study that discusses intercultural education in conflict/post-conflict areas, or in religious communities. There is

research on peace education in conflict areas, which is similar in objectives to intercultural education, yet different in structure, application, and measurement.

As critics have stated, there are indeed problems with many of the available models of interculturality; yet what I have seen so far is that the major problem lies in practice rather than in theory. Although many scholars did provide a definition of *culture* and *the other* that includes all aspects of life (e.g. age, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, etc.), in practice, research has been chiefly focusing on *culture* as nation culture and *the other* as someone who speaks a different language. Hence, the majority of intercultural research available to readers is focused on study abroad programs, where learners use a different language to communicate and interact with people from a different country. In recent years and with the advent of online communication, telecollaboration activities have become a cheaper way to connect with others; however, those others are yet again people from a different country and who speak a different language.

Intercultural research studies focused on classroom-based instruction are not as frequently conducted as study abroad and telecollaboration research studies. Also, the available research studies are often conducted in either one of the following contexts. One is in multicultural multiethnic classrooms in countries such as USA, Canada, Europe, or Australia. The other is in higher education institutions, where the student population is highly heterogeneous and international. I have not yet encountered any well-known research study on interculturality that connects learners from two regions of the same country, and there are barely any studies where participants came from what I call *minimal-cultural-gap* groups. Classrooms, as I personally see them, vary on a continuum depending on the cultural gap between the individuals in the group. Populations can be monocultural, but there are no culturally homogeneous populations. Even the communities with minimal cultural gaps have differences that may lead to violent extremism, especially in countries where borders were drawn with no regard to the natives' ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Another issue in intercultural research is that despite the fact that classroom-based instruction is the most feasible to the majority of the world's students, we find very little research on it. As

discussed earlier in this chapter, the bulk of research is on study abroad programs, but studying abroad is a luxury not everyone can afford. The same goes for telecollaboration studies, which are becoming more and more popular. Still, despite the rise of communication technologies in the past decade, telecollaboration is not feasible for everyone. According to the World Bank (2016), only about 45.8% of the world population is connected to the internet⁴. In-classroom instructed activities could be the only option to develop learners' interculturality, yet more of such research is needed to understand the complexity of the different classroom contexts.

Furthermore, many classrooms around the world still follow traditional and outdated teaching methods that focus primarily on state imposed curricula, and there is no available research that discusses the possibilities, the implications, and the limitations of intercultural education in such traditional classroom contexts. Available in-classroom studies are all conducted employing modern teaching methods where teachers have the freedom, time, and resources to implement an intercultural activity or follow an intercultural training course. So far, there has not been any study conducted in educational settings where students are treated as receivers of information, and where the educational system is exam-oriented. One of the problems in intercultural research is that it assumes modern and flexible settings for implementation, with no regards and no advice on how to put intercultural education into practice in restrictive settings with minimal resources, little educational freedom, and sometimes little freedom of speech, thought or belief.

Lastly, one of the trends in intercultural research that I have noticed is the focus on adults and young adults. There are studies that involve high school students—the work of O'Dowd is an example. Another recent example is a study by Shepherd (2018) who implemented a lesson plan confronting Islamophobia with his seventh graders in the USA. However, there are not any studies that show whether there is a difference in intercultural education based on the age of learners. There is no literature on the different needs of each age group when it comes to choosing intercultural activities and intercultural assessment methods in intercultural education, especially young learners in primary and secondary levels. Also, literature and theory have constantly presented arguments supporting the notion that there is a relationship between

⁴ According to *Internet World Stats*, by June 2018, 55.1% of the world population was connected to the internet. North America 95%, Europe 85.2%, Oceania 68.9%, Latin America 67.2%, Middle East 64.5%, Asia 49%, and Africa 36.1%.

learners' psychosocial and identity development and the development of their interculturality, but there are not any available studies that actually explain and discuss this relationship. I believe the schooling years to be crucial for developing learners' intercultural competences, as many students move to a generally more diverse environment when they relocate to attend university or start work with all types of people, and it is important that they are prepared to face differences and accept diversity. As Byram (2013) says, "*education is [...] preparation, a preparation for something else, something later [...] the entry into the world of work, to university or to a job*" (p.54).

2.8. Research Questions

After careful review of the available literature and research gaps in intercultural education, this study proposes the following research questions in an attempt to understand the implication of intercultural education in a unique and previously unexplored context.

In traditional teaching-and-learning classrooms in minimal-cultural-gap contexts,

- 1) what intercultural competences do high school students demonstrate during a series of reflective intercultural activities?
- 2) what type of factors influencing intercultural competence does students' engagement in reflective intercultural activities reveal?

3. METHODOLOGY

The literature review in Chapter 2 pointed out the lack of insight on intercultural education in five different areas, which are: (1) intercultural education of young and adolescent learners, (2) intercultural education in traditional learning classrooms/environments, (3) intercultural education in schools or localities with limited educational and financial resources and limited access to the internet, (4) intercultural education in minimal-cultural-gap classrooms/societies, and (5) intercultural education in conflict/post-conflict areas. In an attempt to fill some of these research gaps and contribute to a better understanding of interculturality and context, a high school in Palestine, matching four out of these five understudied contexts, was chosen as the setting for this research study. In cooperation with the English language teacher at that school, we implemented an educational project comprised of three reflective intercultural activities with two classes of high school students, which yielded the data analyzed in this study.

This methodology chapter is divided into four sections. The first section introduces the context of the study, as it provides background information on the educational and sociopolitical situation in Palestine and the selected school. The second section presents the participants of the study (i.e. the students, the teacher, and the researcher). The third section describes the research design, the three intercultural activities that were conducted with the students, the data collection tools, and the implementation and data collection process. The fourth and final section explains the data analysis procedures.

3.1. Research Context

The purpose of describing the context is twofold: firstly, so that the reader, and anyone who wishes to replicate the study in the future, would have a good understanding of the educational, sociopolitical, and cultural contexts of this study; and secondly, so that they would also be able to understand the cultural and contextual references in data collected from the participants. It is important to note that this study does not aim to investigate the context of Palestine per se, but rather aims to investigate what the context of Palestine represents—a minimal-cultural-gap population and a traditional educational system.

a) Introduction and Justification of Study Context

This study took place at one co-educational high school in Palestine chosen because it provided a combination of four major under-investigated areas as previously mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. First, the study involved high school students between the ages of 16 and 17. Second, the educational system at the school and in Palestine, in general, is a traditional textbook-based and exam-based learning system. Third, the Palestinian population is an example of a minimal-cultural-gap society. Although Palestinians are religiously, politically, and socially diverse, they still share the same language, the same ethnic origins, and the same customs and traditions. Finally, Palestine has been and is still a conflict area, where politics and religion still play a major role in the daily lives of Palestinians. One understudied area was not included in this study, because Palestine is well connected to an internet network⁵, and the school selected for this study has sufficient educational resources, including a small computer lab.

Palestine was chosen as the setting for this study not only because it represents an understudied context, but also for reasons of accessibility and familiarity. Access to schools for the purpose of research is not an easy task, in Palestine and elsewhere, especially if the project or research study requires taking time off from the teacher's assigned syllabus. However, the researcher's connections to fellow teachers and schools in her region made it possible for the study to take place. Furthermore, being a native to the region, the researcher was familiar with the educational, cultural, and sociopolitical contexts of the study and the students' background, which was an advantage point. The researcher's familiarity with the students' cultural background, and her knowledge of their sociocultural environment, as well as their language and dialect, played a significant role in data analysis.

b) Cultural Context of the Region⁶: Palestine and Israel

Cultural contact in Palestine and Israel, whether positive or negative, is inevitable. Thus, it is not easy to talk about the Palestinian context without talking about the Israeli context. The two

⁵ According the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), by 2017, 60.6% of Palestinian households in the West Bank were connected to the internet, 48.9% owned a computer/laptop/tablet at home, and 89.9% owned a smart phone.

⁶ This section presents the international reader with useful information to better understand the cultural context in the region of Palestine/Israel. The information is presented from a historic and not a political point of view.

countries are interlocked due to the fact that the area was one borderless entity⁷ for decades where the two populations lived together and interacted with each other, peacefully and non-peacefully. By the year in which most of the students in this study were born (c.2000), a complete segregation of the two entities was *de facto*, resulting in less cultural contact between the two populations.

The cultural composition of the Israeli and Palestinian populations is completely different. Up till the beginning of the 20th century, Muslims, Jews, and Christians living in Historic Palestine shared the same language, the same experiences, and had similar customs and traditions. However, the immigration of Jews from the different parts of the world to Historic Palestine, and in later years to Israel, resulted in an increased diversity within the Israeli population, which is now a multilingual⁸, multiethnic, multi-religious⁹, and multid denominational society.

Israel is a modern country with modern infrastructure. Israeli citizens have freedom of movement and freedom of travel. The laws of the country are for the most part secular; yet social norms differ depending on the ethno-religious background of the communities forming the Israeli society, as there are secular communities, ultra-religious communities, and all shades in-between. However, marriage is controlled by religious authorities, and it is solely performed under the auspicious of the religious institution both couples belong to. Civil marriages, same-sex marriages, and interfaith marriages are not legally performed in Israel, but they are recognized by the government if conducted outside Israel. The country suffers from constitutional, social, racial, and religious discrimination that is similar to what could be found in nations of immigrants.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian population is less diverse, as it has not seen any foreign immigration in the last century; on the contrary, emigration of Palestinian Christians from Israel and Palestine

⁷ Historic Palestine is what is now Israel and Palestine (West Bank and Gaza Strip), and it has been an open border entity up until the mid 1990s when Israel started setting up checkpoints and physical borders, and later built a wall that completely cut off the two entities.

⁸ According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) (2011), Israelis over the age of 20 reported the following languages as their native language; Hebrew 49%, Arabic 18%, Russian 15%, Yiddish 2%, French 2%, English 2%, Spanish 1.6% , and 10% other languages (including Romanian, German, and Amharic).

⁹ The Israeli population is mostly Jewish (74.5%) with large minorities of Muslims (17.75%), Christians (1.95%), Druze (1.6%), and other small communities such as the Baha'is and the Samaritans (ICBS, 2017).

has reduced the diversity of the population in the region, particularly in Palestine. The Palestinian population is predominantly Sunni Muslim, with a multid denominational¹⁰ Christian community comprising of about 0.98% of the population, 49.5% of them live in Bethlehem region (PCBS, 2017), where the students in this study live. Palestine is still an occupied territory under ongoing conflict and, despite modernizations, it still lacks modern infrastructure. Furthermore, the Israeli occupation controls all borders in Israel and Palestine, and it imposes restriction of movement on the Palestinian population inside the Palestinian territories and outside. Furthermore, travelling to any part of the world requires a visa from the destination country that is often denied, and crossing into Israel requires a hard to get permit from the Israeli authorities.

The law and social norms in Palestine follow the Islamic tradition, and it applies to both Muslim and Christian citizens of the country, apart from marriage and family law, since each religion has its own family court. Sexual relations before marriage as well as same-sex relations are prohibited by law and by social norms. Name and lineage are passed from fathers to children, so children born to women out of wedlock are given a birth certificate without a last name. This exposes them to social stigma all their lives. Adoption would not provide them with a last name either, since Islamic law prohibits men from giving their name to their non-biological children.

Dress code has changed drastically in the past two decades, as the great majority of Muslim women now-a-days wear a Hijab, and Christian women are socially required to wear non-revealing clothes in public. Religious discrimination exists in Palestine, but there is a general atmosphere of harmonious living, as religious discrimination rarely turns into violence like in other countries. The Palestinian society is a collective tribal society, and as in any society where collectivism prevails, people live by the creed that one cannot separate himself/herself from the group, whether this group was one's clan, one's religion, or one's hometown.

Regardless of religious affiliations, Israeli and Palestinian populations are for the most part religious, and religion still affects people's social lives, attitudes, the way they interact with each

¹⁰ Christians in Palestine and Israel are Greek Orthodox (majority), Melkite (Greek) Catholics, Roman (Latin) Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans, Copts, Assyrians, Armenians, Presbyterian, Jehovah's Witnesses, and others.

other, as well as governmental laws and policies. The first intercultural interaction for Palestinian children is with Israelis, whether it is the Israeli soldier at the checkpoint or at the borders, a shop keeper, or a restaurant waiter in Israel. There are some rapprochement activities and meetings between Israeli and Palestinian students, but they are frowned upon by many who consider the normalization of relationships between the two people to be wrong and unnatural in a state of war. Regarding politics, it is hard to generalize as both Palestinians and Israelis are divided in opinion, some want all of Historic Palestine for themselves without the existence of the other, some are pro a two-state solution, and others believe in a one-state solution where both people can live together with equal rights. However, religious and radical education is still common in many Israeli and Palestinian schools. A major study¹¹ (Adwan, Bar-Tal, & Wexler, 2016) of Israeli and Palestinian textbooks in 2013 revealed that textbooks on both sides include dehumanizing and demonizing characteristics of the other, present unilateral national narratives that portrays the other as the enemy, lack information about the culture and religion of the other, and present the other with negative bias while presenting oneself with positive bias.

c) Educational Context in Palestine

The end of World War I saw an end to the Ottoman rule of Palestine. The British Mandate of Palestine (1923-1948) brought with it British laws that regulated people's lives, including a British educational system. The 1948 War resulted in the establishment of an Israeli state on parts of Historic Palestine, a Jordanian administrative rule in the West Bank, and an Egyptian one in the Gaza Strip. Between 1948 and 1967, Palestinian life and education were controlled by Jordanian and Egyptian laws and regulations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, respectively. After the 1967 war, Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip, thus bringing with it another set of rules and regulations. In other words, education in Palestine has always been enforced by a foreign ruler until the establishment of the Palestinian authority in 1994 and the nationalization of all textbooks in the year 2000.

Nonetheless, there are many problems facing the educational sector in Palestine. Some are a result of the Israeli occupation; for example, curfews, roadblocks, and checkpoints that prevent

¹¹ *Portrayal of the "Other" in Israeli and Palestinian School Books*. Initiated by the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land. Funded by a grant from the United States Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, and awarded to A Different Future. Study Report, February 4, 2013.

teachers and students from reaching their schools. Others are a result of lack of resources; for example, many schools are housed in unsuitable buildings with unhealthy infrastructure and overcrowded classrooms, and lack any educational resources and facilities such as science labs, library books, and educational tools. Furthermore, some problems are a result of the educational system itself, like the unsuitable curricula, the employment of unqualified teachers, the absence of teacher incentives and low salaries, and the lack of educational freedom resulting from enforced nationalized curricula. The Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education (from now on, PMEHE) is constantly working on improving the educational sector by introducing more modern methods of teaching and evaluation, and it is constantly reviewing the curricula and the textbooks. However, there are still many cultural and educational problems with these textbooks, mainly as all these educational improvements are being added on top of an old system that follows old methodologies instead of changing and replacing them.

Schools in Palestine are categorized according to their financing and supervising body¹², and they are also categorized by gender¹³. They all follow the same educational system set by the PMEHE. The school year is divided into two semesters, and the school year starts between the last week of August and the beginning of September, and it ends either beginning or end June, depending on the type of school and its internal regulations. According to the PMEHE (2017), the formal educational system in Palestine consists of two years of pre-school, ten years of primary school, which is compulsory basic education, and then two years of secondary education, after which one can pursue higher education.

The educational system in Palestine is still exam-oriented despite a new grading system¹⁴ that takes into consideration participation, research, and other activities as well. Students' grades decide their future. At the end of tenth grade, students are divided according to their grades into

¹² Public schools are run by the government, and private schools are run by religious institutions, charitable societies, or private companies. There are also schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which were established by the United Nations for Palestinian refugees. According to the PCBS, by 2017, public schools made up 79.3% of schools in the West Bank, private schools made 16.5%, while UNRWA schools made up about 4.2%.

¹³ About 66% of the schools in the West Bank are gender segregated, and only 34% are co-educational (PCBS, 2017).

¹⁴ Grading system percentages: 70% exams (20% daily, 20% mid-term, and 30% final), and 30% other activities (participation, research, and other activities) (Source: School records).

what is called a *stream* of learning. Students who wish to continue their academic studies are divided into two academic learning streams (Scientific and Humanities), whereas those who wish to do vocational studies are recommended to change schools at the end of ninth grade, and are offered five vocational learning streams (Industrial, Commercial, Agricultural, Nursing, and Hospitality). Two years later, at the end of twelfth grade, students have to sit for comprehensive memory-based governmental exams; students are examined in the subjects of their own stream of study. Students who pass are awarded a *Tawjihi* certificate, which is equivalent to a baccalaureate degree in Europe, and this certificate allows them to pursue higher education. Those who fail can retake the exams or repeat the whole year depending on how many subjects they failed.

Study options in higher education are determined by the *Tawjihi* grade as well as the student's learning stream. Vocational stream students as well as Humanities stream students are limited to certain higher education subjects related to their field of study, whereas Scientific stream students have a more free choice of subjects depending on their *Tawjihi* grades, which means that the higher the grade is, the wider the options are and vice versa. Therefore, students focus on enhancing their memorization skills in order to pass these exams and get the grade that would allow them to study whatever they want after high school.

Although literacy rate in Palestine is one of the highest in the world¹⁵, there are many problems within the Palestinian educational system. According to reports¹⁶ from several NGOs, individual researchers, and educational institutions, some of these problems include: (a) an ever changing curriculum that does not take into consideration students' learning needs, (b) teacher trainings that are very theoretical and focus on old methodologies, (c) an inadequate system to evaluate students' academic achievement that is memory-based and textbook-oriented, (d) a serious lack of extracurricular activities, and (e) low integration of critical thinking in teaching. Teachers cannot choose their own syllabus, as they have to follow textbooks and plans assigned by the

¹⁵ According to the World Bank data, literacy rate in Palestine (15 years old and above) increased from 86% in 1997 to 97% in 2016. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?locations=PS>

¹⁶ Pacetti, E. (2009); Ramahi, H. (2015); Romahi, E. & Issa, O. (2010); Affouneh S. (2014); Reba', A. & Harzallah, H. (2018).

government. They are required to complete certain textbook units within a specific timeframe, regardless of the real time students need to study and understand the material.

Curricula, including teaching-and-learning plans, timetable, and textbooks, are designed and assigned by the government for all schools. However, private schools are allowed to choose their own textbooks for English language and other foreign languages, as long as they are approved by the PMEHE. This applies to all grades except for grade twelve. All high schools preparing 12th-grade students for the *Tawjihi* exams have to follow 12th-grade textbooks selected by the government, because the *Tawjihi* exams test students in the content of those textbooks and not their level of knowledge of the language. Students study these textbooks all year long and, at the end of the year, they sit for memory-based exams that cover the content of those textbooks from cover to cover.

Although all schools in Palestine are controlled by the regulations of the PMEHE, private schools also have their internal regulations and strategies, which make them offer better education than public schools. First, private schools teach more than one foreign language, and the language textbooks they choose offer a better and higher level of language teaching. Second, their teachers are carefully selected, and better paid. Third, private schools offer a variety of extracurricular activities, and some of them send students abroad on school exchange trips. Fifth, private schools are more flexible and more open to implementing cultural projects as part of their curricular and extracurricular activities. Despite all that, the educational system at private schools is still influenced by the national educational culture and it is still a memory-based and textbook-oriented system of learning, which leaves little room for developing students' individual and critical thinking skills.

Private schools in Palestine are also categorized by their governing body. There are a few run by Islamic charity organizations, and very few run by private companies, but most of them are Christian church-run schools. Christian schools were established by missionaries and local churches at the beginning of and during the 20th century to serve the local Christian communities, yet they are not exclusive for Christians. Many Muslim families choose to send their children to Christian schools, and the reasons vary. Many prefer them for the quality of

education and the extracurricular activities they offer, and some choose them so that their children can grow up in a mixed culture and away from religious extremism. Although these Christian schools offer elite education compared to public schools, but they are not schools for the elite. Their doors are open to all students from all socioeconomic and religious backgrounds.

Regardless of type of school, a student's day starts between half past seven and eight o'clock in the morning. A school's day starts with students queuing in the school yard, where they listen to the school's morning broadcast prepared by their fellow students. During these morning broadcasts, students read headlines and stories from local and global news. Afterwards, Morning Prayers are recited before going into class. Almost each day, public and Islamic schools select a student to read verses from the Quran on a loudspeaker to all, whereas Christian schools have either a small service in the school chapel (if one exists on the premises) or recite a morning prayer, like *Heavenly Father*, while still queuing in the school yard. Classes are between 40 and 45 minutes long depending on students' age and type of school. They have between six and eight classes a day, again depending on age and school. During those classes they get a short recess once or twice every day. Apart from that, students do not leave their classrooms. Each grade has its own classroom and teachers move between them each period. Only during sports period, and in case there is a music room, a workshop, or a lab, students leave their own classrooms. However, such facilities and resources are scarce in Palestinian schools.

d) The Participating School

This study took place at one private co-educational Christian school in the region of Bethlehem. As a self-governing private school, the school's principal can authorize the implementation of projects without the permission of the PMEHE, whereas conducting research in public schools requires permission from ministry officials, who strictly inspect the appropriateness of the content of the research study before approving the implementation. Furthermore, and as noted earlier in this chapter, all teachers (public and private) are restricted by government-imposed teaching plans and timetables, thus making it difficult to request time out of the assigned syllabus to do activities for research purposes. However, the principal and the English language teacher at the chosen school were excited and ready to help with the implementation of the activities designed for this study, as the school always welcomes projects that could come with benefit to

the students. Consequently, they assigned two weeks to be dedicated to implementing the study's intercultural project. Time restriction and its effect on the study will be later discussed in the challenges and limitations section in Chapter 5.

The school has a majority of Christian students and staff as it mainly serves a community with a Christian majority. The school offers pre-school, primary, and secondary education to around 400 students. There is a kindergarten, classes from grade one to ten, and two 11th-grade classes (Humanities and Scientific streams), and two 12th-grade classes (also Humanities and Scientific streams). All students attend classes in the same compound. The school has modest financial resources, but it is well equipped with educational resources. There is a small computer lab, a science and mathematics lab, a small carpentry workshop, a music room, and a modest library.

The school teaches English as a first foreign language and German as a second foreign language. Students start learning English in kindergarten and German in third grade. The school was established by German missionaries and it still maintains relationships with Germany. Almost every year a couple of teachers and the school's dance troupe and choir go to Germany or Switzerland for a cultural tour to present Palestinian folklore dances and songs, and to meet and stay with German-speaking families. These students are recommended to present a short report to their fellow classmates after they get back from their trip; however, there is no real follow-up or reflection on the experience of this cultural exchange.

There is also an exchange program with Germany, where two students get a scholarship to study for one year in a school in Germany to improve their German language. These students are chosen, firstly, based on their academic achievement and language skills and, secondly, based on their parents' ability to finance their stay, since the scholarship does not cover all expenses. In fact, one of the students in this study was an exchange student in Germany the year before the study took place. The school does not normally receive foreign exchange students, because all subjects apart from English and German are taught in Arabic. However, the school frequently receives German and American interns, who work as language teaching assistants. Teachers at the school commented to the researcher that students are nice and open to them and they

normally befriend them quickly, regardless of their race and color. Many students reported on their encounters with these foreign volunteers in their Cultural Passports.

To sum up, conducting this study in this private school was ultimately a highly satisfactory choice. First, the school's students had a higher level of English language skills, which was needed to do the project's activities. Second, it is a co-educational mixed school, which offered the opportunity to observe any gender or religious differences. Third, as a private school, the research study did not require approval from the PMEHE. The school was accessible and flexible, and a much safer option than public schools, where possible censorship and rejection from the PMEHE could have put a hold on the implementation of the study. Fourth, the English language teacher at this school was interested in the study and the activities, and he was willing to cooperate.

3.2. Participants

This section introduces the three agents involved in the study. (1) The high school students who participated in the research project, (2) the teacher who implemented the research project with the students, and (3) the researcher who developed the research project and analyzed the data collected from students and teacher.

a) The Students

As mentioned earlier, the study took place in a private co-educational Christian school. The study initially involved 34 students, aged between 16 and 17, from the two streams of the 11th grade, the Humanities class and the Scientific class. However, two male students from the Scientific class did not complete the activities, and thus were not included in this study. In the end, as Table 3.1 shows, the study included a final total of 32 students.

Table 3.1: Distribution of students by class, gender, and religion.

Classification Stream	By Class	By Gender		By Religion	
	Total	Female	Male	Christian	Muslim
Humanities	15	8	7	13	2
Scientific	17	6	11	11	6
Total	32	14	18	24	8

The researcher opted for higher classes in this study for three main reasons. First of all, upper classes have better command of the English language than lower classes, which gives them the ability to write good and intelligible essays. The teacher who showed interest in the study teaches secondary level classes, that is, class 11 and class 12. He recommended the 11th graders, since the 12th graders were busy preparing for their *Tawjihi* exams. A language level test was not conducted, since the study did not intend to investigate students' linguistic skills, only their intercultural competences. In addition, the teacher reported that the students had a good enough level to do the project's activities.

Second, the students fall into the age category of maturing adolescents (13-19 years old), which is the time when teenagers start developing their unique personalities and opinions. According to the psychosocial theories of the prominent psychologist Erik Erikson (1963), adolescence is the time when humans undergo the identity formation process. "*The adolescent mind is essentially a mind or moratorium, a psychosocial stage between childhood and adulthood, and between the morality learned by the child, and the ethics to be developed by the adult.*" (p. 245). Adolescents at this time search for a sense of self and personal identity by exploring personal values and beliefs. Development of intercultural competence involves not only negotiation of culture, but also the development of a personal and unique multi-layered identity, which draws on more than one culture, as well as the development of a collective identity (Huber, 2012), which could be the first step to turn young learners to global and intercultural adults.

Third, these students are going to enter a different universe once they start their university studies in a year's time. Whether they choose to study at local universities or move abroad to study at foreign universities, they will eventually meet people who are different from them, who come from different cultural backgrounds than their own. Hence, it is important to start preparing them at this age for any potential intercultural encounter, so as to help equip them with competences they might need when they come face-to-face with others with different views and different life experiences. More data on each student is presented and discussed in Part 1 of Chapter 4.

b) The Teacher

As mentioned previously, it was not an easy task to find a motivated teacher, who was interested in the activities, and who was willing to give time off of his assigned syllabus to implement this study's project with his students. As an agent involved in the study, it is important to explain his cultural background and his role in the research study.

The teacher who helped implement this study is a male teacher in his late 30's. He is a local teacher from the same region as the students. He is a practicing Catholic, but recounts that he does not allow his religious views to influence his teaching. He has a Master's degree and around 10 years of teaching experience. He describes himself as a modern teacher, and as one who socializes and befriends his students. He often listens to their problems and helps them on the academic and personal levels. He enjoys employing modern teaching methods in his language classrooms, such as drama and role-playing. However, he feels that the PMEHE is limiting his work by imposing strict regulation on the curriculum and the educational timeframes. He further asserts that this is killing his students' creativity by forcing them to memorize the study materials instead of developing their critical thinking skills.

The teacher, although busy and overworked, was very excited to implement the activities with his students, as he saw it as an opportunity for his students, as well as for himself, to learn and advance. He stated that students need such kind of activities to open their minds and help them become critical thinkers. In an interview with him after the implementation process, he said that he learned a lot of new information from doing the intercultural activities, especially regarding the religions of the world. He also pointed out realizing that the complexity of this type of education (i.e. intercultural education) lies not in the topics themselves, but rather in how the teacher introduces these topics to the students. This required him to read and prepare for the activities whenever he was faced with an unfamiliar topic, in order to facilitate students' learning experience and the classroom discussions.

His experience during the implementation of the activities was a difficult one, he admitted. He said it took a lot of energy out of him, as some students and their parents were very negative and at times hard to deal with. He described the students as a *tough crowd*. He said that they were

interested and excited to learn about the topics of the activities, but they were not motivated to do the written work. On several occasions, he was faced with negativity and stubbornness from the students. Although he assigned 15 points out of the final grade for this project, still some students did not want to do it, since it was not going to be part of any exam. His comments and feedback on the implementation process will be presented throughout Chapter 4.

c) The Researcher

Intercultural research is subjective in the same sense communication is, since not only the background of the speaker affects the meaning of the message, but also the background of the receiver affects how this message is interpreted. Therefore, it is important to understand not only the cultural background of the students, but also the cultural background of the researcher, who was responsible for the design of the research project—the reflective intercultural activities—and the analysis of students' data.

The researcher is a Palestinian female in her early 30's, who grew up in the same region as the students in this study. She grew up in war time in Palestine in a community that believed in non-violent resistance. She believes in the importance of peace and harmonious coexistence. She participated, as a teenager and as an adult, in peace and dialogue programs for Palestinian and Israeli students. She was fortunate to travel at a young age and study as an exchange student several times, which had a tremendous effect on her character and views on life. Growing up, her home environment was multicultural and different from others her own age. She grew up listening to several languages at home, reading international books, and meeting and greeting a lot of her parents' foreign friends from across the world. She finished her first degree in Palestine, and later she studied at various European universities.

She lives by a global humanistic mindset and has embraced her multicultural identity. She has experienced several types of discrimination, and she fully understands how people's lives can be tremendously affected by rejection and discrimination based on being different, and based on thinking and behaving differently. Her mission, as an academic, is to help young people break from the group mentality and learn to embrace their own unique identities with any and all micro and macro differences, and also to learn to accept and respect others who are different from

them. Her intercultural approach to education is not about changing beliefs, but about changing mindsets, just as the American cultural anthropologist, Margaret Mead (1928), once said, "*Children must be taught how to think, not what to think.*"

3.3. Research Design

This section presents the research paradigm and methodology, the project's intercultural activities, the data collection tools, and the timeline of the implementation and data collection.

a) Research Paradigm and Methodology

According to Oetzel, Pant and Rao (2016), research on intercultural communication has been conducted using primarily three different methodological approaches: social scientific, interpretive, and critical, with creative possibilities for combining more than one that could potentially provide a fuller understanding of intercultural communication. Cresswell and Plano Clark (2011) further suggested that mixing methods in studies provides opportunities for the integration of a variety of theoretical perspectives that could be used concurrently or at different phases. This research is a multiparadigmatic (Taylor & Medina, 2013) research that was constructed following theoretical perspectives from the critical theory paradigm, the pragmatic paradigm, and the constructivist/interpretive paradigm.

First, critical theory presupposes that reality is shaped by social, political, economic, ethnic and gender-based forces (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), and it has a hidden agenda of change and reform (Scotland, 2012), which is at the core of intercultural education. A critical perspective was considered in the construction of this intercultural research, so that it could provide insight on how to bring about change in students and in society. Second, in the pragmatic paradigm, reality is what works and generates practical consequences for society that opens opportunities for better ways of democratic, purposeful living (Gray, 2013). A pragmatist perspective contributed to the design of this intercultural research as it considers whether the teaching-and-learning approach employed in this study could improve the teaching-and-learning of intercultural competence to adolescent students.

Finally, a constructivist/interpretive theory holds that reality is constructed in the mind of the individual, rather than it being an externally singular entity (Hansen, 2004). These realities and constructs are not more or less true, but rather more or less informed and/or sophisticated, since these constructions are alterable as well as their associated realities (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). An interpretive approach suggests that social actors in particular places at a particular time create meaning out of a complex process of social interactions, and to understand this world of meaning, one has to interpret it (Schwandt, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). According to Schwandt (1998), to prepare an interpretation is itself to construct a reading of these meanings. Basically, researchers are constructing meaning from the constructions of the subjects or participants of their study, which is what this study and many others in the field of intercultural education have done. They create knowledge of intercultural competence through interpreting students' constructions.

The methodological approach of this study is a qualitative exploratory case study. Indeed, a case study is one of the best methodological options to explore and obtain an understanding of an issue where there is no preliminary research; it also allows the examination of data within a specific previously unexplored context (Yin, 1994). It has been frequently utilized in the study of intercultural competence, and it was the top choice of methods to assess intercultural competence as reported by various intercultural scholars in Deardorff's (2006) key survey study. An exploratory case study typically attempts to answer *what* questions (Yin, 2014). In this research study, a couple of *what* questions (see Chapter 2 Section 2.8) have been put forward to explore a new previously unexplored context, that could be "*a prelude to additional research efforts*" as Hancock and Algozzine (2011, p. 37) have described it.

The case study design is in the form of an embedded single-case study (Yin, 1994), where intercultural education is investigated in one specific context with various sub-units of analysis. According to Baxter and Jack (2008), looking at sub-units within a larger case is powerful, since it provides a rich analysis that serves to better illuminate the case. In this study, the whole group represents a single-case study with the individual students acting as sub-units. Nonetheless, Yin (1994, 2003) warns that too much attention to the sub-units might lead researchers to ignore the holistic aspect of the case. To avoid this happening in this study, the researcher presented the

results holistically while providing details and examples from each sub-unit of analysis, i.e. each student. As the results and discussion chapters show, the researcher presents a holistic view of the context she studied with detailed accounts from each student. Furthermore, to reduce selection bias, the researcher included all 32 students who took part in this study and all of their written productions in data analysis.

b) The Project's Intercultural Activities

The activities selected and designed for this project were mainly classroom-based learning activities, which were performed by the students in the classroom within regular school hours. The activities focused on classroom discussions, research, and writing assignments, which involved continuous reflection on intercultural topics. Classroom discussions and reflection have been useful tools in intercultural learning (e.g. Jacobson, 1999; Liaw & Bunn-Le Master, 2010; Clouet, 2013; Juan-Garau & Jacob, 2015; Feng, 2016; and others), and have been recommended by many scholars who have investigated intercultural competence (e.g. Martinelli & Taylor, 2000; Deardorff, 2011; Navaitiene et al., 2013).

Similarly, writing activities have been widely used in intercultural research serving two purposes: as an instrument for intercultural learning, and as a data collection instrument (e.g. Krajewski, 2011; Helm, 2009; Georgiou, 2011; and others). Several experts (e.g. Navaitiene et al., 2013; Huber & Reynolds, 2014; Skopenskaja, 2009) recommend the use of writing activities, not only as a tool for assessment, but also as a tool to help students express their thoughts and feelings, enabling them to reflect on critical intercultural topics. For this research project, three writing activities were selected targeting three different writing genres; these are (1) a compare/contrast essay, (2) a short report in form of PowerPoint presentation, and (3) a piece of creative writing (see Appendix 1). Each activity focuses on one form of social bias as a theme/topic of study; these are prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination, respectively.

The reason for the choice of topics comes in twofold. Firstly, these themes of social bias are not culture-specific; they are global phenomena internationally relatable and widely relevant to everyone's life. This choice was made in counter response to the multitude of research focusing on bi-cultural comparisons as means of developing intercultural competence (e.g. Schenker,

2012; Ge, 2004, O'Dowd, 2003; Chun, 2011; Jin, 2015; and many more). Although such studies involve topics on both concrete and abstract forms of culture, their activities still focus solely on target-language culture and do not go beyond lifestyle comparisons and everyday communications. A majority of scholars in the field affirm that intercultural competence is not merely comparing and contrasting one's own culture to the target language culture, but also the ability to create for oneself a comfortable third place between one's source language culture and the target language culture (e.g. Kramsch, 1993; Lo Bianco et al., 1999; Byram, 1997; Crozet & Liddicoat, 1999; O'Dwod, 2003; Bennett 2004; and others). Hence, the activities in this project involved a multiplicity of international non-culture-specific elements to help students reflect on their own identity and develop their own individual personalities away from the constraints of having to fit into one culture or another. Although the majority of studies use culture-specific themes, some have actually used non cultural-specific themes (e.g. Clouet, 2013; Liaw, 2006; Shah-Gordon, 2016; Georgiou, 2011).

The second reason for choosing these themes stems from the researcher's personal belief that intercultural activities should allow for the development of critical awareness on social injustices in students' lives and the lives of others, which is a view shared by many scholars who advocate intercultural education to promote peaceful coexistence (e.g. Barrett, 2016; Byram, 2008c; and others). As it is clearly stated in the UNESCO Intercultural Competence Framework (2013); *"Intercultural competences complement human rights as a catalyst for promoting a culture of peaceful and harmonious coexistence."* (p. 8). Thus, activities aiming at developing learners' intercultural competence should aim to help students become more tolerant towards others and respect their basic human rights. As Byram (2009b) affirms, "[...] *tolerance and respect are steps in the direction of interculturality, and both tolerance and respect are necessary prerequisites for effective intercultural dialogue to take place'* (p.8). Accordingly, the activities in this study constituted of elements that engaged students in thinking about social bias to help them better understand and recognize the various forms of stereotyping, intolerance, and discrimination, i.e. what constitutes social bias, how to spot it, how to deal with it.

- ***The First Activity: 'Stereotypes'***

The first activity was called *Stereotypes*. The objective of this activity was to understand and deconstruct stereotypical images of one's own cultural background and those of others around the world. Students were introduced to the topic by the teacher assisted with a worksheet on stereotypes designed by the researcher (see Appendix 2). Afterwards, students were required to write a compare/contrast essay about themselves. They were asked to write about three ways they saw themselves similar to the stereotypical image of their culture and three ways they saw themselves different, and why. The topic of stereotypes has been successfully used in intercultural studies (e.g. Shah-Gordon, 2016; Georgiou, 2011; Le Baron-Earle, 2013; Clouet, 2013) to familiarize students with the term stereotype and its multiple forms, and to encourage them to dig deep into the roots of their attitudes to critically recognize their own prejudices.

This activity also intended to help students find their own comfortable *third place* culture by comparing and contrasting their own beliefs to the beliefs and values of their own culture and other cultures they are exposed to. This writing genre of compare/contrast has been recommended by experts such as Navaitiene et al. (2013) in their book *Methodology for Development of Intercultural Competence*, and also by scholars such as Byram, Barrett, and Lazar (see Huber & Reynolds, 2014); it has also been examined in several classroom studies related to intercultural education, such as Schenker (2012), Carrillo Cabello (2012), and Martin (2013). In a sense, the use of this type of genre allows students to reflect on their own culture, and it helps them understand the relationship between their culture and their own identity to better understand who they are and what makes them themselves.

- ***The Second Activity: Prejudice and Religious (In)tolerance***

The second activity was the *Religions of the World*. The objective of this activity was to understand the causes of faith-based prejudice and intolerance, and how ignorance of other faiths may lead to misunderstandings, disrespect, and conflict. Students were introduced to the topic using an information sheet, created by the researcher; showing basic data on the major religions of the world (see Appendix 3). Afterwards, students were required to choose one faith other than their own, do an internet research on it at home, and present, in class, a written report on how one can be respectful and avoid accidental insults or misunderstanding when communicating

with someone from a different religious background. Report writing comes as a recommended activity in intercultural research as suggested by Deardorff (2006) and Martinelli and Taylor (2000), as it requires students to search and write about something that is new to them, and present it in an objective manner. Report writing has been widely employed in intercultural education (e.g. Krajewski, 2011; Juan-Garau & Jacob, 2015).

As for the topic of prejudice, it has been a recurrent theme in intercultural studies alongside the theme of stereotypes (e.g. Clouet, 2013; Georgiou, 2011). However faith-based prejudice has not been frequently used as a standalone topic for the purpose of intercultural teaching, most probably due to the sensitivity of such a topic. In the case of this study, students were only required to research certain aspects on one chosen faith and prepare a short presentation for their classmates, introducing facts and giving advice on how to be respectful when meeting and interacting with followers of that faith. There were not asked to do any comparing or contrasting of any kind between those religions. However, this topic proved to be a conflicting and sensitive issue as we will see in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

• ***The Third Activity: Discrimination and the Isms***¹⁷

The third activity by the name of *The Isms* was the last in this series of reflective intercultural activities. The objective of this activity was to be aware of and able to recognize types of discrimination and to promote tolerance through creative work. Students were introduced to the topic by the teacher assisted with an information sheet containing definitions of various forms of *isms* as well as a worksheet on some *isms* that were designed by the researcher (see Appendix 4). Students were given freedom of choice regarding the creative work of their final written production, e.g. a play, a song, short story, cartoons, etc. As suggested by scholars in Huber and Reynolds (2014), creative writing is a good activity for developing intercultural competence, since it can help learners develop willingness to question what is usually taken for granted in their own environment and challenge it.

¹⁷ *Isms* is a term used to refer to words ending with the suffix *-ism*, such as sexism, racism, nationalism, etc. In this activity, *the isms* refer to social injustice isms as can be seen in Appendix 4.

The activity involved students writing about one or more types of *isms*, to highlight or criticize types of discrimination they see around them, whether it was practiced against them or by them against others. The topic of discrimination has been previously employed in case studies by Clouet (2013) and Juan-Garau and Jacob (2015), whereas in other studies, discrimination comes up as a theme in discussions (e.g. Liaw, 2006; De Leon, 2014; Turner, 2009; Shah-Gordon, 2016; Georgiou, 2011). Discrimination is an excellent topic for discussion and it impels students to see life matters from different perspectives. This activity was developed to explicitly teach and discuss discrimination with students, since it is not a certainty that students recognize and comprehend all forms of *isms*, especially their own and their communities'.

c) Data Collection Tools

As discussed in the literature review, many arguments have been put forward, in the past years, on whether we should assess intercultural competence or not, and if yes, what would be the best way to go about it. Although scholars have reached a consensus that intercultural competence can be assessed, yet still, assessment majorly depends on (1) learning objectives and expected outcomes, (2) the definition and component of intercultural competence, and most importantly (3) the reason for the assessment itself. As this section unfolds, it will become clear how this study took into consideration the recent criticism of assessment of intercultural competence. Firstly, clear definitions of working concepts were clearly established, such as the definition of *culture* and *other*, as well as clear definitions of the constructs of intercultural competence. Secondly, the purpose of assessment was not to evaluate students' competences, but rather to diagnose them in relation to the context of the study, in order to be able to assess strengths and weaknesses that would contribute to better planning and execution of intercultural education.

In order to do such diagnostic assessment, quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments were used in this study research. These instruments can be divided into three types based on their purpose of use: (1) tools to collect background data on students, which included a student's self-reported cultural log called *Cultural Passport*, and a psychosocial questionnaire measuring students' degree of acceptance of diversity, (2) tools to collect qualitative data on students' intercultural competences, which included students' essays, and their self-reported reflective journals, and (3) tools to obtain complimentary information, which consisted of only

one interview with the teacher. All data analyzed in this study was obtained from the above mentioned tools, apart from students grades, which were directly obtained from school records.

All data collected from students were combined in a portfolio form. The Portfolio system was introduced to the students as a tool for collecting and documenting progress and achievement (see Appendix 5). According to Jacobson et al. (1999), the portfolio is a great tool for assessing both learning process and learning outcomes, and it provides an excellent context for self-reflection. Students were asked to save their works and any other cultural materials they collected in their own personal portfolio, so that they could show their work and reflect on their progress for the duration of the project's activities. Table 3.2 below shows a list of all data collection tools employed in this research study, which will be discussed in detail in the following sections, and how many items were collected.

Table 3.2: List and number of data collection tools and their purpose.

Nº	Data Collection Tools	Number of Tools Collected	Purpose
1	Student's Cultural Passport	32	To collect background data on students.
2	Self-reported Questionnaire: The Miville-Guzman University Diversity Scale	32	
3	Student's Essays	74	To collect qualitative data on students' intercultural competences.
4	Student's Guided Reflective Journal	95	
5	Teacher's Interview	1	To collect supplementary data on students and implementation process.

• ***Student's Cultural Passport***

Cultural logs have been recommended and frequently used by experts such as Skopenkaja (2009), Lázár, Huber-Kriegler, Lussier, Matei and Peck (2007), and the INCA project (2004). In this study, a cultural log titled *My Cultural Passport* was requested from students at the beginning of the activities. The aim was to collect demographic data on students' cultural and family background and their prior intercultural experiences. It was also meant to help students understand what constitutes a cultural identity. The Cultural Passport was developed by the researcher based on the 12 dimensions of culture by Awad (2014), excluding the dimension of *sexual orientation* for taboo and ethical reasons—which proved to be a controversial issue— as

will be seen in the results chapter. The Cultural Passport required students to provide biographical information on themselves and their families, they were also asked to include information on their travels and encounters with culturally different people. Students were asked to write about their cultural identity in any creative way they choose considering the points presented in the guidelines (see Appendix 6). At the end of the project, 32 cultural profiles were collected from students.

- ***Self-reported Questionnaire: The Miville-Guzman University Diversity Scale***

A plethora of quantitative tools and instruments to assess and diagnose both intercultural sensitivity and intercultural competence have already been created and put to use (see Table 2.6 under Section 2.4 in Chapter 2). The majority of these tools take the form of self-reported questionnaire-like aptitude or placement tests. Each one measures different components of intercultural competence or intercultural sensitivity depending on the model it is based on. After careful review of the available and accessible instruments, it became clear than such type of quantitative instruments do not fit the context of this study. The reasons are as follows.

First of all, the vast majority of those instruments were designed for immersion settings targeting expatriate workers, study abroad students, sojourners, and those who live in diverse communities and have direct encounters with member of other cultures and subculture. Most of these instruments comprise of situational judgment questions/statements which require one to answer based on either an actual encounter or a hypothetical one. This study took place in a minimal-cultural-gap context, where learners rarely have day-to-day encounters with others from distant/dissimilar cultures. Therefore, using such tools would most probably force learners to judge hypothetical situations that do not exist in their own context, and it also increases the risk of getting inaccurate feedback, since people tend to mark down what they think is the more politically-correct answers to give the tester a more positive image of themselves. In fact, Arasaratnam and Doerfel (2005) also presented the same argument as they suggested that the problem with self-assessment tools is not that of giving inaccurate answers, but rather not being able to answer accurately. They stated that "*a major short-coming in studies in the past is that often participants who have little experience in intercultural situations are asked for self-reports of behavioral choices in hypothetical intercultural situations*". (p. 141)

Second, this study identified knowledge, attitudes, skills, and values as the macro components of intercultural competence (as will be further discussed in Section 3.4 in this chapter). So far, there has not been an assessment tool to provide quantitative data on learners' intercultural competence based on these components. The closest instrument in terms of components is the one developed by Fantini and Tirmizi (2006), which is called *Assessment of Intercultural Competence*. However, just like the majority of instruments, it is targeted towards study abroad programs and not in-home-country in-classroom programs, as the tool is a self report of one's experience of being in a host country. Taking into consideration the recent criticism presented in literature, a quantitative assessment of intercultural competence ought to truly reflect the components of intercultural competence being measured, and in the case of this study, no tool was found that could measure the components of intercultural competence as defined in this study.

Thirdly, these tools/instruments are almost exclusively developed targeting the assessment of adults, whether they were university students, expat workers, or adult immigrants. So far, there has not been any study using such instrument on adolescent students. It is completely unpredictable to know how young students who are still developing their own cultural identity and learning about life and the world around them would interpret the questions and relate them to their own possibly limited experience. Using such instruments might pose a risk that teenage respondents might not be able to relate to or understand the questions, and thus provide inaccurate responses. These instruments should be adapted and piloted to obtain more accurate data from adolescent respondents. The circumstances of a PhD study did not allow for creating or piloting an adapted instrument due to time constraints; however, it is a recommended course of action in future studies.

In the end, since quantitative measuring of intercultural competence as defined in the context of this study was not possible, the researcher looked for the next best thing, which is to measure acceptance of differences, which is directly related to the content and the objectives of the designed intercultural activities. The most suitable quantitative instrument the researcher selected for this study was the *Miville-Guzman University Diversity Scale (M-GUDS)*. This free tool measures the *Universal-Diverse Orientation (UDO)*, or the degree to which a person accepts

diversity among people. According to Miville et al. (1999), the UDO is defined as "*an attitude toward all other persons which is inclusive yet differentiating in that similarities and differences are both recognized and accepted; the shared experience of being human results in a sense of connection with people and is associated with a plurality or diversity of interactions with others.*" (p. 292).

The concept of UDO and the M-GUDS test were first developed by Marie L. Miville in 1992 within the field of social psychology. The M-GUDS is a 45 item questionnaire with a six-point likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. It provides a total score as well as scores from three 15-item subscales that measure *Diversity of Contact* (seeking a diversity of contact with others), *Relativistic Appreciation* (having relativistic appreciation of oneself and others), and *Sense of Connection* (having a sense of connection with the larger society or humanity as a whole), which reflects the behavioral, cognitive, and affective aspects of UDO, respectively. Results from Miville et al. (1999) showed evidence of reliability with an alpha score of 0.93. Validity scores also showed that the scale is significantly related to measures of racial identity, homophobia, dogmatism, feminism, and androgyny (Miville et al., 1999).

The M-GUDS has been widely used as an assessment tool to measure interculturality in various fields since its conception. It has been used, in correlation to other tools, to assess mental health of in-training counselors/students' openness and tolerance to working with diverse clientele (Miville, Carlozzi, Gushue, Schara & Ueda, 2006). It has been also used to assess the development of students' openness to diversity pre- and post- explicit versus implicit teaching of counseling (Celinska & Swazo, 2016). In other studies, M-GUDS has been utilized to measure engineering students' ability to thrive in diverse and global environments (Main & Sanchez-Pena, 2015), and also as pre-post test to measure cross-cultural competence of global groups of engineering students (Jesiek, Shen, & Haller, 2012). Furthermore, M-GUDS was used to correlate openness to diversity with identity development, empathy, and moral reasoning to explain the reasons why some intercultural programs fail in developing students' intercultural competence and have counter results (Gerson & Neilson, 2014).

In this study, the M-GUDS test was administered to the students in a form of a questionnaire, which they had to fill in before the beginning of the activities. They were required to finish it individually in the classroom supervised by their teacher. The questionnaire contained 45 items written in English with a translation in Arabic of each item (see Appendix 7). The aim of this questionnaire was to collect background data on students in terms of their openness and acceptance to diversity and difference, in an attempt to formulate a fuller picture of the students in this study, aside from the self-reported cultural passports, essays, and reflective journals. All 32 students submitted complete questionnaires.

- ***Student's Essays***

As discussed earlier, there is not yet an instrument to provide quantitative data to measure learners' intercultural competences in contexts similar to this current study. Therefore, students' essays were employed to act as data collection tools, from which, qualitative data was extracted, coded, categorized, and then analyzed to provide evidence of emerging intercultural competences. As cited earlier in Section 3.b, written works, including essays, have been recommended by many experts in the field as data collection tools; furthermore, various studies have successfully employed such tools to assess intercultural competence (e.g. O'Dowd, 2003; Helm, 2009; Georgiou, 2011; Carrillo Cabello, 2012; and more). Students were instructed to write, in class, one short essay in English for each one of the three activities. They were instructed to write a compare/contrast essay, a report, and a creative piece (see Section 3.b and Appendix 1 for details on the writing tasks). At the end of the project, students handed in 32 essays on *Stereotypes*, 18 PowerPoint presentation on *Religions of the World*, and 24 essays on *The Isms*, which were all written in English, apart from one written in Arabic.

- ***Student's Guided Reflective Journals***

Reflective journals have been one of the major instruments recommended not only for data collection, but also for developing learners' intercultural competence. Experts such as Navaitiene et al. (2013), Ecke (2012), and Skopenskaje (2009) have strongly recommended the use of reflective diaries, and many researchers have successfully put them into practice in recent years (e.g. Medina-López-Portillo, 2004; Turner, 2009; Martin, 2013; Shah-Gordon, 2016; and more). Guided reflective journals (see appendix 8) were used, not only to help students reflect on

themselves and on the activities, but also to find out whether engaging in these activities facilitated the development of any intercultural competences or simply facilitated the emergence of these competences in their writings.

As indicated, the journals were guided, which means students were given guiding questions to help them reflect on certain issues concerning the activity they have just completed in class. Although it was a free narrative tool for students to describe their feelings and experiences, still, the guidelines were designed to steer them into deeper reflection on the intercultural learning experience as well as on their own self. Students were requested to write three reflective journals, in class, one at the end of each activity. To make it easier for the students to express their thoughts, they were given the choice to write their journals in English or in Arabic with no words limit. A total of 95 reflective journals were collected from students (32 journals on *Stereotype* activity, 32 journals on *Religions of the World* activity, and 31 on *The Isms* activity); of those, 29 were written in English, and 66 were written in Arabic.

• *Teacher's Interview*

Classroom observation was not planned for this study, as the researcher wanted to maintain an authentic classroom environment without interference from an outside agent. Therefore, a semi-structured interview with the teacher was conducted, sometime after the end of the implementation of the project, to obtain complimentary information from him on the students and on dynamics of the classroom during the implementation process. In the course of the interview, the teacher was asked to give a glimpse of what he remembered about each student in terms of their level of openness and acceptance, the way they reacted during the activities, or any difficulties or issues they had with the topics and the tasks of the activities. He was also asked about his own personal experience implementing the project's activities among other questions that came up in a one hour long conversation.

d) Implementation Timeline and Data Collected

Figure 3.1 explains the implementation timeline of the intercultural project and data collection, and is followed by a detailed description of each phase.

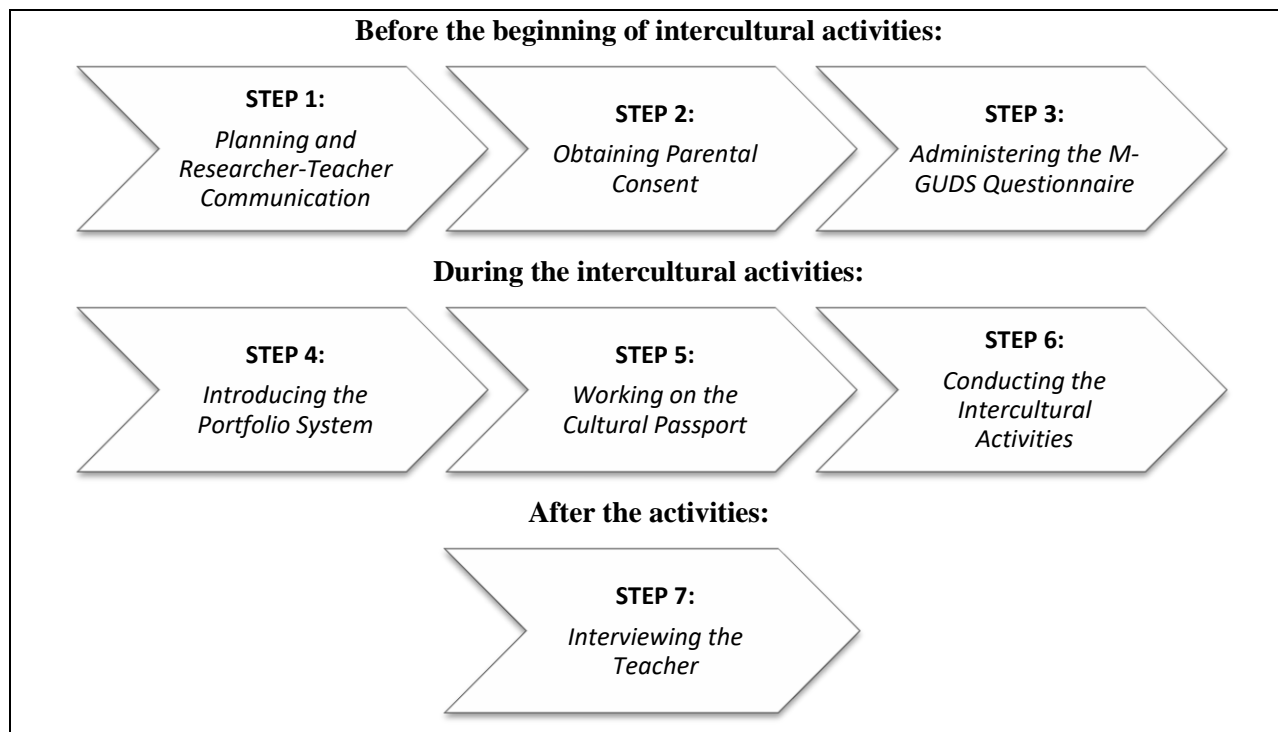


Figure 3.1: Timeline of implementation process and data collection.

STEP 1: *Planning and Researcher-Teacher Communication*

After the school's approval of the project, communication started between the researcher and the teacher to prepare for the implementation of the intercultural project. The researcher explained the project to the teacher and introduced him to several concepts related to intercultural education, since it was an unfamiliar topic to him. The researcher sent him a detailed guiding document with definitions of key concepts related to the study and a detailed plan of the implementation process, (see Appendix 9) along with a document containing the activities guidelines (see Appendix 1). The researcher also provided the teacher with the questionnaire (see Appendix 7), the worksheets (see appendices 2, 3, 4), the portfolio index (see Appendix 5), the cultural passport guidelines (see Appendix 6), the journal guidelines (see Appendix 8), and a parental consent form (see Appendix 10) to give to the students. All researcher-teacher communications happened online (via email and voice calls), as the researcher was not in Palestine during the implementation of the project. The activities were carried out in less than two weeks at the end of the second school semester.

STEP 2: Obtaining Parental Consent

Before starting the project, a parental consent form was collected from the students with their parents' signature approving the participation of their children in the study. All parents signed the forms; however, the teacher reported that some parents complained that this study might take away time from the textbook and the syllabus, and thus affect the students' performance on their final exams. The teacher reported assuring them that the syllabus will be finished on time, and that the project will be of great benefit to their children.

STEP 3: Administering the M-GUDS Questionnaire

After consent forms were collected, the M-GUDS questionnaire was administered to the students in class. The teacher supervised the students while they individually filled in the questionnaire, then he collected them and kept them in a file to later give to the researcher.

STEP 4: Introducing the Portfolio System

On the first day of the project, the researcher arranged for colorful dossier folders to be distributed to the students as a gift, and to encourage them to fully participate in the project. The teacher introduced the project and the portfolio system to the students, and for the duration of the project, students kept their project's work in these folders until the teacher collected them and passed them on to the researcher for analysis.

STEP 5: Working on the Cultural Passport

The teacher presented the students with the first task, which was writing up their Cultural Passport. He explained to them the purpose of the Cultural Passport and supervised them while they wrote it in class. Students finished writing up their cultural profile at home, and typed in on their computers. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, students were given freedom to be creative in the way they present their Cultural Passports, and so they presented them in different ways. Many just used bullet points, but some wrote an essay, and others even included photos of themselves and their families and friends.

STEP 6: *Conducting the Intercultural Activities*

The teacher then started with the activities in the same order as instructed by the researcher, *Stereotypes* first, then *Religions of the World*, and after that *The Isms*. He began the first activity with an introduction to stereotypes using the first worksheet, followed by a classroom discussion on the topic. Students were then asked to write a compare/contrast essay. They began working on the essays in class and finished them and typed them on their computers at home. They printed them and added them to their portfolios. At the end of the activity, the teacher explained the reflective journals to the students, and students wrote them in class. They used the same guidelines sheet, that the teacher handed them, to write their reflections on, and then they put the journal in their dossier.

The second activity started with a discussion initiated by the teacher with the help of the activity's information sheet containing information on the different religions in the world, followed by an explanation of the task required from students. As required, students selected a religion that was not their own, did a small research on it at home, and presented it in class. Some students made PowerPoint presentations, but they did not write short reports as requested. There was a long classroom discussion on the topic, followed by the writing of the second reflective journal. All work went into their portfolio dossier.

The third activity also started with the teacher using the worksheets to introduce the topic of *The Isms* to the students. They worked on the worksheet together in class, and had a discussion about it. They had to write a creative piece of work presenting and discussing types of *isms* they see around them. They began writing it in class and finished it at home, and some typed it on their computers. Later, they wrote their third reflective journal in class, and put all work done in their portfolio dossier. At the end of the activities, the teacher collected the portfolio dossiers containing students' works, and sent them to the researcher.

STEP 7: *Interviewing the Teacher*

An interview with the teacher was conducted to get his feedback on his experience with the implementation process and his impressions from classroom discussions, in an attempt to obtain a fuller understanding of both of the implementation process and the students' actions and

interactions in the classroom during the activities. The planned interview ended up being a rather necessary and crucial tool for data collection, since we were faced with some limitations during the implementation process. It was very difficult for the teacher to communicate frequently with the researcher during the implementation process due to a personal family matter he was going through at the time. Whenever it was possible, he would communicate with the researcher to report that the process was going well and as planned, and that the students are responding well to the activities. It would have been of great added value to the study, had the teacher communicated often with the researcher and allowed her to provide guidance and feedback to him as well as to the students. Furthermore, the study initially included a teacher's diary; however, the teacher was overworked and could not keep one, but he kept personal notes. Nonetheless, an unfortunate incident with the teacher's personal computer caused him to lose all his notes from the implementation process. These points will be further discussed in the challenges and limitations section in Chapter 5.

At the end of the project, 32 portfolios were collected from the students containing a total of 296 documents. These included 32 cultural profiles, 32 questionnaires, 63 worksheets, 74 essays, and 95 reflective journals. All 296 documents were reviewed for data that could help answer the research questions and shed a light on the students and the implementation process, but only 215 documents were found useful and were included in the data analysis (see Table 3.3). Worksheets were not intended as data collection tools, but they were still part of students' works that could provide useful data. A review of the worksheets provided the researcher with information on how much the students were able to understand and give examples on the intercultural concepts under study; however, they showed minimal to no data contribution, and thus were excluded from data analysis. Furthermore, students did not do the writing task of the second activity, which was supposed to be a short report on religion. The PowerPoint presentations that some of the students submitted contained only images and text copied from the internet, but no text written by the students. Thus, these files were excluded from data analysis.

Table 3.3: Data collected from students by source, language, quantity, and inclusion and exclusion from data analysis.

Data Collected	Source	Language	Quantity	TOTAL	Grand Total
Data Included in Analysis	Questionnaire	-	32	32	215
	Cultural Passport	English	32	32	
		Arabic	0		
	Essay 1	English	32	32	
		Arabic	0		
	Essay 3	English	23	24	
		Arabic	1		
	Reflective Journal 1	English	11	32	
		Arabic	21		
	Reflective Journal 2	English	9	32	
		Arabic	23		
	Reflective Journal 3	English	9	31	
Arabic		22			
Data Excluded from Analysis	Worksheet 1	English	32	32	
		Arabic	0		
	Worksheet 3	English	31	31	
		Arabic	0		
	PowerPoint Presentations	-	18	18	
	TOTAL				

3.4. Data Analysis

The quantitative analysis of the questionnaire was conducted by counting each student's scores and presenting them in percentages, since the purpose of the questionnaire was to know students degree of acceptance to diversity and cultural differences. The questionnaire's 45 items were rated on a six-point scale (from 1= *strongly disagree* to 6= *strongly agree*) (Miville et al., 1999). The items were originally positively and negatively phrased to avoid a response bias, thus negative items were reverse-scored. A total score was calculated from the 45 items, as well as a total of each of the three sub-scores that measure *Diversity of Contact*, *Relativistic Appreciation*, and *Sense of Connection*. The higher the score was, the higher the Universal-Diverse Orientation (UDO) levels were, in other words, the more accepting to diversity they were (Miville et al., 2006; Celinska & Swazo, 2016; Main & Sanchez-Pena, 2015; Jesiek, et al., 2012).

As regards to qualitative data, it was obtained from students' written productions, which included two essays, three reflective journals, and the cultural passport, as well as the teacher's interview. As a side note, the Cultural Passport was initially intended to collect background data on students, but it contained useful information on students' intercultural competences, and thus was included in the qualitative analysis. In order to find evidence of any emerging intercultural competences and to better understand the influence of the context on the emergence of these competences, the content of students' written works were qualitatively analyzed by performing content analysis, while data from the teacher's interview was treated as descriptive data complementary to findings from students' works.

Content analysis is a method suggested by scholars like Pruegger and Rogers (1994), and it has been frequently used in intercultural research (e.g. Garrett-Rucks, 2012; Liaw, 2006; Helm, 2009, Cabello, 2012; Jacobs & and Juan-Garau, 2015). Content analysis is a good way to simplify complex and large data, in order to unearth latent meanings and present them in a way that makes sense, as its process involves collecting and categorizing data into groups or clusters to identify consistent patterns that will enable making inferences and interpretations (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009; Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Krippendorff, 1980). In this study content analysis was performed by extracting and coding any phrase, sentence, or paragraph in students' written production with content that revealed something (negative or positive) about students' intercultural competences, and categorizing it under the corresponding intercultural competence.

In general, qualitative intercultural studies tend to employ a deductive approach to content analysis by adopting an intercultural model as a framework of analysis and using the component of that model as the categories of analysis. However, considering how such methods provide a limited assessment, and a partial picture of learners' interculturality, as Borghetti (2017) and others have previously stated, this study employed both deductive and inductive approaches to content analysis. The content analysis in this study was conducted in two phases. In phase I, four *macro-competences* were set as the main categories of analysis, which were identified based on the most common umbrella competences found in literature. So, relevant data from students' works were first extracted, coded, and categorized under these four macro-competences, which are *knowledge, attitudes, skills, and values*.

In phase II, an inductive approach was employed to identify *micro-competences* under each one of the four macro-competences. As sub-categories started to emerge, the coded excerpts extracted from students' works were given an additional number and were grouped together representing an emerging micro-competence. The result was the emergence of **14 micro intercultural competences** that reflect students' unique competences in this specific context of study (see Table 3.4). Some of those micro-competences correspond to ones in literature, while others were new. The relation between the emerging competences and competences found in literature will be discussed in Chapter 5.

In a final note, it is important to mention that the content analysis was recursive, with long intervals between each review session, complemented by feedback from the thesis supervisor. All micro-level competences were clearly titled and defined based on the context of this study. Clear definitions reduce ambiguity and enable transparency of assessment as many critics have previously suggested (e.g. Borghetti, 2017; Dervin, 2016; Abdulah-Preteceilli, 2012). The final list of emerging competences, their definitions, and the codes they were assigned are presented next in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Final list of emerging intercultural competences, their codes, and their definitions.

Category	Number	Code	Title of Emerging Intercultural Competence	Definition of Competence Based on Study Context
Knowledge	1	K1	Knowledge of culture-specific information in own and other cultures.	Knowledge and understanding of concepts of social bias and biased practices in own culture and other cultures, as well as knowledge of the religions of the world and their religious traditions and beliefs.
	2	K2	Knowledge of correct cultural terminology in own language and foreign language.	Using correct cultural lexicon and semantics, including politically correct words to describe concepts and people in both native and foreign languages.
Attitude (Savoir être)	3	A1	Respect for other cultures.	Talking/writing about others who are different or who have different views in a respectful manner, and not using their difference as an insult or excuse to attack them.
	4	A2	Appreciation of similarities and acceptance of differences.	Considering both similarities and differences while learning or interacting with others, and showing comfort and acceptance to intercultural learning and others with cultural differences.
	5	A3	Curiosity and interest in learning about intercultural topics and other cultures.	Showing curiosity and interest in learning about social bias and other religions and cultures, and showing willingness to feed their curiosity by seeking information from books, internet, and people in their social circle.
	6	A4	Openness and eagerness to interact and live with others from different cultures.	Being open to and interested in exploring and experiencing other cultures, and seeking opportunities to interact and engage with others from different cultural background.
	7	A5	Readiness to reserve judgment and suspend disbelief about other cultures.	Being able to allow oneself to believe that something is true in other cultures even though it seems untrue, and not to pass judgment without learning others' cultural facts and perspectives.
	8	A6*	Dispelling of mistaken preconceived notions about others.	Being open and able to change one's own mind and perception about the other after getting to know them or learn about them.
Skills	9	S1	Ability to observe cultural elements in own and other cultures.	Being able to observe and notice elements of social bias in own and other cultures.
	10	S2	Ability to analyze and interpret cultural elements in own and other cultures.	Being able to analyze and interpret situations of social bias in own culture and other cultures.
	11	S3*	Ability to express critical issues in own and other cultures.	Being vocal and communicating criticism of social bias observed in own and other cultures.
	12	S4*	Ability to recognize, question, and analyze the root of one's attitudes and practices.	Attempting to reflect on and understand the root of one's own and others' biased attitudes and practices.
Values	13	V1*	Values of social justice and peaceful coexistence.	Show values that promote or support social justice and peaceful coexistence.
	14	V2*	Motivation for positive change in self, society, and the world.	Show motivation to change one's own behavior and way of thinking, as well as motivation to change the current injustices and social bias in one's own city, country, and the world.

Note: Competences marked with (*) are new to literature.

4. THE STUDENTS' AND THEIR INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCES

The results chapter is divided into two parts. The first part presents the analysis of data collected prior to the implementation of the reflective intercultural activities. It draws a group profile of the participating students, which was built from data collected from the students themselves (i.e. self-reported cultural passports, and a self-reported Miville-Guzman University Diversity Scale, or M-GUDS, questionnaire), and from their school (i.e. academic grades). The second part presents the analysis of data collected during the implementation of the reflective intercultural activities. It investigates students' intercultural competences that emerged from their written productions, complemented by data provided by the teacher in an interview, during which he gave his review on the students, the activities, and the implementation process.

PART 1: STUDENTS' CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC PROFILE

Before the beginning of the implementation process, it was important to collect data that could contribute to a better understanding of the students' cultural and academic backgrounds. As expected, the researcher's familiarity with the students' home culture was indeed of significance during data analysis. Nonetheless, since the researcher was not the teacher in this study, it was crucial to obtain as much background information as possible on each student, in order to formulate a better understanding of their personal lives, views, and dispositions, and to develop a clearer image of their (inter)cultural profiles at the beginning of the study.

4.1. Students' Cultural Passports

The Cultural Passport has proven to be a valuable instrument in regards to collecting background information on students. It provided the study with data on students' cultural backgrounds as reported by the students themselves. Data included their age, linguistic and religious backgrounds, their parents' education and occupation, hobbies and interests, travels, intercultural experiences and more. On several occasions, these sets of data provided the researcher with better understanding of student's points of view in their written productions, since much of their personal views was based on their own life experiences and personal interests. Although the

Cultural Passport was a tool with guided instruction, students were given the freedom to be creative in presenting information about themselves. Some students presented their information point by point following the same order as the bullet points found in the guidelines sheet (see Appendix 6), others presented their Cultural Passport in the form of an essay, and some were very creative and included designs and also photos of themselves and of their families and friends.

The participants, aged between 16 and 17, were in their 11th grade at the time of implementation. There were 14 female and 18 male students divided into two classes—Humanities and Scientific. It is worth mentioning that there were two sets of twins in this study, YOUNIS¹⁸ and KAREEM, and ISSAM and MARCO. All students in this study were ethnically homogeneous, yet a major problem they faced in developing their Cultural Passports was identifying their own race and ethnicity. It is true that these terms are blurry and controversial; however, they still form part of one's identity, and students needed to understand their meanings. The teacher contacted the researcher regarding this issue, and she sent him links to WebPages and YouTube videos that explain the two terms, and suggested considering the term Brown Caucasian for race, and Palestinian Arabs as ethnicity. Nonetheless, many students indicated Asian, as their ethnicity or race, considering that Palestine lies in the continent of Asia.

Regarding their religious beliefs, 23 self-identified as Christians, eight self-identified as Muslims, and one self-identified as agnostic (his family background is Christian). The majority of students reported knowledge of languages other than their native tongue, which is Levantine Arabic. In their Cultural Passports, 30 out of 32 students reported knowing one or two languages other than Arabic and English. German is taught as a third language in this school, so those who grew up in this school indicated German as their third language. Those who indicated another language, such as French or Greek, as their third language are students who transferred from other private schools at an older age. Each private school in Palestine teaches a different third language, whereas public schools only teach English as a foreign language.

¹⁸ All students in this study have been given pseudonyms to protect their real identities.

Around three quarters of the students (n=21) reported having travelled abroad; however, as indicated, it was mostly for the purpose of tourism. Only seven students reported travelling for cultural exchange purposes. Apart from one student who went on an exchange program, all these students travelled as part of either a music or dance troupe, as part of a sports team, or as participants in the Mock United Nations (MUN) program. Around 80% of the students (n=26) reported having interacted with foreigners from different countries and different cultural backgrounds. Students reported meeting foreigners during their travels, and also in their hometown and in their school. Only six students did not report having interacted with people from a different cultural background or they reported having met none. In the guidelines sheet of the Cultural Passport, students were asked to list some of their encounters with people from different cultural backgrounds. They all reported international encounters, as they only considered national and linguistic differences as cultural differences.

The following Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 introduce the students who took part in this study. All students were given pseudonyms that reflect the linguistic origin of their real names; that is, students who had Arabic names were given Arabic pseudonyms, and students who had Western names were given Western pseudonyms. These tables present students' data as reported by them in their Cultural Passports; their ages at the time of the implementation, their gender and religion, the languages they learned in and outside school, their travels, and their intercultural encounters in their home country and during while travelling. Table 4.1 presents background information on students from the Humanities Class, and Table 4.2 presents background information on students from the Scientific Class.

Table 4.1: Students' background information as self-reported in their Cultural Passports (Humanities Class).

Code	Student	Age	Gender	Religion	Foreign languages learned		Foreign countries visited		Intercultural Encounters	
					At School	Outside School	Exchange stays	Tourism & visits	Home	Abroad
H01	ELLEN	16	F	C	English German	Hebrew*	India USA	-	Israeli	American
H02	LAURA	16	F	C	English German	-	Czech Republic	-	German	Czech
H03	MARIA	16	F	C	English German	Turkish* Hindi*	None		None	
H04	MELANIE	17	F	C	English German	-	Spain - Jordan Germany - Egypt		German	-
H05	MELODY	17	F	C	English German French	-	-	Jordan Egypt	American German & more	-
H06	ORAIB	16	F	C	English	-	None		Various (not identified)	-
H07	SALMA	16	F	M	English German	-	Italy - Norway Jordan - Qatar		None	
H08	ZAHRA	16	F	C	English German	Turkish*	Germany USA		-	German
H09	AMEEN	17	M	A	English	-	USA - Egypt - Jordan Cyprus - Germany		Turkish - German American	
H10	BASIM	16	M	C	English German	-	-	Italy - Jordan Switzerland	-	Italian of Palestinian origin
H11	JAMAL	16	M	C	English German	-	None		-	
H12	LOAY	17	M	C	English	Korean*	None		-	
H13	MALIK	16	M	C	English German	-	None		German Cambodian- American	-
H14	MARWAN	17	M	C	English German	Hebrew	Germany	Holland Greece - Turkey	American - German - Japanese & more	-
H15	YOUNIS	16	M	M	English German	-	Czech Austria Germany	Jordan Kuwait	Norwegian - Russian German- Slovak Czech and more	

Note: Religion Column: C=Christian, M= Muslim, A=Agnostic.

(*): Indicates knowledge of very few words and phrases only.

Table 4.2: Students' background information as self-reported in their Cultural Passports (Scientific Class).

Code	Student	Age	Gender	Religion	Foreign languages learned		Foreign countries visited		Intercultural encounters	
					At School	Outside School	Exchange stays	Tourism & visits	Home	Abroad
S01	MAYA	17	F	C	English German Greek	-	None		Danish German American	-
S02	NANCY	16	F	C	English German	-	Italy	-	-	Italian
S03	NICOLE	17	F	C	English German	-	None		German	-
S04	SAMARA	17	F	M	English German	-	None		-	-
S05	SAWSAN	16	F	C	English German	-	Italy	USA Canada	American German	American Italian
S06	YASMIN	17	F	M	English Greek	-	Italy Turkey Myanmar	-	German	Italian
S07	ADEEB	17	M	C	English French	Hebrew	-	Italy France Egypt	Israeli Various tourists	-
S08	ELLIOT	17	M	C	English German	-	Germany Czech Republic	-	-	Czech
S09	FARIS	17	M	C	English German	-	Turkey Germany	Egypt		Various nationalities
S10	ISSAM	17	M	C	English German	-	-	Greece Egypt &more	Turkish (online)	
S11	JACOB	16	M	C	English German	Japanese*	None		German Swiss English	-
S12	KAREEM	16	M	M	English German	-	-	Jordan Kuwait	Dutch	-
S13	KHALID	17	M	M	English German	-	None		Canadian- Palestinian	-
S14	MARCO	17	M	C	English German	-	-	Greece Egypt &more	-	-
S15	SALEEM	16	M	M	English German	-	None		English German	-
S16	TAMER	16	M	C	English	-	-	Jordan Syria	English	-
S17	WALEED	17	M	M	English German	-	-	France Thailand & more	American Chilean German	-

Note: Religion Column: C=Christian, M= Muslim.

(*): Indicates knowledge of very few words and phrases only.

The students come from the same town and its surroundings, yet from different types of households. The educational and socioeconomic backgrounds of their parents differ. For instance, some could afford to travel for holidays while others could not. In their Cultural Passports, students presented the educational and occupational background of their parents (see Table 4.3). Such data may shed a light on one aspect of their parents' cultural background, but it is in no way an indication of their mentality, way of life, and interculturality. It is worth mentioning that the great majority of those parents were in their high-school years during the first Palestinian Intifada (1987-1993). Their education was continuously interrupted by war events and closures of schools and of universities, which could possibly explain their lack of higher education compared to other generations in the same town. Students' parents came from all walks of life: employees, engineers, doctors, construction workers, teachers, craftsmen, nurses, custodians, housewives...etc. Nonetheless, the occupations of each student's parents are not listed here in order to maintain students' anonymity.

Table 4.3: Summary of parents' educational background.

Level of Education	Fathers	Mothers
Did not finish high school	1	1
High School Diploma	11	6
College/Vocational Diploma	2	2
First University Degree	6	12
Second University Degree	3	0
Not reported by student	9	11

4.2. Students' M-GUDS Questionnaire Scores

The Miville-Guzman University Diversity Scale (M-GUDS) was administered to students in a form of 45-item questionnaire, in order to obtain data on students' orientations towards diversity before the start of the intercultural activities. (For description of M-GUDS, see Chapter 3, Section 3.3.c) Table 4.4 shows how each student scored in total and by subcategory. Higher scores on the *Diversity of Contact* subscale means interest in learning about other cultures, higher scores on *Relativistic Appreciation* subscale means an appreciation of similarities and differences among people, and higher scores on *Sense of Connection* subscale signifies comfort relating to people different from oneself.

Table 4.4: Students' scores on the M-GUDS questionnaire by subcategory (in percentage).

Code	Student	Gender	Subcategory 1: Diversity of contact	Subcategory 2: Sense of Connection	Subcategory 3: Relativistic Appreciation	Total
H01	ELLEN	F	98.89	98.89	88.89	95.56
H02	LAURA	F	78.89	83.33	77.78	80.00
H03	MARIA	F	65.56	62.22	68.89	65.56
H04	MELANIE	F	47.78	48.89	50.00	48.89
H05	MELODY	F	90.00	85.56	73.33	82.96
H06	ORAIB	F	77.78	87.78	82.22	82.59
H07	SALMA	F	62.22	58.89	65.56	62.22
H08	ZAHRA	F	71.11	54.44	63.33	62.96
H09	AMEEN	M	98.89	94.44	92.22	95.19
H10	BASIM	M	72.22	71.11	65.56	69.63
H11	JAMAL	M	44.44	71.11	55.56	57.04
H12	LOAY	M	47.78	65.56	70.00	61.11
H13	MALIK	M	72.22	58.89	70.00	67.04
H14	MARWAN	M	66.67	61.11	61.11	62.96
H15	YOUNIS	M	63.33	63.33	50.00	58.89
S01	MAYA	F	90.00	85.56	86.67	87.41
S02	NANCY	F	68.89	64.44	61.11	64.81
S03	NICOLE	F	86.67	86.67	84.44	85.93
S04	SAMARA	F	58.89	60.00	75.56	64.81
S05	SAWSAN	F	74.44	78.89	84.44	79.26
S06	YASMIN	F	85.56	86.67	76.67	82.96
S07	ADEEB	M	76.67	82.22	76.67	78.52
S08	ELLIOT	M	78.89	70.00	67.78	72.22
S09	FARIS	M	85.56	90.00	86.67	87.41
S10	ISSAM	M	67.78	75.56	80.00	74.44
S11	JACOB	M	63.33	66.67	68.89	66.30
S12	KAREEM	M	94.44	90.00	85.56	90.00
S13	KHALID	M	44.44	62.22	63.33	56.67
S14	MARCO	M	73.33	77.78	76.67	75.93
S15	SALEEM	M	83.33	82.22	68.89	78.15
S16	TAMER	M	54.44	60.00	57.78	57.41
S17	WALEED	M	90.00	91.11	72.22	84.44
TOTAL			72.95	74.24	72.12	73.10
TOTAL (Female)			75.48	74.44	74.21	74.71
TOTAL (Male)			70.99	74.07	70.49	71.85

The result of the M-GUDS questionnaire analysis showed that students achieved relatively high scores, which means that their awareness and potential acceptance of similarities and differences in others and their sense of connection and openness to diversity were relatively high before starting the activities. About one third of the students scored higher than 80%, and, as a group, they scored a total of 73.10%. The average total score is high in comparison to other studies. For

instance Main and Sanchez-Pena (2015) reported an average score of 66.20% among domestic students, and 70.06% among international students. Jesiek et al. (2012) reported an average score of 66.40% for their baseline (non-global) group, and 70.40%, 73.10%, and 70% for their treatment (global) groups. Nonetheless, it is important to note that these are scores of undergraduate students in contexts different from this study; there are not any available studies where M-GUDS was administered to high school students that would allow for a closer comparison and understanding of our results.

However, interestingly, it seems like gender differences are consistent across age and context. Data from different studies showed that girls scored higher than boys. In this study, the difference was 2.86% in total score. In Main and Sanchez-Pena's (2015) study, the difference was reported at 3.35% combining domestic and international students. Jesiek et al. (2012) presented differences separately: among non-global students, the differences were 1.60% in pre-test and 7.3 in post-test, whereas among global students, the differences were 5.70% in pre-test and 2.10% in post-test. Miville, Romans, Johnson, & Loneet (2004) have previously indicated that women, minority students, as well as international students tend to score higher, as these groups are more likely to interact with others from different backgrounds. This is clearly evident in the results of this study as the difference between the genders can be mainly seen in the subcategories of diversity of contact and relativistic appreciation, where we can see a difference of 4.59% and 3.72%, respectively.

Another important observation is that the Scientific Class scored higher than the Humanities Class with a difference of 5.51%, as their collective scores were 75.69% and 70.17%, respectively. It is not possible to find evidence to explain this difference at this stage, as no correlations were done, but it is worth looking at in future research. In general, those initial scores from the M-GUDS questionnaire gave a positive view of the students' orientation towards diversity; however, it is important to always remember that such questionnaires are general and more focused on race and ethnicity. As we will see later on in this chapter, acceptance to diversity is complex, since people have different levels of acceptance depending on the type of difference (e.g. gender, ethnic, religious, etc.)

4.3. Students' Academic Grades

The school provided the researcher with students' grades of the semester before the activities were carried out (see Table 4.5). Although grades do not fully and truly reflect students' academic skills and intellectual abilities, they can still provide background information on students' academic performance. Normally, students in the Scientific Class are academically advanced compared to their counterparts in the Humanities Class and have better language skills. This was clearly noticed in their written production, as students in the Scientific Class presented longer essays and more elaborate writings than students in the Humanities Class. As a result, it was easier to detect emerging intercultural competences in their works. Table 4.5 presents students' total grades in percentages, as well as their grades in the two language subjects, English and Arabic. Students wrote their works in both languages, and it was relevant to see if their scores related to their ability to express themselves in both languages. This matter will be further discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.1.a.

Table 4.5: Students' first-term grades before the implementation of the activities (in percentage).

Humanities Class						Scientific Class					
Code	Student	Gender	Grades			Code	Student	Gender	Grades		
			English Language	Arabic Language	Total Grade				English Language	Arabic Language	Total Grade
H01	ELLEN	F	76	63	65	S01	MAYA	F	92	93	89
H02	LAURA	F	92	65	73	S02	NANCY	F	85	84	86
H03	MARIA	F	66	65	72	S03	NICOLE	F	75	80	86
H04	MELANIE	F	55	76	73	S04	SAMARA	F	72	80	78
H05	MELODY	F	42	61	59	S05	SAWSAN	F	90	86	91
H06	ORAIB	F	90	92	91	S06	YASMIN	F	73	83	82
H07	SALMA	F	66	72	73	S07	ADEEB	M	82	67	77
H08	ZAHRA	F	60	86	73	S08	ELLIOT	M	80	80	82
H09	AMEEN	M	70	62	60	S09	FARIS	M	92	87	93
H10	BASIM	M	50	63	67	S10	ISSAM	M	75	75	80
H11	JAMAL	M	55	76	79	S11	JACOB	M	68	67	75
H12	LOAY	M	50	55	64	S12	KAREEM	M	90	64	72
H13	MALIK	M	75	84	85	S13	KHALID	M	70	68	68
H14	MARWAN	M	70	63	66	S14	MARCO	M	85	85	83
H15	YOUNIS	M	80	59	70	S15	SALEEM	M	70	77	68
						S16	TAMER	M	70	80	76
						S17	WALEED	M	90	88	89
Class Average Scores			66.5	69.5	71.3	Class Average Scores			79.9	79.1	80.9

PART 2: STUDENTS' EMERGING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCES

During the implementation of the reflective intercultural activities, students' written productions (cultural passports, essays, and reflective journals) and their teacher's feedback revealed a lot about their intercultural competences, as well as the factors influencing their intercultural competences and intercultural learning process. Data analysis in this part of Chapter 4 is organized around the four umbrella or macro competences, which served as the departing categories of analysis in this study (see Chapter 3 Section 3.4). These macro competences are knowledge, attitude (*savoir être*), skills, and values. Part II begins with a section that presents an overview of students' emerging intercultural competences, while the following sections present and explore evidence of these competences.

4.4. Overview of Students' Emerging Intercultural Competences

As described in the data analysis section of the methodology chapter, any phrase, sentence, or paragraph in students' written productions with content revealing something, either positive or negative, about students' intercultural competences was extracted and categorized under the corresponding macro-competence. Later on, these coded excerpts were given an additional number and were grouped together representing emerging micro-competences. This process revealed the emergence of 14 micro intercultural competences that reflect students' unique competences in this study. **A total number of 362 excerpts** were extracted from students' written works. However, some excerpts reflected more than one competence, so they were assigned more than one code. Therefore, the 362 excerpts were **coded 462 times**, as can be seen in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: The number of coded instances by intercultural competence and by student.

Code	Student	Gender	Knowledge		Attitudes						Skills				Values		Total
			K1	K2	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	S1	S2	S3	S4	V1	V2	
H01	ELLEN	F	2		1		2	4			1		4	2	5		21
H02	LAURA	F	3	1			2	2	2				2		1		13
H03	MARIA	F	1	2			2	1			2		2	1			11
H04	MELANIE	F	4	1			1		1		2		2				11
H05	MELODY	F	2	3			3	2	1		2		2	1			16
H06	ORAIB	F	1	1			2	1	1		1		1	2		1	11
H07	SALMA	F	2	1			2				2		2		1		10
H08	ZAHRA	F	3	4			2		1		2	1	2				15
H09	AMEEN	M	2	1			3	1			2		2		1		12
H10	BASIM	M	3	1			2		1		3		3				13
H11	JAMAL	M	3	2			2				3		1	2	2	1	16
H12	LOAY	M	3	2		1	2		2		2		1		1		14
H13	MALIK	M	2	1	1		3				3		1	1		1	13
H14	MARWAN	M	1	1	1	1	2		1		1		2		1		11
H15	YOUNIS	M	2			3	1	1			1	2	1	2	1		14
S01	MAYA	F	1		1	1	1		1	2	2	1	2	1		3	16
S02	NANCY	F	3	2	1	1	2	1	4		2			3	1	2	22
S03	NICOLE	F	5	1	1		1		1				1	1	1	1	13
S04	SAMARA	F	4	2			2	1			1	1	1	2		1	15
S05	SAWSAN	F	4	4		2	3				3	1	3	3	3	3	29
S06	YASMIN	F	1	1			2	2	2		2		2	1			13
S07	ADEEB	M	1	1						1	1		1	1	1	1	8
S08	ELLIOT	M	3	1			3	3			2			3	2	2	19
S09	FARIS	M	3	1	1		2	2			1			3	1	2	16
S10	ISSAM	M	3	1		1	1	1	1		3			3	1	1	16
S11	JACOB	M	2	1			3	2			1				1		10
S12	KAREEM	M	3				3	2	1		1		3	3			16
S13	KHALID	M	2	2	1	2	2	1	2		2				1	1	16
S14	MARCO	M	3	3			2	1		1	1	1	1	2		1	16
S15	SALEEM	M	3	2			1				2		1	1		1	11
S16	TAMER	M	3	1			3	1			1		1	3		2	15
S17	WALEED	M	2	1			1	1				1		2		2	10
TOTAL			70	45	8	12	63	30	22	4	52	8	24	55	22	61	462

Note: K1: Knowledge of culture-specific information in own and other cultures; K2: Knowledge of correct cultural terminology in own language and foreign language; A1: Respect for other cultures; A2: Appreciation of similarities and acceptance of differences; A3: Curiosity and interest in learning about intercultural topics and other cultures; A4: Openness and eagerness to interact and live with others from different cultures; A5: Readiness to reserve judgment and suspend disbelief about other cultures; A6:Dispelling of mistaken preconceived notions about others; S1: Ability to observe cultural elements in own and other cultures; S2: Ability to analyze and interpret cultural elements in own and other cultures; S3: Ability to express critical issues in own and other cultures; S4: Ability to recognize, question, and analyze one's attitudes and practices; V1: Values of equality and peaceful coexistence; V2: Motivation for positive change.

Each one of those 462 codes represents an instance that revealed something (positive or negative) about students' intercultural competences. The reflective journals were the major source of qualitative data (see Table 4.7) where most of those instances were found. In the first and second reflective journals, 125 and 119 instances were recorded, respectively. In the third journal, there were slightly less instances, as only 104 instances were coded. Essay One produced 28 instances, and Essay Three produced 68 instances. Initially, the Cultural Passport was only intended for collecting background data; however, 18 instances were recorded that showed information on students' intercultural competences.

Table 4.7: Number of coded intercultural instances by competence and by type of written work.

Competence Source	K1	K2	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	S1	S2	S3	S4	V1	V2	Total
Essay One	0	4	1	2	0	3	1	0	2	2	10	6	1	2	28
Essay Three	0	18	1	1	0	3	2	0	9	2	3	0	12	17	68
Journal One	26	4	2	0	30	4	8	1	12	2	6	25	1	4	125
Journal Two	26	5	3	6	25	4	10	3	10	1	2	19	4	1	119
Journal Three	28	14	0	2	8	1	1	0	19	2	2	17	11	6	104
Cultural Passport	0	0	1	1	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	18
TOTAL															462

Those 462 coded instances revealed different types of evidence related to the 14 emerging intercultural competences. To differentiate the type or nature of evidence found in students' works, the researcher divided them into four types:

Type One (◆): Students Reporting Development of Intercultural Competence:

These are instances where students themselves reported the development of intercultural competences attributing it as a direct result of engaging in the intercultural activities.

Type Two (●): Students Demonstrating Intercultural Competence:

These are instances where students' self-reporting revealed certain intercultural competences, yet it is not clearly indicated whether these competences were newly developed during the activities or pre-existed the intercultural activities.

Type Three (■): Students Showing Cultural Rejection:

These are instances where students' self-reporting revealed rejection, negativity, and lack of openness to certain intercultural topics and/or the intercultural activities.

Type Four (▲): Students Showing Lack of Intercultural Competence:

These are incidents where students' self-reporting revealed that they lacked certain intercultural competences at the time of the activities.

It is very important to mention that instances emerging from students' written works varied even for the same student. For example, it is possible to see a student demonstrating one competence in one written work, and the lack of the same competence in another. It is also very possible to find the same students showing two types of the same competence in the same written work. Such occurrences can be seen in the following tables (Tables 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12, and 4.13), which present the type/nature of evidence of each emerging intercultural competence by student and by written production. This phenomenon of complex and contradictory competences will be further discussed in this chapter and also in Chapter 5.

Table 4.8: Type of evidence of knowledge competences by student and data source.

Code	Student	Gender	Type of Evidence of Knowledge Competences							
			K1: Knowledge of culture-specific information in on and other cultures.			K2: Knowledge of correct cultural terminology in own language and foreign language.				
Data Source*			R1	R2	R3	E1	E3	R1	R2	R3
H01	ELLEN	F		◆	●					
H02	LAURA	F	◆		◆●		●			
H03	MARIA	F		◆			▲		▲	
H04	MELANIE	F	◆	◆	◆◆				▲	
H05	MELODY	F	◆	◆		▲	▲			▲
H06	ORAIB	F	◆				●			
H07	SALMA	F		◆	◆					●
H08	ZAHRA	F	◆	◆	◆		●	▲	▲▲	
H09	AMEEN	M	◆		◆					●
H10	BASIM	M	■	◆	◆				▲	
H11	JAMAL	M	■	◆	◆		▲			●
H12	LOAY	M	◆	◆	◆		▲			●
H13	MALIK	M	◆	◆			●			
H14	MARWAN	M			◆		●			
H15	YOUNIS	M	◆		◆					
S01	MAYA	F		◆						
S02	NANCY	F	◆	◆	●		●			▲
S03	NICOLE	F	◆◆	◆	◆◆					●
S04	SAMARA	F	◆◆	◆	◆		●			▲
S05	SAWSAN	F	◆◆	◆	◆	●	●			▲▲
S06	YASMIN	F			◆					▲
S07	ADEEB	M		◆				▲		
S08	ELLIOT	M	◆	◆	◆		●			
S09	FARIS	M	◆	◆	◆		●			
S10	ISSAM	M	◆	◆	◆	▲				
S11	JACOB	M		◆	◆					●
S12	KAREEM	M	◆	◆	◆					
S13	KHALID	M		◆	◆		▲			▲
S14	MARCO	M	◆	◆	◆	▲		▲▲		
S15	SALEEM	M	◆	◆	◆		▲			▲
S16	TAMER	M	◆	◆	◆		●			
S17	WALEED	M	◆	◆			▲			

* Note: **R1:** First reflective journal, **R2:** Second reflective journal, **R3:** Third reflective journal,

E1: First essay, **E3:** Third essay.

Type one (◆): Students Reporting Development of Intercultural Competence.

Type two (●): Students Demonstrating Intercultural Competence.

Type three (■): Students Showing Cultural Rejection and Lack of Intercultural Competence.

Type four (▲): Students Showing Lack of Intercultural Competence.

Table 4.9: Type of evidence of attitude competences by student and data source (part 1 of 2).

Code	Student	Gender	Type of Evidence of Attitude Competences (part 1 of 2)												
			A1: Respect for other cultures.					A2: Appreciation of similarities and acceptance of differences					A3: Curiosity and interest in learning about intercultural topics and other cultures.		
Data Source*			E1	E3	R1	R2	CP	E1	E3	R2	R3	CP	R1	R2	R3
H01	ELLEN	F	●										●	●	
H02	LAURA	F											●		●
H03	MARIA	F											●	◆	
H04	MELANIE	F											●		
H05	MELODY	F											●●	●	●
H06	ORAIB	F											◆	◆	
H07	SALMA	F											◆	●	
H08	ZAHRA	F											●		●
H09	AMEEN	M											●◆	●	
H10	BASIM	M												●●	
H11	JAMAL	M											■	▲	
H12	LOAY	M								■			●	●	
H13	MALIK	M					●						■	◆	●
H14	MARWAN	M			◆					■			●	●	
H15	YOUNIS	M						●●				●	◆		
S01	MAYA	F				◆				◆			◆		
S02	NANCY	F	●						●				◆	◆	
S03	NICOLE	F				●							◆		
S04	SAMARA	F											◆	◆	
S05	SAWSAN	F								◆■			◆	◆	◆
S06	YASMIN	F											◆	◆	
S07	ADEEB	M													
S08	ELLIOT	M											◆	◆	◆
S09	FARIS	M				◆							◆	◆	
S10	ISSAM	M									◆			◆	
S11	JACOB	M											■	■	■
S12	KAREEM	M											◆	◆	◆
S13	KHALID	M			◆					■	●			■	◆
S14	MARCO	M											◆	◆	
S15	SALEEM	M											●		
S16	TAMER	M											◆	◆	◆
S17	WALEED	M												◆	

* Note: **R1:** First reflective journal, **R2:** Second reflective journal, **R3:** Third reflective journal,

E1: First essay, **E3:** Third essay, **CP:** Cultural profile.

Type one (◆): Students Reporting Development of Intercultural Competence.

Type two (●): Students Demonstrating Intercultural Competence.

Type three (■): Students Showing Cultural Rejection and Lack of Intercultural Competence.

Table 4.10: Type of evidence of attitude competences by student and data source (part 2 of 2).

Code	Student	Gender	Type of Evidence of Attitude competences (part 2 of 2)												
			A4: Openness and eagerness to interact and live with others from different cultures.						A5: Readiness to reserve judgment and suspend disbelief about other (sub)cultures.					A6: Dispelling of mistaken preconceived notions about others.	
Data Source*			E1	E3	R1	R2	R3	CP	E1	E3	R1	R2	R3	R1	R2
H01	ELLEN	F	●	●●				●							
H02	LAURA	F						●●			●	●			
H03	MARIA	F						●							
H04	MELANIE	F									◆				
H05	MELODY	F			●			●			●				
H06	ORAIB	F						●				●			
H07	SALMA	F													
H08	ZAHRA	F									◆				
H09	AMEEN	M	▲												
H10	BASIM	M									●				
H11	JAMAL	M													
H12	LOAY	M									●	■			
H13	MALIK	M													
H14	MARWAN	M										■			
H15	YOUNIS	M	●												
S01	MAYA	F									●			◆	◆
S02	NANCY	F		●					●	●●		●			
S03	NICOLE	F											●		
S04	SAMARA	F				◆									
S05	SAWSAN	F													
S06	YASMIN	F				●		●			◆	●			
S07	ADEEB	M													◆
S08	ELLIOT	M				◆		●●							
S09	FARIS	M						●●							
S10	ISSAM	M			◆							●			
S11	JACOB	M			■		●								
S12	KAREEM	M			◆			●				●			
S13	KHALID	M				■						■	■		
S14	MARCO	M						●							◆
S15	SALEEM	M													
S16	TAMER	M						▲							
S17	WALEED	M						●							

* Note: **R1:** First reflective journal, **R2:** Second reflective journal, **R3:** Third reflective journal,

E1: First essay, **E3:** Third essay, **CP:** Cultural profile.

Type one (◆): Students Reporting Development of Intercultural Competence.

Type two (●): Students Demonstrating Intercultural Competence.

Type three (■): Students Showing Cultural Rejection and Lack of Intercultural Competence.

Table 4.11: Type of evidence of skills competences by student and data source (part 1 of 2).

Code	Student	Gender	Type of Evidence of Skills competences (part 1 of 2)									
			S1: Ability to observe cultural elements in own and other cultures.					S2: Ability to analyze and interpret cultural elements in own and other cultures.				
Data Source*			E1	E3	R1	R2	R3	E1	E3	R1	R2	R3
H01	ELLEN	F		●								
H02	LAURA	F										
H03	MARIA	F				●	●					
H04	MELANIE	F			●	●						
H05	MELODY	F		●	▲							
H06	ORAIB	F			◆							
H07	SALMA	F			●		◆					
H08	ZAHRA	F			●	●					●	
H09	AMEEN	M				●	▲					
H10	BASIM	M				●	●●					
H11	JAMAL	M		●		▲	▲					
H12	LOAY	M				●	●					
H13	MALIK	M		●			●●					
H14	MARWAN	M					●					
H15	YOUNIS	M					●	●●				
S01	MAYA	F		●			●			●		
S02	NANCY	F			●		●					
S03	NICOLE	F										
S04	SAMARA	F	●									●
S05	SAWSAN	F	●		◆	◆		●				
S06	YASMIN	F			◆		●					
S07	ADEEB	M			●							
S08	ELLIOT	M		●			●					
S09	FARIS	M					◆					
S10	ISSAM	M			●	●	●					
S11	JACOB	M		●								
S12	KAREEM	M				●						
S13	KHALID	M			●		●					
S14	MARCO	M		●								●
S15	SALEEM	M		●			◆					
S16	TAMER	M			●							
S17	WALEED	M						●				

* Note: **R1**: First reflective journal, **R2**: Second reflective journal, **R3**: Third reflective journal,

E1: First essay, **E3**: Third essay.

Type one (◆): Students Reporting Development of Intercultural Competence.

Type two (●): Students Demonstrating Intercultural Competence.

Type four (▲): Students Showing Lack of Intercultural Competence.

Table 4.12: Type of evidence of skills competences by student and data source (part 2 of 2).

Code	Student	Gender	Type of Evidence of Skills Competences (part 2 of 2)							
			<i>S3: Ability to recognize, question, and analyze one's attitudes and practices.</i>					<i>S4: Ability to recognize, question, and analyze one's attitudes and practices</i>		
Data Source*			E1	E3	R1	R2	R3	R1	R2	R3
H01	ELLEN	F		●	●●	●		●	●	
H02	LAURA	F						◆		●
H03	MARIA	F						◆	●	
H04	MELANIE	F						◆	●	
H05	MELODY	F						◆	●	
H06	ORAIB	F	●					◆	●	
H07	SALMA	F						◆	●	
H08	ZAHRA	F						◆	●	
H09	AMEEN	M						●	●	
H10	BASIM	M						●	●	●
H11	JAMAL	M					●	●	●	
H12	LOAY	M						●	●	
H13	MALIK	M	●					●		
H14	MARWAN	M						●	●	
H15	YOUNIS	M	●					◆		●
S01	MAYA	F		●	●					●
S02	NANCY	F						●	●	●
S03	NICOLE	F				●				●
S04	SAMARA	F	●					●		●
S05	SAWSAN	F	●●		●			◆	●	●
S06	YASMIN	F	●				●		●	
S07	ADEEB	M			●					●
S08	ELLIOT	M						●	◆	●
S09	FARIS	M						◆	●	●
S10	ISSAM	M						●	●	◆
S11	JACOB	M								
S12	KAREEM	M	●●		●			●	●	◆
S13	KHALID	M								
S14	MARCO	M		●				◆		◆
S15	SALEEM	M	●							●
S16	TAMER	M			●			●	◆	
S17	WALEED	M							◆	●

* **Note:** **R1:** First reflective journal, **R2:** Second reflective journal, **R3:** Third reflective journal,

E1: First essay, **E3:** Third essay.

Type one (◆): Students Reporting Development of Intercultural Competence.

Type two (●): Students Demonstrating Intercultural Competence.

Table 4.13: Type of evidence of values competences by student and data source.

Code	Student	Gender	Values										
			V1: Values of equality and peaceful coexistence.					V2: Motivation for positive change in self, society, and the world.					
Data Source*			E1	E3	R1	R2	R3	E1	E3	R1	R2	R3	CP
H01	ELLEN	F	●	●●●		●							
H02	LAURA	F							●				
H03	MARIA	F		●									
H04	MELANIE	F											
H05	MELODY	F		●									
H06	ORAIB	F							●				
H07	SALMA	F								◆			
H08	ZAHRA	F											
H09	AMEEN	M								◆			
H10	BASIM	M											
H11	JAMAL	M		●●					●				
H12	LOAY	M							●				
H13	MALIK	M						●					
H14	MARWAN	M							●				
H15	YOUNIS	M				●							
S01	MAYA	F							●		◆	●	
S02	NANCY	F		●					●●				
S03	NICOLE	F				●				◆			
S04	SAMARA	F							●				
S05	SAWSAN	F		●				●●	●	◆		●	
S06	YASMIN	F											
S07	ADEEB	M						●				◆	
S08	ELLIOT	M		●				●	●				●
S09	FARIS	M		●					●			◆	
S10	ISSAM	M		●					●				
S11	JACOB	M				●							
S12	KAREEM	M											
S13	KHALID	M			●				●				
S14	MARCO	M							●				
S15	SALEEM	M							●				
S16	TAMER	M							●			◆	
S17	WALEED	M						●				●	

* Note: **R1**: First reflective journal, **R2**: Second reflective journal, **R3**: Third reflective journal,

E1: First essay, **E3**: Third essay, **CP**: Cultural profile.

Type one (◆): Students Reporting Development of Intercultural Competence.

Type two (●): Students Demonstrating Intercultural Competence

4.5. Emerging Intercultural Competences Related to *Knowledge*

Two micro-competences emerged from students' written productions that correspond to the macro-competence of knowledge. The first competence is *Knowledge of culture-specific information in own and other cultures*, and the second competence is *Knowledge of correct cultural terminology in own language and foreign language*.

a) Knowledge of Culture-specific Information in Own and Other Cultures

In the context of this study, this competence signifies *knowledge and understanding of concepts of social bias and biased practices in own culture and other cultures, as well as knowledge of the religions of the world and their religious traditions and beliefs*. Based on this definition, this competence emerged in the written works of all 32 students (100%), and it was coded 80 times, as seen Table 4.14. Nearly all students reported increased knowledge on concepts and practices of social bias, and also increased knowledge about other religions and other cultures. Much of the content of the activities was new to them, especially the contents of the second activity about religious intolerance, as they got to learn about many new religions and religious traditions from around the world that they were not acquainted with before the activities.

Table 4.14: Number and nature of instances coded under (K1) *Knowledge of culture-specific information in own and other cultures*.

CODE: K1	Knowledge of culture-specific information in own and other cultures			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	75	3	2	0
Number of Students	32 (100%)	3 (9.4%)	2 (6.3%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	80 instances emerged in the works of 32 students (100%)			

- *Students reported increased knowledge of the different types of social bias*

The project's activities were designed to introduce the students to various concepts and forms of social bias. As observed in their own reports, students had different levels of previous knowledge on the concepts and types of social bias included in the activity. For example, to FARIS, the concept of stereotypes was new, he reported in his journal: *"I have learned a lot about stereotypes. I didn't really know what stereotypes were. I learned also about the different sorts of stereotypes"* (FARIS, Journal 1, original excerpt in English). As for SAMARA, it was the content of activity number three about the

isms that was completely new to her. She wrote in her journal: "I learned a lot about new types of discrimination, for example discrimination based on gender or race or a person's look. It was all new to me" (SAMARA, Journal 3, excerpt translated¹⁹ from Arabic²⁰).

Other students stated that they had previous knowledge of certain biases, but still discovered and learned about more types of bias through these activities, like SAWSAN, who reported: "I learned that there are not only racial and religious stereotypes, but there are many types of stereotypes like age, socioeconomic status, and others" (SAWSAN, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic²¹). Many other students reported learning about new types of social bias that they have not heard of or knew about before engaging in the intercultural activities. Here is what some of them wrote:

I discovered a lot of discriminations that I have never heard about before, like xenophobia and anti-Semitism, and why these discriminations happen. (MARCO, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic²²)

I learned new types of the isms such as ableism misogyny misandry xenophobia. (LAURA, Journal 3, original excerpt in English)

The stereotype that I have newly learned is the stereotype of the disabled. (ISSAM, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic²³)

I've never thought of ageism as a stereotype. (YOUNIS, Journal 3, original excerpt in English)

¹⁹ IMPORTANT: All translations of students' excerpts are word-for-word translations from the original texts in Arabic. It was important to present the content to non-Arabic speakers while maintaining students' authentic use of language. For that reason, it is possible that some translations may sound odd in English, but it simply serves to reflect students writing styles in their native language, especially using colloquialism. This matter will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

²⁰ Original in Arabic: "لقد تعلمت الكثير من انواع التمييز الجديدة على سبيل المثال التمييز حسب الجنس أو العرق أو الشكل الخارجي للشخص. كانت جديدة بالنسبة لي."

²¹ Original in Arabic: "تعلمت أنه لا يوجد فقط صور نمطية عنصرية ودينية بل يوجد العديد من الانواع من الصور النمطية مثل العمر والحالة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية وغيرها."

²² Original in Arabic: "اكتشفت العديد من التفرقات التي لم اسمع عنها قبل مثل anti-Semitism و xenophobia ولماذا هذه التفرقات تحدث"

²³ Original in Arabic: "الصورة النمطية التي عرفتتها جديد هي الصورة النمطية للمعاقين."

All students reported increased knowledge at least once. Some of them reported it after each of the three activities. However, in two separate instances, a couple of students did not report increased knowledge; instead, they stated that they were previously aware of the content of the activity. The first one is ELLEN, who reported that the content of activity three about the *Isms* was not new to her, she wrote: "*I know and [sic] aware [sic] all of them*" (ELLEN, Journal 3, original excerpt in English). The second one is NANCY, who wrote about the same activity: "*I did not learn much, because I see and hear about many types of racial discrimination²⁴ on everything and in every country*" (NANCY, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic²⁵). In fact, both ELLEN and NANCY gave some examples of the *Isms* they see around them in their everyday life, which is a possible evidence that they were really familiar with this topic.

In two other instances, two students showed negative responses to learning about stereotypes in the classroom. One wrote: "*I did not learn anything..... it is like regular activities, but there is a benefit in terms of the English language*" (BASIM, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic²⁶), and the other wrote: "*I did not learn anything, because in my opinion it is a waste of time*" (JAMAL, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic²⁷). Basically, the two girls and the two boys reported no increased knowledge, but whereas the two girls wrote that they already had previous knowledge of the topic (positive reporting), the two boys dismissed the activity and reported no increased knowledge (negative reporting). Furthermore, unlike the girls, who showed examples of their knowledge of the *Isms*, the boys' essays did not reflect a good understanding of the concept of stereotype. Their essays were basically a description of personal qualities, and not personal stereotypes as the task required.

The writing task of the first essay required students to write about their own stereotypes; however, the majority of students wrote about personal qualities rather than stereotypes. Their first essay showed that they either did not truly understand the concept or that they were simply unable to express themselves well. They reported increased understanding of the concept in their reflective journals, and the examples they provided in their worksheet reflected a good understanding of various types of stereotypes. When asked about it, the teacher could not provide an explanation for this matter.

²⁴ Here she uses the term *racial discrimination* as an umbrella term for discrimination. See section 4.5b in this chapter for further explanation.

²⁵ Original in Arabic: "لم اتعلم الكثير لانني ارى واسمع الكثير عن انواع التمييز العنصري حول كل شيء وفي كل دولة."

²⁶ Original in Arabic: "لم اتعلم شيء..... انها مثل نشاطات عادية. ولكن هناك فائدة من ناحية اللغة الانجليزية."

²⁷ Original in Arabic: "لم اتعلم شيء، لانه في وجه نظري شيء اضاعة للوقت."

- *Students reported better understanding of social bias*

Some students went beyond merely reporting the types of social bias they have newly learned, and made an effort to reflect on the knowledge they have acquired and how it helped them better understand what stereotyping really is. Here is what some of them wrote:

I learned many stereotypes in many of the world cultures, and that a stereotype differs from one place to another. (MARCO, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic²⁸)

I learned that stereotypes have more of a negative result than positive on the person you are talking about. (KAREEM, Journal 1, original excerpt in English)

I learned that some stereotypes are not real and they are just talk among people in the different cultures. (MELANIE, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic²⁹)

[The activity] helped by making me realize how scary and important [stereotyping] is, and made me understand more about the topic. (AMEEN, Journal 1, original excerpt in English)

In their reflective journals, some students not only reported increased knowledge on social bias, but also tried to make a connection between the new knowledge, their own culture, and other cultures. They developed an understanding that social bias differs from one culture to the other. For example, NICOLE wrote in her journal: "*There was a discussion in class about discrimination, I discovered new things that exist in other societies, and at the same time [I discovered ones] that exist here and does not exist in other societies*" (NICOLE, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic³⁰). Another student, ORAIB, wrote in her journal: "*I have learned about stereotypes in my own culture and around the world that stereotypes exist of different races, cultures or ethnic groups*" (ORAIB, Journal 1, original excerpt in English). As for WALEED, he reported how the activity of stereotypes helped him understand how people think. He wrote:

²⁸ Original in Arabic: "لقد تعلمت العديد من الصور النمطية في العديد من ثقافات العالم وان الصور النمطية تختلف من مكان الى اخر."

²⁹ Original in Arabic: "تعلمت ان بعض الجمل النمطية ليست حقيقية ومجرد كلام يقال بين الناس في الحضارات المختلفة."

³⁰ Original in Arabic: "حصل نقاش داخل الصف عن التمييز، اكتشفت اشياء جديدة موجودة في مجتمعات خارجية، وفي نفس الوقت [اكتشفت اشياء] موجودة هنا وليست موجودة في مجتمعات خارجية."

This part of the project was very useful to me, for I learned and looked via the internet and through asking people and relatives. Through these all, I got to know about other new and foreign cultures and lifestyles, and it made me understand in a clearer way people's mentality and their judgment of each other through stereotypes. (WALEED, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic³¹)

• ***Students reported increased knowledge of social bias in own culture***

Only seven students saw their own culture in new eyes after the activities. In a sense, the activity provided them with a better understanding of social bias, which helped them see how habitual interactions in their daily lives can be considered as stereotyping or discrimination. For example, MELANIE wrote in her journal: "*Ageism exists in my country, I recently discovered that*" (MELANIE, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic³²). She never thought that treating people differently based on their age was discriminatory, and she never realized that people were doing it in her country. The examples that were provided in the worksheets, and probably during the discussion in class, made her reflect on her own culture and see inter-age interactions from a different perspective.

Other students also reported seeing their own culture from a different perspective after engaging in the activities, like TAMER, who wrote in his journal: "*The stereotype that I have newly learned in my country is the socioeconomic stereotype*" (TAMER, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic³³). He started seeing how people in his own society have certain images of others from a different socioeconomic background, and how this is a form of stereotype. SAMARA, on the other hand, noticed the stereotyping based on families' background (e.g. family history, socioeconomic status ...etc.). She wrote in her journal: "*Also I learned a lot about the place where I live [...] For example, the discrimination based on families*" (SAMARA, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic³⁴). The society in her hometown still maintains remnants of tribal or clan-oriented mentality, she hears how people around her describe members of other families, and before the activity, she never thought of it as a form

³¹ Original from Arabic: "هذا الجزء من المشروع كان مفيدا جدا بالنسبة لي فقد تعلمت وتطلعت عن طريق البحث على الانترنت ومن خلال سؤال الناس والاقارب فقد تعلمت من خلالهم على ثقافات وانماط حياة غريبة وجديدة وجعلني افهم بشكل اوح تفكير الناس وحكمهم على بعضهم من هذه الانماط."

³² Original in Arabic: "موجود في بلدنا التمييز بالعمر اكتشفته جديدا."

³³ Original in Arabic: "التشبيه النمطي الذي تعلمته جديدا في بلدي هو التشبيه النمطي للطبقة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية."

³⁴ Original from Arabic: "لقد تعلمت الكثير عن المكان الذي اعيش فيه [...] وعلى سبيل المثال التمييز حسب العائلات [...]."

of stereotype. Moreover, she was one of very few students who thought of a stereotype from their own cultural background that was not mentioned in the activity's worksheet.

Furthermore, some students reported how the activities helped them understand how others perceive them. For example, NICOLE and YASMIN have realized through this activity how others stereotype them based on who they are and where they come from. They wrote in their journals:

I was surprised by how stereotypes of Arabs are presented [...] One point caught my attention is that they think that all Arabs are Muslims, whereas in fact there are Christians. In some western countries they do not know that Arabs are Muslims and Christians. I only found out this information through this project and then I asked my parents about this topic. Through this topic and this project I have comprehended more the meaning of stereotype. (NICOLE, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic³⁵)

One of the things we discussed and I did not know it well is Islamophobia, especially in western countries. There are people and groups who distort the image of Islam and it is what makes people fear Islam. (YASMIN, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic³⁶)

NICOLE is a Christian girl who has never travelled abroad in her life. She has never faced this type of stereotyping herself, but she got to learn about it from her classmates and teacher in class. On the other hand, YASMIN is a Muslim girl who has travelled to many places, yet she is not familiar with Islamophobia, as she has never encountered it personally in any Western country she visited. Through the activity, both girls acquired knowledge, which might be useful for them in the future when they travel and interact with people who carry these types of biases about Arabs and Muslims, since the shock of knowing had already happened before and not during the interaction. Nonetheless, it is not possible to predict how this now pre-existing knowledge would affect their behavior and direct any of their future intercultural interactions.

³⁵ Original in Arabic: "لقد تعجبت من كيفية طرح الصور النمطية عن العرب [...] هناك نقطة الفتت انتباهي وهي انه يعتقدون ان كل العرب مسلمين ولكن في الحقيقة هناك مسيحيون، وانا فقط علمت هذه المعلومة من هذا النشاط، حينها سألت اهلي عن هذا الموضوع، وانا من خلال هذا الموضوع وهذا المشروع استوعبت اكثر عن معنى الصورة النمطية."

³⁶ Original in Arabic: "من الامور التي ناقشناها ولم اكن اعرفها جيدا هي الخوف من الاسلام خصوصا في البلاد الاجنبية فان وجود اشخاص وجماعات تشوه صورة الاسلام وهو ما يجعل الناس تخاف من الاسلام."

• *Students reported learning about new religions and new religious traditions*

After doing the second activity, which required students to research the cultural traditions and beliefs of a religion different from their own, students reported increased knowledge. Many students expressed their lack of previous knowledge about the number of different religions that exist in the world, and how the activity introduced them to a lot of new religions. This is what some of them wrote:

In this activity I learned a lot about new religions in the world which I did not know existed. (SAMARA, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic³⁷)

I leaned that there are many more religious beliefs in the world than I expected. (JACOB, Journal 2, original excerpt in English)

I learned through this activity that there are a lot of religions in the world that I did not know. (MARCO, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic³⁸)

Students also reported how the activity increased their knowledge of the cultural traditions and beliefs of other religions, as seen in the following quotes:

I learned the way they worship God, and I became familiar with religions we did not know before, and manners of eating, what is permitted and not permitted to eat, and many other things. (MARIA, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic³⁹)

I learned something new about other religion like Taoism that they started Taichi, Taoist are kind to other people because they believe in nature and that all people are compassionate by nature. (JACOB, Journal 2, original excerpt in English)

I learned a lot about other religions like manners of greeting and ways of worship (SALMA, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁴⁰)

³⁷ Original in Arabic: "في هذا النشاط تعلمت الكثير عن الديانات الجديدة في العالم التي لم اكن اعلم بوجودها."

³⁸ Original in Arabic: "تعلمت من خلال هذا النشاط ان هنال العديد من الديانات في العالم لم اكن اعرفها."

³⁹ Original in Arabic: "تعلمت طريقة عبادتهم لله وتعرفت على اديان لم نكن نعرفها من قبل وطريقة الاكل المسموح اكلها وغير المسوح اكلها واشياء اخرى كثيرة."

The activity did not just introduce the students to new religions and religious traditions, it also made them look at the world beyond their own culture, and beyond their own community and country. Here, we see some students expressing how the activity brought them in contact with other religions that are completely new to them; religions that are outside what is familiar in their own country. For example, ELLIOT reported learning about a religion that was completely new to him and to everyone around him. He wrote: "*I've learned 100% new religion and it was Zoroastrianism it was really new experience for me [...] I asked my family, my teachers, and my relatives, but unfortunately none of them know it*" (ELLIOT, Journal 2, original excerpt in English).

TAMER also wrote: "*The religions I recently learned about are almost all [new] apart from Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Druze, because they exist in my country*" (TAMER, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁴¹). Another example is NICOLE, who found out through the activity that there are more denominations in Christianity than the ones she knew, and the ones that existed in her country. She wrote: "*Through my research on Mormonism, I learned that Mormonism is a branch of Christianity, and this information is something I got to know for the first time through this project*" (NICOLE, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁴²).

b) Knowledge of Correct Cultural Terminology in Own Language and Foreign Language

This competence is defined in this context as *the use of correct cultural lexicon and semantics, including politically correct words and non-derogative words, to describe concepts and people in both native and foreign languages*. As this competence started to appear in students' written works during data extraction, it was important to decide on which terms to code and which terms to exclude, since the analysis of this competence could make up a dissertation on its own. Consequently, only two terms were coded as indicators of this competence, which are *racism* and *sexual aberrant*. The reason for that is because they were the only two terms, where inconsistency of correct and incorrect use was found.

⁴⁰ Original in Arabic: "تعلمت الكثير عن الاديان الاخرى مثل تقديم التحية وطريقة العبادة."

⁴¹ Original in Arabic: "الديانات التي تعلمتها جديد كلهم تقريبا [جدد] ما عدا المسيحية والاسلامية واليهودية والدرزية لانها منتشرة في بلدي."

⁴² Original in Arabic: "من خلال بحثي عن المورمونية تعلمت ان المورمونية هي فرع من فروع المسيحية، وهذه المعلومة عرفتھا لأول مرة من خلال هذا البرنامج."

These two terms emerged in the written works of 28 students (87.5%), where they were coded 45 times, as can be seen in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Number and nature of instances coded under (K2) *Knowledge of correct cultural terminology in own language and foreign language.*

CODE: K2	Knowledge of correct cultural terminology in own language and foreign language			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	0	18	0	27
Number of Students	0 (0%)	17 (53%)	0 (0%)	17 (53%)
TOTAL	45 instances emerged in the works of 28 students (87.5%)			

• *Students used cultural lexicon that shows lack of political correctness in native language*

Sex and sexuality has been and still is a taboo topic for the students in this study; therefore, terms related to this subject were rarely found in students' writing. Nonetheless, it was important to highlight one term that appeared in Arabic in the works of two students, which is *sexually aberrant*. This term has been also used by many students during classroom discussions according to the teacher. The term in Arabic is شاذ جنسيا [shādh jensiæn], which literary translates into *sexually aberrant*. In Arabic, the word شاذ (shādh) means *deviant from the norm*, and for many years it has been used to describe homosexual people. It is still used in formal and informal settings in many Arabic-speaking countries, as homosexuality is still perceived as an abnormal and unnatural act.

It is possible that students used this word simply because it is the prevalent term that people around them use. It is also possible that they do not know that there are more correct alternatives for describing people's sexual orientations, such as مثلي جنسيا [methlee jensiæn] and مغاير جنسيا [mooḡaer jensiæn] to talk about homosexuals and heterosexuals, respectively, where مثلي (methlee) means *same* or *homo-*, and مغاير (mooḡaer) means *different* or *hetero-*. The teacher opted not to correct them in class, as he felt that it would interfere with the researcher's assessment of the students.

The context where those two instances occurred drives us to think that the students used the terms *aberrant/aberrance* either out of ignorance or echoing what they hear in their society. In his journals, KHALID reflected on the types of discrimination he saw in his own society. He criticized how his

society rejects others because they are different. He clearly expressed that discrimination against homosexuals is wrong and should stop, but he used an incorrect term in Arabic. He wrote:

Even those who have sexual aberrance[,] they were born, raised, or forced by circumstance to appear like this, so should we discriminate in our society[?] In our society we do not accept any person different from us[,] we talk about him and different types of discriminating appear here[,] because he is different from the others[,] because we do not want him" (KHALID, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁴³)

On the other hand, MARCO's use of the term is open to interpretations, as his beliefs and intentions are not clearly stated. He reflects on how people stereotype the sexual orientation of others based on certain behaviors, but his words hint at the idea that being called gay is an insult. He shows fear that people in the West might think of him as gay if they saw him kissing another man, which in normal way of greeting in his culture. He wrote in his journals:

People do not like those who are different from them [...] and they judge them with a negative image [...] For example[,] kissing in our country is intuitive among men and relatives and there is no problem in that[,] but in the west if a guy kisses another guy they will say that he is sexually aberrant. (MARCO, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁴⁴)

- ***Students committed lexical errors in English resulting from lack of understanding of cultural semantics in Arabic***

Throughout their written works, many students showed misunderstanding of the term التمييز العنصري (al-tamyeez al-'onsori) *racial discrimination* in Arabic. This resulted in the misuse of the term, in both Arabic and English, as an umbrella term for other types of discrimination. In Arabic, *racial discrimination* translates into both التمييز العنصري (al-tamyeez al-'onsori) and التمييز العرقي (al-tamyeez al-'erqi), where عنصر ('onsor) signifies origin and عرق ('erq) signifies race. Both terms are commonly

⁴³ Original text in Arabic: "حتى الذين لديهم شذوذ جنسي هم خلقوا او هم تربوا واجبرتهم الظروف على الظهور هكذا فهل يجب ان نميز في مجتمعنا، في مجتمعنا لا نتقبل اي شخص مختلف عنا نتكلم عنه ويظهر انواع من التمييز هنا لانه مختلف عن الاخرين لاننا لا نريده."

⁴⁴ Original text in Arabic: "الناس لا تحب المختلفون عنهم ... ويحكمون عليه بصورة سلبية ... مثلا التقبيل في بلادنا شيء بديهي بين الشباب والاقارب وهذا لا مشكلة فيه اما في الغرب فانه لو شاب قَبِلَ شاب سوف يتحدثون انه شاذ جنسيا."

used in formal and informal forums to signify racism; however, very often the term التمييز العنصري (al-tamyeez al-'onsori) is incorrectly used as an umbrella term for other types of discrimination, and the word عنصرية ('onsoria) *racism* is used to signify discrimination.

For example, MELODY wrote in her journal: "*Racial discrimination that exists in my country is religious for example discrimination between Muslims and Christians*" (Journal 3, translated from Arabic⁴⁵). She used the term التمييز العنصري (al-tamyeez al-'onsori) *racial discrimination* to signify discrimination, which is semantically wrong; she should have written either the word التمييز (al-tamyeez) *discrimination*, or the phrase التمييز الطائفي (al-tamyeez al-ta'yfi) *faithism*. Furthermore, a literal translation of a misunderstood term in one language results in lexical errors in the other language. So, when MELODY wrote her essay in English, the translation of the term resulted in an error. She wrote: "*One of the examples of racial discrimination in my daily life is the sexual distinction between male and female, the distinction between the rich and the poor, the religious distinction between Christians and Muslims*" (MELODY, Essay 3, original excerpt in English).

The following quote is another example of how the term racial discrimination is erroneously used in English. The student here used it as an umbrella term for other types of discrimination.

Racial discrimination is [sic] a variety of different forms: discrimination in color like a human being if his skin is black and human is white, distinguishing between a Muslim and a Christian, a distinction between a poor man and a rich man, and between educated and uneducated. (MARIA, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

Nonetheless, not all students misused the term in both languages, for example LOAY used the terms correctly in Arabic, but erroneously in English. In his journal he listed the new forms of *Isms* he had newly learned, he wrote: "*Discrimination based on ability, discrimination based on age, discrimination based on religion, discrimination based on culture, discrimination based on sect*" (LOAY, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁴⁶), while in his essay he wrote: "*Types of discrimination [sic] see in their everyday life? [sic] 1. Racism among religious communities 2. Religious Racism 3. Racism*

⁴⁵ Original text in Arabic: "التمييز العنصري الموجود في بلدي هو ديني مثل التفريق بين المسلمين والمسيحية."

⁴⁶ Original in Arabic: "تمييز القدرة، تمييز بالعمر، تمييز الاديان، تمييز ثقافي، تمييز الطوائف."

between man and woman 4. Racism between Arabs and foreigners 5. Israeli racism" (LOAY, Essay 3, original excerpt in English). Here, it merits explaining that in Arabic, the *Isms* do not exist in the same form as in English. In Arabic the word *discrimination* (التمييز al-tamyeez) has to be combined with the cultural identifier. For example, in English it is *ageism*, but in Arabic it is *age discrimination* (التمييز العمري al-tamyeez al-'omri) or *discrimination based on age* (التمييز بناء على العمر al-tamyeez bina' ala al-'omr).

4.6. Emerging Intercultural Competences Related to Attitudes

Six micro-competences emerged from students' written productions that correspond to the macro-competence of attitude or *savoir être*. The first competence is **Respect for other cultures**. The second competence is **Appreciation of similarities and acceptance of differences**. The third competence is **Curiosity and interest in learning about intercultural topics and other cultures**. The fourth competence is **Openness and eagerness to interact and live with others from different cultures**. The fifth competence is **Readiness to reserve judgment and suspend disbelief about other cultures**. The sixth competence is **Dispelling of mistaken preconceived notions about others**.

a) Respect for Other Cultures

This competence signifies *talking/writing about others who are different or who have different views in a respectful manner, and not using their difference as an insult or excuse to attack them*. This competence emerged in the written works of eight students only (25%), and it was coded eight times as can be seen in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: Number and nature of instances coded under (A1) *Respect for other cultures*.

CODE: A1	Respect for other cultures			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	4	4	0	0
Number of Students	4 (12.5%)	4 (12.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	8 instances emerged in the works of 8 students (25%)			

In their written works, students communicated attitudes of respect to others who are different from them in race, color, and religion. MALIK showed these attitudes in his Cultural Passport before the start of the activities. He wrote: "My religious beliefs: I'm Christian and I respect other religions

Muslim, Jewish religion etc....." (MALIK, Cultural Passport, original excerpt in English). Other students reported on respecting others after engaging in the activities. The following are examples, which demonstrate how students thought respectfully of others.

After learning about stereotypes, MARWAN recognized that it is important to respect others who are different from him. He wrote: "*I did learn that we have to respect all people [even] if they are from a deferent [sic] race or deferent [sic] color*" (MARWAN, Journal 1, original excerpt in English). After the same activity on stereotypes, KHALID realized that it all comes down to one's attitude and one's behavior towards others who are different, and thus he wrote: "*I learned that a respectful person remains respectful even if the religion is different*" (KHALID, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁴⁷).

Moreover, the second activity, which required students to research a new religion, made students think about how they treat others from a different religious background. NICOLE wrote about herself: "*When I want to get to know someone, I do not ask him about his religion, because no matter what his religion was, I will treat him with kindness and respect, because he is a person equal to me*" (NICOLE, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁴⁸). Her classmate MAYA reached a similar conclusion after researching a new religion. Not only did she change her preconceived notions about that religion, but she also realized the importance of respecting difference. She wrote:

Everyone has their principals and faith and we have to respect them and not judge them or see them as inferior, and this is what I will start doing personally. I will start working on my personality, so I can give opportunities to hear the different points of view and open my mind. (MAYA, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁴⁹)

b) Appreciation of Similarities and Acceptance of Differences

This competence means *considering both similarities and differences while learning or interacting with others, and showing comfort and acceptance to intercultural learning and others with cultural*

⁴⁷ Original in Arabic: "تعلمت ان الشخص المحترم يبقى محترم حتى وان كانت الديانة مختلفة."

⁴⁸ Original in Arabic: "انا عندما اريد ان اتعرف على شخص لا اسأله عن دينه، لانه مهما كانت دينه سأعامل معه بحسنة واحترام لانه شخص مثلي مثله."

⁴⁹ Original in Arabic: "كل شخص لديه مبادئه وإيمانه ويجب علينا احترامها وعدم الحكم عليهم أو النظر لهم نظرة دونية وهذا ما سأفعله شخصياً سأتبدأ بالعمل على شخصيتي حتى اعطي فرصاً للسماع لوجهات النظر المختلفة وتوسيع الفكر."

differences. It was found in the written works of eight students (25%), where it was coded 12 times as can be seen in Table 4.17. The activities did not directly require students to look at similarities and differences with other cultures or subcultures, but some students were able to notice and report on things they thought were similar and/or different to them, mostly regarding other religions.

Table 4.17: Number and nature of instances coded under (A2) *Appreciation of similarities and acceptance of differences*.

CODE: A2	Appreciation of similarities and acceptance of differences			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	3	5	4	0
Number of Students	3 (9%)	3 (9%)	3 (9%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	12 instances emerged in the works of 8 students (25%)			

The majority of instances related to this competence shows acceptance and/or rejection of differences rather than appreciation of similarities, which were only found in two instances by two students. One is SAWSAN, whose writings will be discussed later in this section, because they show contradictions, and the other is YOUNIS, who wrote about how Christianity and Islam have similarities, and how people in his society should not discriminate on the basis of religion. He wrote in one of his essays:

The kind of discrimination I am suffering from is being a Muslim in a Christian School because some people where I live think its [sic] not right to blind [sic] in with people with different beliefs and some different style of living which is very wrong and closed minded because we people of [town] have the same traditions at most of the things we do and have two religions that share the same thought which is to believe in god and his love. (YOUNIS, Essay 1, original excerpt in English)

As mentioned earlier, the majority of instances were related to acceptance and/or rejection of differences rather than appreciation of similarities. ISSAM and NANCY show good examples of attitudes of accepting differences; this is not only reflected in the following quotes, but also throughout their written works, as they reported open mindedness towards others different from them. Here is what they both reported in their written works:

I got to know new types of discrimination that people and society practice. I got to know that people do not like strangers or anything strange to them, and they cannot accept this stranger quickly. I learned to accept the other, his difference from me does not mean dispute with me, we both share humanity. (ISSAM, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁵⁰)

Not all people are the same, we must accept who are different from us and learn about them more because we may acquire from them new knowledge and culture, we have to break the barriers of fear of change and accepting [sic] those who are different from us. (NANCY, Essay3, original excerpt in English)

On the other hand, there were students who showed rejection of differences, especially regarding other religions and other religious beliefs and tradition. The following are examples of instances where students showed lack of acceptance of religious differences:

It was hard for me to see some information about this religion and I think I judge against religion through what do religion teaches and if they don't believe that God created earth and that God exists that [is] how I judge. (MARWAN, Journal 2, original excerpt in English)

Things that make me judge a religion to be a bad religion is that they worship ghosts and idols and that they have nonsensical rituals. (LOAY, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁵¹)

Nonetheless, when it comes to accepting or rejecting difference, students' works have proven that it is not a simple case of black or white. Some students showed contradictions and conditional acceptance of differences. Some students reported accepting people who are different from them, but at the same time they showed rejection to religious beliefs different from their own. For example, in one journal, KHALID, who is a Muslim student, wrote about accepting others for who they are even if they were

⁵⁰ Original in Arabic: "عرفت انواع تمييز جديدة يمارسها الناس والمجتمع، وعرفت ان البشر لا يحبون الغريب او اي شيء غريب عنهم ولا يمكن ان يتقبلون هذا الغريب بسرعة، وتعلمت ان اتقبل الاخر فاختلفه عني لا يعني خلافا فكلانا نشترك في الانسانية."

⁵¹ Original in Arabic: "الاشياء التي تجعلني احكم ان الدين دين سيء هو انهم يعبدون اشباح واصنام وانهم عندهم طقوس غير منطقية."

gay, which is a strong and courageous statement, as homosexuality is frowned upon and is forbidden in his religion and country, and in another journal he wrote that religions, who do not believe in God (Allah) are wrong and unimportant.

Even those who have sexual aberrance[,] they were born, raised, or forced by circumstance to appear like this, so should we discriminate in our society[?] In our society we do not accept any person different from us. (KHALID, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁵²)

In the society I live in, there are 3 religions, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Judaism not so much. [They are] heavenly religions that call for the worship of God -be praised. As for me, I did not care much for other religions, because they are wrong [and] call for the worship of someone or something unimportant. (KHALID, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁵³)

Another example is the case of SAWSAN, who kept going back and forth in the same journal regarding her view on the religion she had researched. At the beginning of her journal entry, one can see that despite finding that religion illogical, she still tried to see some positive similarities. She wrote:

I learned about other religions and I did a research on a Hindu religion and I got to know it. I saw that a lot of things are not logical in the religion but on the other hand there are things similar to other religions like calling for love, peace, and tolerance. (SAWSAN, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁵⁴)

However, later on, in the same journal, she concluded that only the Abrahamic religions are true and that the others are illogical. She wrote:

⁵² Original in Arabic: "حتى الذين لديهم شذوذ جنسي هم خلقوا او هم تربوا واجبرتهم الظروف على الظهور هكذا فهل يجب ان نميز في مجتمعنا، في مجتمعنا لا نتقبل اي شخص مختلف عنا."

⁵³ Original in Arabic: "في المجتمع الذي اعيش فيه يوجد 3 ديانات المسيحية والاسلامية واليهودية ولكن اليهودية ليست بكثرة، ديانات سماوية تدعوا الى عبادة الله سبحانه، بالنسبة لي لم اهتم كثيرا في الديانات الاخرى لانها اشياء خاطئة تدعوا الى عبادة شخص او اشياء غير مهمة."

⁵⁴ Original in Arabic: "تعلمت عن ديانات اخرى واجريت بحث عن ديانة هندية وتعرفت عليها ورأيت ان العديد من الاشياء ليست منطقية في الديانة ولكن في المقابل يوجد اشياء تشابه الديانات الاخرى مثل الدعوة الى المحبة والسلام والتسامح."

I also learned that people think that their religion is the true one and they hate whomever thinks otherwise, as for me I love my religion and I think that the three heavenly⁵⁵ religions are correct, because they believe in the one God and the other religions are illogical. (SAWSAN, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁵⁶)

As we have seen in this section, religion has revealed itself to be a major factor affecting students' intercultural attitudes in the context of this study. This section is just the tip of the iceberg, as it will keep showing up again in following sections. The teacher commented that students used to relate everything to their own cultural background, especially to their own religious background. He reported that many students simply could not separate religion from other life matters, and that many rejected everything that was different from their home culture. He mentioned how some of the students did not appreciate learning about religions that they did not have in their own country. However, he was amazed by how accepting they were to Jehovah's Witnesses, which is a group that is strictly shunned in their society. All of this and more will be discussed in details in Chapter 5, Section 2.b.

On another point regarding acceptance of differences, the teacher reported that students' reactions towards homosexuality was very fierce. Although homophobia was included on the list of *Isms* in the third worksheet, the researcher did not plan for it to be part of the activity, realizing that it is still a taboo topic in the country. Nonetheless, the teacher reported that the topic came up in discussion and students' reactions varied. He mentioned that many students did not want to take part in the discussion, and stayed silent. Other students, like LAURA and AMEEN, were open and accepting, while others completely rejected and refused to accept homosexuality. The teacher was mainly shocked by some of the fierce responses made by some of the rejectionists, as they went on to say phrases like this "*if my classmate were gay, I would beat him up*", or "*if my classmate were gay, I would ask that they leave the school*". The teacher made a remark that Christian students were divided into accepting and rejecting, but all Muslim students rejected homosexuality. Ironically, the only student, who stated that one should not judge gay people because they are born like this, is a Muslim student, but his teacher reported that he was one of those students willing to accept others, but not those with a different sexual orientation

⁵⁵ In her essay she wrote *الديانات السماوية الثلاث* which literally translates to *the three heavenly religions*. This term in Arabic signifies the three main Abrahamic religions; Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

⁵⁶ Original in Arabic: "تعلمت ايضا ان الناس تعتقدون ان ديانتهم هي الصحيحة ويكرهون من يعتقد غير ذلك، ولكن بالنسبة لي أنا احب ديانتني وأعتقد ان الديانات السماوية الثلاث صحيحة لانها تؤمن بالله الواحد وان الديانات الخرى ليست منطقية."

and definitely not those from a different religion. This issue of discrepancies between what students say in front of each other and what they write in private raises a critical question of peer and cultural pressure, which will be further discussed in Chapter 5, Section 2.b.

c) Curiosity and Interest in Learning About Intercultural Topics and Other Cultures

In the context of this study, this competence signifies *showing curiosity and interest in learning about social bias and other religions and cultures, and showing willingness to feed their curiosity by seeking information from books, internet, and people in their social circle*. It appeared in the written works of 31 students (97%), and it was coded 63 times (see Table 4.18).

Table 4.18: Number and nature of instances coded under (A3) *Curiosity and interest in learning about intercultural topics and other cultures*.

CODE: A3	Curiosity and interest in learning about intercultural topics and other cultures			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	34	22	6	1
Number of Students	20 (62.5%)	13 (40.5%)	4 (12.5%)	1 (3%)
TOTAL	63 instances emerged in the works of 31 students (97%)			

In general, students showed a lot of enthusiasm for the intercultural activities. Their work showed how curious and interested they were in learning and discovering about new intercultural topics and new religions. However, the teacher reported that students had different reactions to the activities. He stated that some students showed enthusiasm and were cooperative and interested in learning, like MAYA, who was always very curious to learn more, and who was excited and came prepared before each class. He also mentioned others, like SAWSAN and JACOB, who were complaining the whole time, asking "what is the benefit in all this?!", as well as MELANIE, who was not convinced in the project, and missed many classes, as her mother rejected and complained about the project claiming that she does not want to expose her daughter to such knowledge that might lead her to doubt her true religion. The teacher reported some of parents' reactions to the project that ranged from acceptance to rejection. This issue will be further discussed in Chapter 5, Section 2.b.

• *Students reported being interested in the topics of social bias*

Students reported interest in the topics of study. For example, LAURA expressed interest in a specific topic that is dear to her as she wrote in her first journal: "*I was interested about [sic] the sexual stereotype more than the other stereotypes, because I am supportive to this case in general*" (LAURA, Journal 1, original excerpt in English). Other students expressed interest in new information they have just learned. For example:

Getting to know other religions and entering discussions in class about this topic was interesting as well as getting to know the beliefs of other religions and looking up what is allowed and forbidden in all aspects like food and dress and holidays, etc. (YASMIN, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁵⁷)

There were many religions that I have not heard of before, and I learned about them through this activity and through the internet, like Sikhism, which is for me a new and interesting religion to research about. (WALEED, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁵⁸)

Some students, who showed interest in learning about social bias and other religions, mentioned that their interest came from their pursuit to increase their knowledge in order to become better educated on such subjects and more knowledgeable about the cultures of others. They knew that it is important to understand what happens around them in terms of social bias. For example:

[I am] interested to know more about stereotypes so I can be educated. (ZAHRA, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁵⁹)

I learned about new religions that I didn't have any idea that they existed and never noticed that I need to know more about, I was really interested. (KAREEM, Journal 3, original excerpt in English)

⁵⁷ Original in Arabic: "التعرف على الديانات والدخول في نقاشات في الصف عن هذا الموضوع كان مثير للاهتمام والتعرف على معتقدات الديانات الاخرى والنحت عنها عن الحلال والحرام من جميع النواحي كالاكل واللبس والاعباد الى اخره."

⁵⁸ Original in Arabic: "كان هناك العديد من الديانات التي لم اسمع بها من قبل، وتعرفت عليها من خلال النشاط ومن خلال الانترنت، مثل ديانة السيخية هي جديدة ومشوقة لي لكي ابحث عنها."

⁵⁹ Original in Arabic: "[انا] مهتمة لاعرف اكثر عن صور النمطية لآكون مثقفة."

For me, I want to read to learn about these types of discrimination so as to know what is happening in the society around me. I used the internet to read about those types of discrimination, I searched and I learned a lot of things. (KHALID, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁶⁰)

• ***Students reported being curious about the topics of social bias***

One can clearly notice that students were not only interested in topics of the intercultural activity, but they were also curious about the new information they learned during those activities, and this is clearly reflected in their writings. Their curiosity took them to discover the unknown; they searched the internet for more information, and asked family and community members about the topics of the activities. The majority showed curiosity to learn about social bias; however, while some students went the distance to explore new and interesting information, others did not put much effort in it. The following statements by the students show how curious they were to learn about the topics of the intercultural activities:

The activity made me interested and curious to know more about the topic of stereotypes, so I used the internet to learn more about it. (ORAIB, Journal 1, original excerpt in English)

This activity made me interested about stereotypes of other countries, and I used the internet to get to know other stereotypes that are not mentioned in this activity. (MARCO, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁶¹)

This activity inspired me to read more about stereotypes, and to watch videos on YouTube about stereotypes. (FARIS, Journal 1, original excerpt in English)

⁶⁰ Original in Arabic: بالنسبة لي اريد ان اقرأ لاتعلم عن هذه الانواع من التمييز لكي اعرف ما الذي يحدث في المجتمع من حولي. ولقد قمت باستخدام الانترنت لقراءة عن هذه الانواع من التمييز. بحثت وتعلمت اشياء كثيرة."

⁶¹ Original in Arabic: "ولقد جعلني هذا النشاط ان اهتم بالصورة النمطية للبلدان الاخرى، ولقد استخدمت شبكة الانترنت للتعرف على صور نمطية اخرى غير الموجودة في هذا النشاط."

I got very excited about this topic, and I wanted to search the internet and ask people about it, because I wanted to know more. It caught my attention a lot, so I searched a lot and I asked and inquired on this topic, and I wanted to know about as many stereotypes as possible. (NICOLE Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁶²)

Many students had at least some background about the topics of the first and third activities (*Stereotypes* and *The Isms*), but learning about the religions of the world was something completely new to all of them, and it ignited a lot of curiosity in many students. The following excerpts show some of their reactions:

I learned about different religions during this activity, because I was curious to know so I started searching in the internet about these kind of stuff and I learned a lot of new things. (KAREEM, Journal 2, original excerpt in English)

It created in me curiosity and I searched the internet about some mysterious and unknown religions, and I learned a lot about them. (TAMER, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁶³)

Yes I learned about new religions I did not knew about before nor heard of before, to me their images were unclear but it ignited curiosity inside me to know these religions and their faiths and practices. (ISSAM, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁶⁴)

The activity made me very curious to know about other religions, so I watched a documentary about religions. (FARIS, Journal 2, original excerpt in English)

• ***Students reported lack of curiosity and unwillingness to look outside of one's own boundaries***

Although the majority of students reported increased curiosity, some students showed a different attitude. One case of such students is JACOB, who reported twice that the activities did not make him

⁶² Original in Arabic: "وانا قد تحمست لهذا الموضوع كثيرا، وارادت ان ابحث على الانترنت واسأل ناس عن هذا الموضوع لانني اردت معرفته اكثر، ولقت انتباهي كثيرا فيبحثت كثيرا وسألت واستفسرت لهذا الموضوع، وارادت معرفة عن أكثر عدد من الصور النمطية."

⁶³ Original in Arabic: "وخلق لدي الفضول وبحثت في الانترنت عن بعض الديانات الغامضة والغير معروفة وتعلمت عنها الكثير."

⁶⁴ Original in Arabic: "نعم لقد تعلمت عن ديانات جديدة لم اكن اعلم عنها واسمع عنها من قبل وكانت صورتها مشوشة بالنسبة لي، وهذا اشعل بداخلي فضول لمعرفة هذه الديانات ومعتقداتهم وممارساتهم."

curious. As reported by his teacher, he was negative, he had problems accepting others as well as new knowledge, and he could not see any benefit in doing the activities. During the second activity, students learned about the different religions of the world and about religious tolerance. In his reflective journal, he wrote: "*My study of Taoism didn't make me curious about religious intolerance as I am not a fanatic. I treat people equally regardless of their religious beliefs or background*" (JACOB, Journal 2, original excerpt in English). In another journal, after learning about discrimination and the *Isms*, he wrote: "*Discrimination isn't that important thing I will search about it or it will pay my attention. People should respect each other even if they are different from each other*" (JACOB, Journal 3, original excerpt in English).

It is interesting to see how tolerant his views are, but how fiercely negative his attitude is towards learning and talking about social bias. On several occasions in his essays and reflective journals, he showed open-mindedness, yet he still shelters himself in his own cocoon, and refuses to see what is happening around him and outside his country. He sees himself as a tolerant person, who does not need to learn about intolerance. He refuses to see the value in discussing such topic and that many people can be intentionally and unintentionally intolerant.

• *Students showed intermittent curiosity*

While a student like JACOB showed lacked of interest and curiosity in all activities throughout his written work, another like MALIK showed a different reaction to each activity. In his first journal, he wrote: "*I am not interested in knowing about other stereotypes, I did not discuss it with the others, and I did not use the internet to know stereotypical images*" (Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁶⁵). In his second journal, he wrote: "*I used the internet to know more about other religions, and I was curious to know the culture of other religions*" (Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁶⁶). Finally, in his third journal, he wrote: "*Yes, I used the internet to know more types of discrimination and I asked people for that purpose*" (Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁶⁷).

⁶⁵ Original in Arabic: "انا غير مهتم في معرفة الصور النمطية الاخرى ولم ادخل في نقاش مع الاخرين في هذا الموضوع ولم استعمل الانترنت لمعرفة الصور النمطية."

⁶⁶ Original in Arabic: "استعملت الانترنت لمعرفة المزيد عن الاديان الاخرى وكنت فضوليا في معرفة ثقافة الاديان الاخرى."

⁶⁷ Original in Arabic: "نعم استخدمت الانترنت لمعرفة انواع التمييز وسألت اشخاص لهذا الغرض."

From his reporting, one can see that he rejected learning about stereotypes and was not curious about the content of the first activity; however, he presented a different view on the other two activities. The different journal entries showed a different view of this student's intercultural attitude. His work showed intermittent curiosity and interest, which could be attributed to several factors, ranging from topic to mood at the time. This shows how complicated intercultural assessment can be, which will be discussed further in the following chapter.

- ***Students reported seeking information to feed their curiosity***

A lot of students used the internet to look up the topics of the activities, but also many of them sought information from people in their own immediate circle. They asked them questions, discussed topics on social bias with them, and shared with them new information they had learned in the activities. For example:

I used the internet to search for some information about this topic and I asked people, particularly my mom [...] I liked to know more about this topic and it made me very curious, for example, to know more about stereotypes and why people do this thing and judge people without reason. (ORAIB, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁶⁸)

When I read about the Druze religion, I was surprised by a lot of facts that I did not know before, and that encouraged me to search more about this religions and discuss a few points with my dad. (NANCY, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁶⁹)

Nonetheless, students were disappointed and sometimes shocked by the responses of people they had asked. They were curious and they sought information from others, but they were disappointed by their lack of knowledge, and sometimes lack of interest. Eventually, with no guidance from their immediate circle, they turn to the internet for information. Following are a few testaments from students' reflective journals.

⁶⁸ Original in Arabic: "استخدمت الإنترنت في البحث عن بعض المعلومات حول هذا الموضوع وسألت الناس خصوصا امي [...] احببت المعرفة اكثر حول الموضوع وجعل لدي فضول كبير مثل معرفة انواع اكثر من النمطية ولماذا تعمل بعض الناس هذا الشيء وتحكم على الناس بدون سبب."

⁶⁹ Original in Arabic: "عندما قرأت عن الديانة الدرزية تفاجأت بالكثير من الحقائق التي لم اكن اعرفها من قبل وهذا شجعني على ان ابحث اكثر عن هذه الديانة ومناقشة بعض النقاط مع ابي."

I used the internet and I asked my friends and people from my church about this religion and I was shocked that no body [sic] know[s] about this religion. (MARWAN, Journal 2, original excerpt in English)

We took people's opinions and we noticed that they are surprised by the customs and traditions of other religions. (BASIM, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁷⁰)

I have asked a lot of people in my country, but most of them did not know and didn't want to talk about it, and yes I definitely used the internet for my research. (AMEEN, Journal 2 original excerpt in English)

I used the internet to search about religions I did not know, and I asked people, and they also do not know religions other than the three heavenly religions and it is the first time they hear about [other] religions and their customs and traditions. (MARIA, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁷¹)

It was difficult to learn [about Zoroastrianism] but I was happy searching for new religion, I was interested to know from people, I asked my family my teachers and my relatives but unfortunately none of them know it. So I got information from websites. (ELLIOT, Journal 2, original excerpt in English)

Curiosity is the first step to learning about the other and accepting differences, and students' access to information—to correct information—to satisfy their curiosity is crucial for developing their intercultural competences. It is unfortunate to read how students' curiosity was sometimes not satisfied. One can sense a tone of disappointment in these excerpts as their relatives either could not help them or were uninterested in the topics they brought up with them. For instance, the teacher mentioned SAMARA's mother, who comes from a very conservative Muslim family. He reported the mother saying that, in her family, they do not talk about such issues as the topics of the activities, because such topics are against their mentality and religion; she went on to make a sexist joke about how funny it

⁷⁰ Original in Arabic: "اخذنا اراء من الناس ونلاحظ انهم يتفاجئوا في عادات وتقاليد الاديان الاخرى."

⁷¹ Original from Arabic: "استخدمت الانترنت في البحث عن اديان لم اكن اعرفها وسألت الناس وأيضاً وهم لا يعرفون اديان غير الديانات السماوية الثالث، ولأول مرة يسمعون بأديان وعاداتهم وتقاليدهم."

would be if her daughter became a car mechanic. In this case the attitude of the mother is different from the attitude of the student, but later on it becomes clear how her family environment reflects on her attitudes towards others. Another mother, whom the teacher mentioned, is MARWAN's mother. He said that she thanked the school for introducing the students to such topics that help open their eyes and equip them with knowledge for the future when they leave the country to study abroad. Parents' attitudes continue to be part of the students' intercultural experience, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

d) Openness and Eagerness to Interact and Live with Others From Different Cultures

This competence is defined as *being open to and interested in exploring and experiencing other cultures, and seeking opportunities to interact and engage with others from different cultural background*. It emerged in the written works of 19 students (59%), and it was coded 30 times as seen in Table 4.19. Many students showed openness towards other cultures, and interest in engaging with others from different cultures. Each one of them had their own reasons and motives for their interest in meeting and engaging with other people from other cultures. The teacher reported that students varied in their openness to others, but many students, regardless of their religious background, showed rejection to unfamiliar religions that do not exist in their country and that do not believe in the Abrahamic God.

Table 4.19: Number and nature of instances coded under (A4) *Openness and eagerness to interact and live with others from different cultures*.

CODE: A4	Openness and eagerness to interact and live with others from different cultures			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	4	22	2	2
Number of Students	4 (12.5%)	14 (44%)	2 (6%)	2 (6%)
TOTAL	30 instances emerged in the works of 19 students (59%)			

- ***Students reported interest in other countries, languages, and cultures***

In their Cultural Passports, students mentioned places they want to visit and why they want to visit them. Many students responded with reasons that were simply tourist-oriented; however, others gave more culture-oriented reasons for their choices. For example, KAREEM wrote about the countries he would like to visit in the future: "*America, England, Germany because I would like to see other peoples*

cultures and what type of life they live" (KAREEM, Cultural Passport, original excerpt in English). He showed openness and interest again in his journals as he wrote: *"Now I am really curious to go visit other places I saw on the internet and see what is it like to get stereotypes in other countries"* (KAREEM, Journal 1, original excerpt in English).

Another example is LAURA, who wrote: *"I'm interested in languages and meeting new people from another countries"* (LAURA, Cultural Passport, original excerpt in English). She further wrote:

In the future I would like to live in Berlin or London, and also I would like to visit Spain, Moscow, Czech Republic [...]. There countries have something special and I always wanted to visit them, London and Ireland for their accent, Berlin and Spain for their language. (LAURA, Cultural Passport, original excerpt in English)

Students reported interest in others from different countries and cultures, but very few reported on engaging with different *others*. One of those few students is FARIS. He is the only student in both classes who had lived outside his country for a long period of time. He was an exchange student in Germany for a year. He wrote this:

During my exchange year, I have met many people. Most of them were Germans, so I talked with them in German, the non-Germans were wither my classmates there or the refugees. Our class had people from: Germany, Spain, Italy, France, Montenegro, Armenia, Mexico, Turkey, and Palestine. So we had to talk in English with each other, I spoke to some refugees in Germany from Syria, Bangladesh and Iraq. With most of them I spoke Arabic or with hand signs. (FARIS, Cultural Passport, original excerpt in English)

- ***Students reported interest in helping people in need who are from a different culture***

Some students' openness and eagerness for contact with others was related to their motivation to help others and to change the world. For example, ELLIOT wrote in his Cultural Passport: *"I would like to visit South Africa or Somalia or any poor State because I want to see how they live and what they do..."*

and if I can help them it would be an honor for me" (ELLIOT, Cultural Passport, original excerpt in English).

As another example, ELLEN not only wants to help change the world, but also wants to better understand world history. She wrote in her Cultural Passport:

[I want to go to] Berlin to see some of the world war II history, South Africa because I really want to do volunteer work, New York because my dream job is in the united nations [sic], Syria to do a volunteer work, but I cannot go because it's dangerous.
(ELLEN, Cultural Passport, original excerpt in English)

- ***Students showed acceptance and openness towards other religions***

Some students showed open-mindedness and acceptance towards the different religions they were studying. For example, YASMIN's interest in and openness towards the religion she was studying came from having been in contact with followers of that religion. She wrote:

My topic was about Buddhism. I researched this religion, because I interacted with Buddhists and I visited their temples and I saw how some prayers are conducted and the statues that they believe in, but I was not convinced in it, that is why I wanted to go more deep into this religion. (YASMIN, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁷²)

Her classmate SAMARA also reported how researching new religions ignited her interest and opened her mind towards unfamiliar religions. Here is what she wrote:

I searched the internet for a lot of religions which made me want to investigate more about. I asked a lot of people about this topic and dug more deep into it. I loved to learn more about Judaism, so I searched and I learned about it, and also about Hinduism, I

⁷² Original in Arabic: "موضوعي كان عن البوذية. بحثت عن هذه الديانة لانني تعاملت مع اشخاص بوذييين وزرت معابدهم ورأيت بعض الصلوات كيف تتم والتماثيل التي يؤمنون بها لكنني لم اقتنع بها لهذا احببت ان اتعمق اكثر في هذه الديانة."

got to know about their traditions and customs and I knew more about them.
(SAMARA, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁷³)

• ***Students showed lack of openness and lack of interest in other cultures***

Some students showed lack of openness and lack of interest in other cultures and in other people. Their feedback in their reflective journals showed lack of cultural relativism as they were centered on their own culture, or rather centered on their own religious beliefs. This point was also stressed by the teacher, who indicated that students were unable to see things beyond their own culture, as they continuously kept relating and comparing everything to their own cultural, specifically religious, background. Following is a quote by KHALID, where he shows lack of interest and closed-mindedness to anything outside his own cultural background:

In the society I live in, there are 3 religions, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Judaism not so much. [They are] heavenly religions that call for the worship of God -be praised. As for me, I did not care much for other religions, because they are wrong [and] call for the worship of someone or something unimportant, that is to say, a man can make it himself, and I do not want to think about it. (KHALID, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁷⁴)

Nonetheless, not all such students showed complete close-mindedness, some of them like JACOB verbalized conflicting views. He showed a different view in each journal. In one journal, he transmitted ethnocentric views when he wrote about his lack of interest in anything outside his country. In another journal, he reports that he likes socializing with people from different nationalities and different backgrounds. Here is what he reported:

I know so many traditional culture about my country, but I don't know anything about other countries. I didn't search about other countries around the world because I don't

⁷³ Original in Arabic: "بحثت في الانترنت عن الكثير من الديانات التي جعلتني احب ان استطلع عنها اكثر وسألت العديد من الناس حول هذا الموضوع وتعمقت بهم اكثر ولقد احببت ان اتعلم اكثر عن الديانة اليهودية فقامت بالبحث والتعلم عنها وكذلك عن الديانة الهندوسية لقد تعرفت عن عاداتهم وتقاليدهم وعرفت عنهم اكثر."

⁷⁴ Original in Arabic: "في المجتمع الذي اعيش فيه يوجد 3 ديانات المسيحية والاسلامية واليهودية ولكن اليهودية ليست بكثرة، ديانات سماوية تدعوا الى عبادة الله -سبحانه-، بالنسبة لي لم اهتم كثيرا في الديانات الاخرى لانها اشياء خاطئة تدعوا الى عبادة شخص او اشياء غير مهمة اي ان الانسان ممكن ان يصنعها بنفسه ولا اريد ان افكر بها."

need to know what happens outside my country, I don't have desire to ask about their stereotype because I am not interested in others. (JACOB, Journal 1, original excerpt in English)

I like to socialize with other people regardless of their (nationality, race, sex, faith and etc...). I think that discrimination has been mature [sic] cause of conflicts around the world. (JACOB, Journal 3, original excerpt in English)

In general, students showed eagerness to travel and openness to meet other people and learn about new religions, languages, and cultures. However, there still remains one question to ponder. Many of them reported having travelled abroad, and also many reported having interacted with and befriended foreigners in their school and in their hometown, why did not any of these students reported on their interactions with those foreigners?

e) Readiness to Reserve Judgment and Suspend Disbelief About Other Cultures

This competence means *being able to allow oneself to believe that something is true in other cultures even though it seems untrue, and not to pass judgment without learning others' cultural facts and perspectives.* It emerged in the written works of 15 students (47%), and it was coded 22 times as can be seen in Table 4.20. In their reflective journals, students showed their own attitudes on judging others, some of them showed attitudes of reserving judgment and suspending disbelief, yet on various levels, and some showed the opposite.

Table 4.20: Number and nature of instances coded under (A5) *Readiness to reserve judgment and suspend disbelief about other cultures.*

CODE: A5	Readiness to reserve judgment and suspend disbelief about other cultures			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	3	15	4	0
Number of Students	3 (9%)	11 (34%)	4 (12.5%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	22 instances emerged in the works of 15 students (47%)			

Most instances under this subcategory were coded as positive attitudes in reserving judgment. One example of such positive attitude is by NANCY, who wrote:

Not all of people who are different from you are wrong they just see life from a different angle and also if a person done [sic] something wrong that doesn't mean that all of his community are wrong and bad as him, every person represents himself not his community. (NANCY, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

Moreover, students reported that the activities helped them learn to reserve judgment on others. For example, YASMIN and MELANIE reported on how engaging in the intercultural activities of this project taught them to suspend their judgment of others based on first impressions and preconceived stereotypes. This is what the girls wrote:

Stereotypes helped me know how others think and that I should not judge them just by looking at them. (MELANIE, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁷⁵)

I think that the topic of man and woman has caught my attention a lot. Additionally, this project is wonderful and it emits enthusiasm in one's soul and teaches one not to judge others without getting to know them and their personality. (YASMIN, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁷⁶)

Students, on several occasions, mentioned that they would judge people based on their behaviors and not based on their cultural background, for example:

I judge people though their acts, their words, and their behavior. (BASIM, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁷⁷)

I wouldn't judge people bases on stereotypes [...] I would judge them from their behaviour or acts toward something. (LAURA, Journal 1, original excerpt in English)

⁷⁵ Original in Arabic: "ساعدتني النمطية في معرفة كيف يفكر الاخرين وان لا احكم عليهم بمجرد النظر اليهم."

⁷⁶ Original in Arabic: "اعتقد ان موضوع الرجل والمرأة لفت نظري كثيرا. اضيف الى ذلك أن هذا المشروع رائع ويبيث الحماس في نفس الانسان ويعلم الانسان ان لا يحكم على غيره دون التعرف عليه وعلى شخصيته."

⁷⁷ Original in Arabic: "احكم على الناس من خلال حركاتهم واقوالهم وتصرفاتهم."

It is important to note that, although these students understood the need to suspend judgment based on cultural background and other generalizations like stereotypes, they still based their judgment on observing the words and behaviors of others. On the other hand, other students understood the importance of going beyond observing towards interacting with others, in order to be able to judge them after getting to know them. For example:

I learned how to judge people via talking to them. By talking to you in a polite and passionate way, because many people judge others without knowing them, and that is wrong. (ZAHRA, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁷⁸)

I judge people, but I cannot be sure of my judgment without evidence, for I do not like someone to judge me based on my behavior. Through this project, I now understand why I judge people. (MELODY, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁷⁹)

It is part of human nature to have a judgmental or evaluative attitude; in fact, attitudes are one's evaluations of something or someone and, from attitudes, opinions and behaviors develop. Some students understood the need to get to know others well before forming an opinion about them or judging them. However, none of them were at a level where they realize the need to go beyond interaction to making an effort to understand the reasons behind people's behaviors and beliefs, which is at core of being an interculturally competent person.

At the other end of the spectrum are those students who were unable to suspend disbelief and went on to pass negative judgments on other religions, for example:

I learned about other religions, but not much. I learned that they believe in something which is not God, for example, they believe in the process of getting rid of the cycle of death and life through self control and asceticism and the liberation of soul from the

⁷⁸ Original in Arabic: تعلمت كيف احكم على الناس من خلال طريقة الكلام وتحدث معك بشكل مهذب وشغف لان الكثير من الناس يحكمون على غيرهم بدون معرفتهم فهذا خطأ.

⁷⁹ Original in Arabic: انا بحكم عن الناس ولكن لن اتأكد من حكمي دون دليل فأنا لا احب ان احد يحكم على تصرفاتي، ولقد فهمت لماذا احكم على الناس من خلال هذا المشروع.

body and connecting to it, and for sure that this thing is not real, for no one can separate the soul from the body. (KHALID, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁸⁰)

Nonetheless, many showed contradictory views regarding suspending judgment of others. Students reported the need to stop judging others without knowing them, but they were unable to suspend their judgment of others' religions, their faith, and their ways of life. The teacher pointed out that students could not separate religion from other life matters. Here are some examples of such contradictions:

In his first journal LOAY wrote: *"I do not judge people before I get to know them well [...] I think people who criticize people have no ethics, especially if they did not know that person"* (LOAY, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁸¹), and in his second journal, he went on to say the opposite, as he wrote: *"Things that make me judge a religion to be a bad religion is that they worship ghosts and idols and that they have nonsensical rituals"* (LOAY, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁸²). Another example is SAWSAN, who wrote in her first journal that it is wrong to judge people because they seem different, but in her second journal she wrote: *"I think that the three heavenly religions are correct, because they believe in the one God and the other religions are illogical"* (SAWSAN, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁸³).

f) Dispelling of Mistaken Preconceived Notions About Others

This competence signifies *being open and able to change one's own mind and perception about the other after getting to know them or learn about them*. It showed up in the written works of only three students (9%), where it was coded four times as seen in Table 4.21.

⁸⁰ Original in Arabic: *تعلمت عن الديانات الاخرى ولكن ليس الكثير، اي تعلمت انهم يؤمنون بشيء وهو ليس الله، فمثلا يؤمنون بعملية التخلص من دائرة الموت والحياة عن طريق التحكم بالنفس والزهد وتحرير الروح عن الجسم والارتباط بها ومن المؤكد ان هذا الشيء غير حقيقي فلا يمكن لاحد ان يفصل الروح عن الجسد.*

⁸¹ Original in Arabic: *انني لا احكم على الناس قبل ان اتعرف عليهم جيدا [...] انا اعتقد ان الناس التي تنتقد الناس ليس لهم اخلاق وخصوصا اذا كان لم يعرف الشخص.*

⁸² Original in Arabic: *"الاشياء التي تجعلني احكم ان الدين دين سيء هو انهم يعبدون اشباح واصنام وانهم عندهم طقوس غير منطقية."*

⁸³ Original in Arabic: *"أعتقد ان الديانات السماوية الثلاث صحيحة لانها تؤمن بالله الواحد وان الديانات الخرى ليست منطقية."*

Table 4.21: Number and nature of instances coded under (A6) *Dispelling of mistaken preconceived notions about others*.

CODE: A6	Dispelling of mistaken preconceived notions about others			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	4	0	0	0
Number of Students	3 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	4 instances emerged in the works of 3 students (9%)			

The following are testimonies from students, whose research on a different religion drove them to change some preconceived notions they previously had. The new information they learned helped them see those religions from a different perspective, which differs from the one they see on television or experience in their everyday life.

[I learned] *that there are a lot of prejudgments about religions without any deep examining of the religion and its customs and principles, and with the help of this activity, the image of a lot of religions has changed in me from what I used to see on television, which is a lie and a distortion to the reputation of religion.* (MARCO, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁸⁴)

I learned from the previous activity [...] that there are people who distort the image of religions, even the Jewish religion, which I did not know much about, through my research on the internet, I found out that it is a religion of love and tolerance, contrary to what the occupying Zionists show us in form of subjugation and killings and more. (ADEEB, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁸⁵)

Moreover, the student who reported the most drastic change in preconceived notions is MAYA. This girl reported that, before the activities, she used to think that her religion is the only true one. She said that the activities opened her eyes to a new reality regarding others and other religions in the world. She

⁸⁴ Original in Arabic: [تعلمت] ان هناك العديد من الاحكام المسبقة على الديانات دون التعمق في الديانة وعاداتها ومبادئها. وبمساعدة هذا النشاط تحولت صورة العديد من الديانات بالنسبة لي كما كنت اشاهدها على شاشة التلفاز وهو كذب وتشويه لسمعة الدين.

⁸⁵ Original in Arabic: [لقد تعلمت من النشاط السابق [...] يوجد اناس من يشوهون صورة الديانات حتى الديانة اليهودية التي لم اكن اعرف الكثير عنها، عن طريق بحثي بالانترنت عرفت انها ديانة حب وتسامح على عكس ما يصوره لنا الصهاينة المستعمرين من قمع وقتل وغيره.

saw the need to change and open her mind to listen to others and not judge anyone or any religion to be inferior. Here is her testimony:

Before working on this project, I had different views. As a Christian girl I used to see that my religion is the great and true religion and the Christian people are absolutely the best, and I used to feel sorry and pity for those from other religions, but when we did the activity that requires researching religions and knowing their beliefs and culture, I started being surprised of facts I did not know [...] Everyone has their principals and faith and we have to respect them and not judge them or see them as inferior, and this is what I will start doing personally. I will start working on my personality, so I can give opportunities to hear the different points of view and open my mind." (MAYA, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁸⁶)

Changing preconceived ideas is not an easy task. Also, there is no way to tell what incident, what encounter, what life experience, or what simple piece of information could transform students' preconceived notions. Every person has their own way of reflecting, processing, and internalizing information. Nonetheless, it is important to mention that some students had a change of perception regarding Judaism, according to the teacher. The previous quote by ADEEB is one example of this. Such change of perception was not directly reported in the works of other students, but a positive view of Judaism could be clearly seen. For example, KHALID wrote in his second journal: "*The conflict of the Palestinians is with the Zionists and not the Jews, the Jews worship God and they are the People of the Book*"⁸⁷ (KHALID, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic⁸⁸).

Another example is NICOLE, who started writing about Jews collectively, then corrected herself, she wrote in her third journal: "*America greatly supports them [Jews] to stay on Palestinian lands. What I mean when I say Jews is the Zionist occupiers of our lands who treat us with no ethics and kill us. The*

⁸⁶ Original in Arabic: "قبل العمل على هذا المشروع كانت لدي افكار مختلفة كفتاة مسيحية كنت ارى ان ديانتني هي الديانة العظمى والصحيحة وان الاشخاص المسيحيين هم الافضل على الاطلاق وكنت اشعر بالحزن والشفقة على الاشخاص من الاديان الاخرى، لكن عندما قمنا بالنشاط الذي يتطلب البحث على الاديان ومعرفة ايمانها وثقافتها، بدأت اتفاجئ من حقايق لم اكن اعرفها [...] كل شخص لديه مبادئه وايمانه ويجب علينا احترامها وعدم الحكم عليهم أو النظر لهم نظرة دونية وهذا ما سأفعله شخصيا سابدأ بالعمل على شخصيتي حتى اعطي فرص للسماع لوجهات النظر المختلفة وتوسيع الفكر."

⁸⁷ 'People of the Book' is an Islamic term which refers to Jews, Christians, and Sabians. The term is used in the Quran to emphasize the community of faith between those monotheistic religions.

⁸⁸ Original in Arabic: "الصراع الفلسطيني مع الصهيوني وليس اليهودي، بل اليهود هم يعبدون الله أي انهم من اهل الكتاب."

Jews, who have nothing to do with Zionism, are good people and have a sense of humanity" (NICOLE, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁸⁹). The reason for this objective view on Jews and Judaism could be attributed to what the teacher did during the activities. On his own initiative, he got help from the history teacher to explain to the students the difference between Judaism as a religion and Zionism as a political movement. It seems that his efforts made a difference in the minds of his students. However, it was not the case for YASMIN, as the teacher described her *unwilling* to accept or interact with any Jewish person, despite her openness and acceptance to others from different cultural background. Her political views were firm regarding this issue, so the teacher said.

4.7. Emerging Intercultural Competences Related to Skills

Four micro-competences emerged from students' written productions that correspond to the macro-competence of skills. The first competence is *Ability to observe cultural elements in own and other cultures*. The second competence is *Ability to analyze and interpret cultural elements in own and other cultures*. The third competence is *Ability to express critical issues in own and other cultures*. The fourth competence is *Ability to recognize, question, and analyze the root of one's attitudes and practices*.

a) Ability to Observe Cultural Elements in Own and Other Cultures

In the context of the study, this competence means *being able to observe and notice elements of social bias in own and other cultures*. It emerged in the written works of 29 students (91%), and it was coded 52 times as seen in Table 4.22. Students showed ability to notice and observe cultural bias around them. Apart from a couple of students who reported noticing racial discrimination between whites and blacks on Western television, all students reported observations from their own culture and from their own personal experience in their community, town, and country.

⁸⁹ Original in Arabic: "أمريكا تدعمهم [اليهود] بشكل كبير ليقفوا في اراضي فلسطين، أنا اقصد بقولي اليهود أي الصهيونية المحتلين اراينا والذين يعاملونا بغير اخلاقية ويقتلوننا، إن الاشخاص اليهود الذين لا علاقة لهم في الصهاينة اشخاص طبييين ولديهم انسانية"

Table 4.22: Number and nature of instances coded under (S1) *Ability to observe cultural elements in own and other cultures.*

CODE: S1	Ability to observe cultural elements in own and other cultures			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	7	42	0	3
Number of Students	6 (19%)	27 (84%)	0	3 (9%)
TOTAL	52 instances emerged in the works of 29 students (91%)			

Assessing this ability using written production depends a lot on the way students express themselves in writing—in native and foreign languages. In their journals, some students wrote one sentence answers, while others wrote elaborate essays. Sometimes, the same student wrote the bare minimum in one journal entry, and an elaborate paragraph in another. For example, MALIK wrote in one journal entry: *"Yes there is [discrimination around me] for example, ableism, hetrosexualism, mentalism, and xenophobia"* (Journal 3), and in his essay, he wrote:

The world has discrimination because the mind of people isn't good for example [...] when a rich woman wants to [marry] poor man the people told her (what do you want from poor man the rich man is better than the poor man) this is 1000% discrimination the money don't determination of destiny. (MALIK, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

This brings us to think that their writings reflect their communication and reflective skills, but not necessarily their intercultural competence of noticing and observing. This point will be discussed further in Chapter 5, Section 2.a. Following are examples of how the students showed different levels of this intercultural competence.

In their essays and reflective journals, students reported the types of social bias that they have observed in their own surroundings. Many just listed those biases without any reflection or explanation. Here are a few examples:

I think there is in my town many discrimination like misogyny and classism and racism. (MARWAN, Journal 3, original excerpt in English)

In my society, the stereotype that is common is the stereotype based on gender and on religion. (ISSAM, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁹⁰)

Discrimination that exists in my country is between the rich and the poor. (BASIM, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁹¹)

I notice a lot in my country the discrimination and preference of males over females and there is come discrimination and fanaticism in religion. (NANCY, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁹²)

On the other hand, some students were very elaborate in their reflection on the social biases they notice and observe in their surroundings. ELLEN gave a short yet elaborate response when she wrote: "*They [society] ban them [females] from wearing shorts and miniskirts but they don't teach males to be respectful*" (ELLEN, Essay 3, original excerpt in English).

Others like KHALID and JACOB gave detailed and specific accounts of the types of social bias they see in their everyday life, which shows an ability to observe and also explain those biases.

In our society, we do not accept anyone who is different than us; we talk about him [...] because he is different than the others, because we do not want him. We as a society do not accept women working in construction or even work or drive in public transportation (bus or taxi). We do not accept a person who appears like a girl, we do not accept someone who is different from us in religion, that is, he does not worship God -be praised- and does not believe in judgment day. People cannot rid themselves from discrimination unless everyone just minds their own behavior and becomes an individual and did not gossip about others. (KHALID, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁹³)

⁹⁰ Original in Arabic: "في مجتمعي الصورة النمطية المنتشرة هي الصورة النمطية عن الجنس والدين."

⁹¹ Original in Arabic: "انواع التمييز الموجودة ببلادنا هي الغني والفقير."

⁹² Original in Arabic: "الاحظ كثيرا في بلادي التمييز وتقبل الذكر عن الانثى وهناك بعض التمييز حول الديانة والتعصب لها."

⁹³ Original in Arabic: "في مجتمعنا لا نتقبل اي شخص مختلف عنا نتكلم عنه [...] لانه مختلف عن الاخرين لاننا لا نريده. نحن كمجتمع لا نتقبل النساء يعملون في البناء او حتى يعملون او يسوقون على سيارة عمومي (باص او تكسي). لا نتقبل شخص يظهر كفتاة. لا نتقبل شخص مختلف عنا في الدين اي انه لا

In Palestine we face many kinds of discrimination from Israel and inside our Palestinian society. At Israeli level we aren't treated equally in terms of availability of water, building, houses, freedom of movement and so many other rights. At the internal level, we face other kinds of discrimination such as ableism, faithism, sexism and others. (JACOB, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

These biases that students reported observing in their society are mentioned in the worksheets that were given to them as part of the activities. Very few students listed social biases that were not mentioned in the worksheets. Such students are MELANIE, who reported being stereotyped based on personal hobbies, and SALEEM and SAWSAN, who reported noticing discrimination based on family or clan. They wrote:

There are annoying stereotypes in our community, like judging people by their looks, their color, their religion, and also their hobbies. (MELANIE, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁹⁴)

Of the discrimination that I started seeing is the discrimination based on family [clan] and socioeconomic status, and this project helped me know some things related to this topic. (SALEEM, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁹⁵)

People around me love using all kinds of Stereotypes, and the most popular kind is family Stereotype, for example if someone is from a family they don't like, that means he is a bad person and they won't let him marry their daughter and vice versa. (SAWSAN, Essay 1, original excerpt in English)

Students also reported on how they started noticing social biases around them, which they had not noticed before or did not know about before doing the intercultural activities. For example, SALMA

يعبد الله -سبحانه- ولا يؤمن باليوم الاخرى. لا يمكن ان يفقد الناس التمييز الا اذا اهتم كل شخص بتصرفاته واصبح شخص بذاته ولم يتكلم عن الاخرين."

⁹⁴ Original in Arabic: "موجود في مجتمعنا بعض الصور النمطية المزعجة مثل: الحكم على الشخص من شكله ولونه وديانته ومن هواياته."

⁹⁵ Original in Arabic: "من التفرقة العنصرية التي بدأت ارها هي التمييز حسب العائلة والمستوى المعيشى وساعدني هذا المشروع في معرفة بعض الاشياء تتعلق عن هذا الموضوع."

reported that she started noticing new types of *Isms* she never knew about before doing the activities. She did not mention which *Isms* were new to her, but this is what she wrote: "*There are a lot of types [of Isms] that I have never noticed before, because I never knew about them, but now I tried to learn more about them and I have noticed them all*" (SALMA, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁹⁶). ORAIB even expresses shock when discovering types of social bias she had never noticed before. She wrote: "*I started noticing in my own culture and around the world different types of stereotypes. For example, socioeconomic status and disability stereotypes <I feel shocked>. this activity has helped me see things differently*" (ORAIB, Journal 1, original excerpt in English).

YASMIN is another girl whose research for information—as part of the activities—brought her to better understand social bias around her. This is what she wrote in her journal:

It is for the first time that I go deep while researching new stereotypes and other topics. What caught my attention the most are the stereotypes about women, because of how society tries to belittle them. Also, through my internet search I found out that men in the Arab world possess a lot of power, and this power is too much power, which pushes them to interfere in every little detail [...] Eastern societies are patriarchal ones. (YASMIN, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁹⁷)

Despite the fact that almost all students reported noticing social bias around them, a couple of students at some point reported noticing nothing. One example is MELODY, who wrote about the stereotypes around her: "*I did not notice anything*" (MELODY, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic⁹⁸), another example is JAMAL, who wrote that he did not notice intolerance on television, because he does not watch often watch it: "*I don't know, I do not watch TV a lot*" (JAMAL, Journal 2, original excerpt in English).

⁹⁶ Original in Arabic: "يوجد الكثير من الانواع لم تلفتني سابقا لانني لم اعرف عنها والان حاولت ان اعرف عنها والتفت لها جميعها."

⁹⁷ Original in Arabic: "انها المرة الاولى التي اتعمق فيها وانا ابحت عن صور نمطية جديدة وعن مختلف المواضيع واكثر ما لفت نظري الصورة النمطية عن المرأة بسبب محاولة المجتمع التقليل منها وايضا خلال بحثي عل الانترنت وجدت ان الرجال في الوطن العربي يمتلكون قدرا كبيرا من السيطرة وان هذه السيطرة زائدة عن حدها مما يدفعهم للتدخل في كل كبيرو وصغيرة [...] المجتمعات الشرقية هي مجتمعات ذكورية."

⁹⁸ Original in Arabic: "انني لم الاحظ شيء."

BASIM also wrote about the types of *Isms* he sees around him: "*In my country, I do not notice (I know them...)*" (BASIM, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic⁹⁹). It is not possible to tell whether this student is actually aware of social bias around him as he claims, or lack the ability to notice things, or is simply not willing to make an effort to write about them in his journals. His work shows no evidence to support his claim.

b) Ability to Analyze and Interpret Cultural Elements in Own and Other Cultures

This competence means *being able to analyze and interpret situations of social bias in own culture and other cultures*. It emerged in the written works of seven students (22%), and it was coded eight times as seen in Table 4.23. Very few students showed the ability to go one step beyond observing social bias around them to analyzing them and understanding the forces behind them. Students did not show a high level of analytical skills; nonetheless, some of them tried to reflect on the reasons behind social bias in their culture.

Table 4.23: Number and nature of instances coded under (S2) *Ability to analyze and interpret cultural elements in own and other cultures*.

CODE: S2	Ability to analyze and interpret cultural elements in own and other cultures			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	0	8	0	0
Number of Students	0 (0%)	7 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	8 instances emerged in the works of 7 students (22%)			

For instance, when SAMARA tried to reflect on the reasons there is discrimination in her society, she realized that it has something to do with the customs and traditions of her country. She understood that the mentality of people and the society as a whole plays a role in how they treat others, especially those who are different and do not share the same traditions and values. She also touched upon an interesting point which is treating others based on personal interest. She wrote:

In my point of view, there are a lot of reasons that makes people discriminate, for the nature of the society I live in and our traditions and customs makes it very hard to accept new things and that is why discrimination happens. Also, one of the reasons is

⁹⁹ Original in Arabic: "في بلادنا لا التفقت (اعلم بهم...)"

that everyone has their own interest and they discriminate based on their own interest.
(SAMARA, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹⁰⁰)

WALEED also believed that people's mentality plays a role in how and why people discriminate. He realizes that mentality is reflected in the language that people use. The group mentality of *us versus them*, which is clear to him from what he hears in his own society, is a source for discrimination according to him. He wrote:

In my society most people use the pronouns we and they, they don't even think to say I, he or she, here we can find the problem that if someone is racist we don't have to say that the whole society is racist too!! And when we do that thing we can fight and prevent every racist person easily because they will be known for us. (WALEED, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

On the other hand, ZAHRA's analysis of religious intolerance in her country made her come to the conclusion that lack of knowledge about the other is a source for faithism. She is reflecting on a situation of social bias, presenting an opinion, and indirectly providing a solution. Here is what she wrote:

No, religions do not teach tolerance, because they form a source of discrimination specifically in our country Palestine. The population has become too biased on religions to have tolerance towards each other. The things I know about religions is that each religion [religious group] is involved in it own and they do not go deep in the religion of others, which is wrong. (ZAHRA, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic¹⁰¹)

YOUNIS reported on the same issue. He wrote about how people from his own religious group have bad thoughts about Christians and how they criticize him and tell him off for being a Muslim boy who has Christian friends. He reports that these views those Muslims have on Christians are not only a result

¹⁰⁰ Original in Arabic: "في وجهة نظري هنالك العديد من الاسباب التي تجعل الناس يميزون عنصريا حيث ان طبيعة المجتمع الذي اعيش فيه وعاداتنا وتقاليدينا تجعله امرا صعبا ان ننقل شيء جديدولذلك تحصل العنصرية. ومن احد الاسباب كذلك ان لكل شخص مصلحته حيث انه يسير وراء مصلحته لكي يعيش فذلك يميزون حسب مصلحتهم."

¹⁰¹ Original in Arabic: "لا، الاديان لا تعلم التسامح لانه تشكل قوة عنصرية في بلدنا فلسطين خصوصا، شعب اصبح عنصري في الاديان شديدة لتكون التسامح مع بعض، والاشياء اللي عرفتها في الاديان انه كل دين يخص بدينه ويتعمقوش في دين الاخر وهذا شيء خاطيء."

of not knowing about Christianity, but also a result of not knowing what their own religion teaches about Christianity. He wrote:

I think that those people [Muslims] have these thoughts because they never got to socialize with Christians and getting [sic] to know them and their religion and their thoughts and not getting [sic] to learn what Islam thinks of these people [Christians] and Jesus and if they really got to do all of that and learned the rights [sic] things they would have had [sic] better thoughts off [sic] Christians [and] their religion. (YOUNIS, Essay 1, original excerpt in English)

All those students wrote about discrimination; however, MAYA wrote about preconceived perceptions. She wrote about the political situation in her country and how others wrongly perceive some things from afar. She wrote:

I read that all Jews support Israel, but as a Palestinian living in Bethlehem, that is close to seeing the facts, I know that this image is wrong. However, it is possible that someone else might believe it, because they are far away and cannot see the full facts [...] Every human being needs to see facts by themselves and not to judge anyone because of a stereotype that may be true or false (MAYA, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic¹⁰²)

c) Ability to Express Critical Issues in Own and Other Cultures

In the context of this study, this competence means *being vocal and communicating criticism of social bias observed in own and other cultures*. It emerged in the written works of 15 students (47%), and it was coded 24 times as can be seen in Table 4.24. Not only were students able to observe social bias in their lives, but they also made an effort to criticize it. Throughout their written works, students communicated and criticized social bias that they had experienced themselves first hand, and that others around them face.

¹⁰² Original in Arabic: "قرأت ان اليهود جميعهم يدعمون اسرائيل، لكن كفلسطينية ساكنة في بيت لحم، اي قريبة من رؤية الحقائق، اعرف ان هذه الصورة خاطئة. لكن من الممكن ان غيري يصدقها لانه بعيد ولا يرى الحقائق التامة [...] فكل انسان بحاجة الى ان يرى الحقائق بنفسه ولا يحكم احد بسبب صورة نمطية قد تكون صحيحة او خاطئة."

Table 4.24: Number and nature of instances coded under (S2) *Ability to express critical issues in own and other cultures.*

CODE: S3		Ability to express critical issues in own and other cultures			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence	
Number of Instances	0	24	0	0	
Number of Students	0 (0%)	15 (47%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	
TOTAL	24 instances emerged in the works of 15 students (47%)				

• *Students criticized social biases that others around them experience*

Students talked about social bias that others different from them face. For example, NICOLE showed sympathy and support towards black people after she saw a racist commercial on television. She wrote in her journal:

Of the commercials that mostly caught my attention is when they put a black man in a washing machine and added a detergent and then took him out and he was white. It is a detergent commercial, but it is racist and undervalues people with black skin color."
(NICOLE, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹⁰³)

NICOLE also talked about how others in her country are treated differently. As a Christian girl, she is a minority in a country of Muslim majority. Although she suffers from discrimination as a religious minority, she feels sympathy for the majority group of Muslims, which suffers another type of religious discrimination at the hands of Israeli soldiers. In her journal, she describes her experience crossing the Israeli checkpoints, and she criticizes how soldiers treat people differently based on their religion. She wrote:

If we wanted to go to occupied Jerusalem and we stopped at the checkpoint, they [Israeli soldiers] would let the Christian pass, but they would stop the Muslim and interrogate

¹⁰³ Original in Arabic: "من اكثر الدعايات التي لفتت نظري عندما وضعوا رجل اسو اللون في غسالة ووضعوا عليه مواد الغسيل ثم اخرجوه من الغسالة كان لونه ابيض انها دعاية لمواد التنظيف لكنها دعاية عنصرية تقلل من شأن ذوي البشرة السوداء."

him for a long period, and this is annoying [...] because he is different from others, he is humiliated. (NICOLE, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic¹⁰⁴)

ELLEN criticized another kind of religious discrimination in her country that is imposed by governmental law. She wrote about abandoned children who are automatically raised with the religion of the state, which is Islam. Because of this, parents from a different religion are forbidden to adopt those kids, since changing one's religion from Islam to another is prohibited by law. As adoption in Islam is not permitted, she feels compassion and sorrow for those children who will grow up with no family, and for childless Christian couples who cannot adopt them, because of discriminatory institutional laws. She wrote:

As I notice that in our law there is some unfairness for example every single baby that is unknown and his parents are unknown this baby is considered Muslim so when this baby grow in an orphanage Christians cannot adopt this baby because this baby is unknown and Muslim so they are afraid to change the baby's religion even though the baby and his family are unknown. (ELLEN, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

MALIK criticized social traditions in his country that define gender roles, and showed support for redefining sexist gender roles in the household. As his friends mocked him for washing the dishes, he realized the impact of sexist attitudes, which many men and women have and show in his country. He wrote:

In our society (Arab society) the woman's [sic] should do everything in the house and the men's [sic] shouldn't do anything in the house just to eat and drink and sleep. In the other societies the man helps woman's [sic] in the housework. The people have a gender stereotypical image of me because my friend saw me when I was washed [sic] the dishes which is not wrong but I want to help my mother [...] I help her in the housework which is not wrong. (MALIK, Essay 1, original excerpt in English)

¹⁰⁴ Original in Arabic: "إذا اردنا الذهاب الى القدس المحتلة ووقفنا على المحسوم، المسيحي يمرروه ولكن المسلم يوقفوه ويحققون معه لفترة طويلة، وهذا الشيء مزعج [...] وبمجرد انه مختلف عن الاخرين يتعرض للاهانة."

MAYA criticized another type of discrimination in her society, which is ageism. In a society where children are taught to listen and not to talk when an older person is talking, she feels that the youth are marginalized and that their ideas are not worth listening to because of their young age. She wrote: "*Ageism takes a big part also, people can listen to you if you are older, but you are young you don't exist to them.*" (MAYA, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

• ***Students expressed social biases they have experienced themselves***

The majority of students were majorly focused on their own culture and mainly reflected on their own experiences of bias. Many have criticized social bias that they have come face-to-face with, whether it was from within their own community or from without. Many of those were Muslim students who communicated being stereotyped as terrorists. For example, SAMARA and SALEEM, who are both Muslim students, reported the following:

And for example me as a Muslim girl I have a lot of problems when I travel because people think that all Muslims kill people and they think that all Muslims are not good people. (SAMARA, Essay 1, original excerpt in English)

And some people see me [as a] terrorist because I am Muslim and this make[s] me sad because we are not terrorist and Islam is a religion of peace and love [...] I wish all world know I am a Muslim I am not terrorist. (SALEEM, Essay 1, original excerpt in English)

Interestingly, other Muslim students reported being discriminated against by their own Muslim community. KAREEM recounted how he was being ostracized for having Christian friends, he wrote: "*Because I have a lot of Christian friends some Muslims judge me*" (KAREEM, Essay 1, original excerpt in English). Whereas YASMIN told of how her own Muslim community judges her morality because of her being a non-orthodox Muslim, and of how this was forcing her to keep explaining herself and her choices to others.

I am a football player. When I wear shorts they don't accept it so everybody start talking [...] I don't wear Hijab so they think I'm a girl with bad manners, but Hijab don't [sic]

introduce our manners [...] I really hope their way of thinking changes into a better one towards me and other Muslim girls. (YASMIN, Essay 1, original excerpt in English)

KAREEM also talked about how he is discriminated against based on his country of origin. He wrote: "*Being a Palestinian I face a lot of problems like being discriminated for my identity or being banned to visit countries that I always wanted to visit or study or live in it [sic]*" (KARREN, Essay1, original excerpt in English). ELLEN reported a similar type of discrimination based on nationality as she wrote: "*People judge each other instead of understand [sic] each other for example I was called terrorist because I am Palestinian*" (ELLEN, Journal 1, original excerpt in English). SAWSAN also reported similar views. This is what she wrote about being stereotyped by others based on her country of origin:

We Christians are very few in Palestine and when we travel to other countries they won't believe that we are Christians because we are Arabs, they think that all Arabs are Muslims, and at the same time they will think we are terrorists because we are Arabs. (SAWSAN, Essay 1, original excerpt in English)

d) Ability to Recognize, Question, and Analyze One's Attitudes and Practices

This competence means *attempting to reflect on and understand the root of one's own and others' biased attitudes and practices*. It emerged in the written works of 30 students (94%), and it was coded 61 times as seen in Table 4.25. Students tried to reflect on why people have social biases and why they themselves might be biased against others. One of the journal guidelines (see Appendix 8) guided students to write about whether the activities helped them understand why people stereotype others, why they can be prejudice and intolerant towards others, and why they may discriminate against others. It also guided students to reflect on whether the activity helped them understand why they themselves might have such biases.

Table 4.25: Number and nature of instances coded under (S4) *Ability to recognize, question, and analyze one's attitudes and practices.*

CODE: S4	Ability to recognize, question, and analyze one's attitudes and practices			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	17	44	0	0
Number of Students	16 (50%)	29 (91%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	61 instances emerged in the works of 30 students (94%)			

Students' feedback varied as they showed different levels of reflection. Some students did make an effort to analyze their attitudes and the attitudes of others on committing social bias. However, many times, especially in the second journal about religious intolerance, what they wrote could be considered biased, as we will see later in this section. Therefore, it is important to note that this competence was coded based on whether the student showed an effort to analyze root of one's attitudes, and not based on the content of their reflection.

• *Students reflected on the root of people's social biases*

In their own way, students tried to analyze and understand why people can be biased towards others. They tried to explore the reasons why people can be prejudiced against one another or stereotype and discriminate against each other. Many students reached the same conclusion, which they reported as cultural difference. Here is what some of them wrote:

I think people judge because their culture is different than my culture, yes I know now. I think that is not good. (MARWAN, Journal 1, original excerpt in English)

The base reason for stereotype is DIFFERENCE¹⁰⁵. (YOUNIS, Journal 3, original excerpt in English)

People judge other people because they are scared of change or different people, they become over protective and aggressive when dealing with different people. (KAREEM, Journal 1, original excerpt in English)

¹⁰⁵ Capitalization in original text.

I discovered through the activity why people stereotype others. The answer is simple: Because the human is afraid from different humans and tries to be the best always.
(FARIS, Journal 1, original excerpt in English)

Because when we see someone we do not know, the first thing we notice is the thing that makes him different from us, so we classify him based on his difference from us.
(NANCY, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹⁰⁶)

Some students talked about one's environment and its influence on why people commit social bias. For example, SAMARA wrote on stereotyping: *"In my opinion, people judge in this way, because they have lived in an environment based on this judgment"* (SAMARA, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic¹⁰⁷). SALEEM also wrote about upbringing and preconceived notions. He wrote that the activity helped him understand *"preconceived ideas about people, and [how] some bad individuals give bad reputation to the whole group like how DAESH is distorting the image of Islam, and [that discrimination is due to] the unhealthy upbringing and non-acceptance of difference among people"* (SALEEM, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹⁰⁸).

Other students wrote about the mentality of the people and the society. For instance, NICOLE mentioned how negative stereotypes lead people to negatively judge followers of other religions. As a Christian, she reflected on the attitudes of other Christians in her society towards Muslims, she wrote: *"What makes people discriminate [...] is the way people talk about others, for example, when we have a negative stereotypical image about Muslims, we accuse them of negative things through that image we have received about them"* (NICOLE, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹⁰⁹). Another example is MAYA, who wrote:

When I tried to reach a solution [on discrimination] or to know the reason of the problem, I found out that the problem is in the image existing in our minds towards

¹⁰⁶ Original in Arabic: "لأننا عندما نرى شخص لا نعرفه أول شيء نلاحظه هو الشيء المختلف عنا فيه فنصنّفه بحيب اختلافه عنا."

¹⁰⁷ Original in Arabic: "في وجهة نظري يحكم الناس بهذه الطريقة لأنهم عاشوا في بيئة تقوم على هذا الحكم."

¹⁰⁸ Original in Arabic: "الأفكار المسبقة عن الناس وبعض الأشخاص السبئيين الذين يسيؤون سمعة الجماعة كلها كداعش كيف تشوه صورة الإسلام والتربية الغير سليمة وعدم تقبل الآخر والاختلاف بين الناس."

¹⁰⁹ Original in Arabic: "الذي يجعل الناس تميز [...] هو طريقة الناس في التحدث عن الآخرين، أي أنه عندما نأخذ صورة نمطية سلبية عن المسلمين، نحن نحكم عليهم بأشياء سلبية من خلال هذه الصورة النمطية التي وصلتنا عنهم."

everything that is different, and if we changed our way of thinking and our outlook on every difference we see, we can then work on changing our lives. (MAYA, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹¹⁰)

Each student had their own view on reasons why people discriminate or stereotype. Although they did not go into details, they still managed to reflect on certain important points and show some understanding of why people can be biased towards others.

• ***Students reflected on the root of their own social biases***

The skill of self-reflection on one's attitude and way of thinking is crucial to being an interculturally competent person. However, students' written works showed that they either did not, or could not, reflect deeply on the root of their own attitudes that might lead them to commit social bias. Implications of this will be discussed in Chapter 5, Section 2.a. Some students admitted to having biases, but they did not reflect on why they have them or why they would or would not act on them. Following are some examples:

I learned that people do not like anything that is strange to them and they cannot accept it and maybe I myself am among those people. (MARCO, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹¹¹)

It [the activity] helped me know people's thoughts, for they judge others based on stereotypes, I sometimes judge people based on stereotypes and other times I don't. (MARIA, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic¹¹²)

Sometimes I judge others just to make a joke to have fun but I really hate discrimination because they make people worse. (ELLIOT, Journal 3, original excerpt in English)

¹¹⁰ Original in Arabic: "عندما حاولت ان اصل الى حل أو أن اعرف سبب المشكلة اكتشفت ان المشكلة في الصورة الموجودة في عقلنا اتجاه كل شيء مختلف واذا قمنا بتغيير تفكيرنا ونظرتنا تجاه كل اختلاف نراه سنعمل عندها على تغيير حياتنا."

¹¹¹ Original in Arabic: "تعلمت ان الناس لا يحبون اي شيء غريب عنهم ولا يتقبلونه ويمكن انا نفسي من بينهم."

¹¹² Original in Arabic: "ساعدني [النشاط] في معرفة افكار الناس اذ يحكمون على غيرهم بالمنطية، احيانا احكم على الاخرين بالمنطية و احيانا لا."

I discriminate in one condition only; between people who are educated leading people, and careless ignorant people. (BASIM, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹¹³)

I do not stereotype people but sometimes I do because of their (informations [sic], education or their doing if they [are] doing wrong or right doings. (ELLIOT, Journal 1, original excerpt in English)

Nonetheless, some students reported that they do not have those types of social biases and that they do not judge people based on their background. Some wrote that they would judge others based on their behavior, while other students wrote that they would not judge others before talking to them or getting to know them first. The following examples show students' effort to reflect on the root of their attitudes about others, as well as their readiness to suspend judgment:

I wouldn't judge people bases on stereotypes [...] I would judge them from their behaviour or acts toward something. (LAURA, Journal 1, original excerpt in English)

I judge people though their acts, their words, and their behavior." (BASIM, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic¹¹⁴)

As a person, I do not judge anyone based on race, color, religion, or anything before I interact with him. (ISSAM, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic¹¹⁵)

I learned how to judge people via talking to them [...], because many people judge others without knowing them, and that is wrong. (ZAHRA, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic¹¹⁶)

¹¹³ Original in Arabic: "اميز في حالة واحدة الناس المتعلمين القيايين وبين الناس المستهترة الجاهلة."

¹¹⁴ Original in Arabic: "احكم على الناس من خلال حركاتهم واقوالهم وتصرفاتهم."

¹¹⁵ Original in Arabic: "انا كشخص لا احكم على اي شخص على اساس العرق او اللون او الدين او اي شي قيل ان اتعامل معه."

¹¹⁶ Original in Arabic: "تعلمت كيف احكم على الناس من خلال طريقة الكلام [...] لان الكثير من الناس يحكمون على غيرهم بدون معرفتهم فهذا خطأ."

Other students also reported that they do not stereotype or discriminate against others. As can be seen in the following examples, students first reflected on why people might be biased and then stated that they do not have those types of biases. For example:

I think that others use this stereotype [socio-economic] to get to know the character of others. I don't use this kind of stereotype, because it is possible that it bothers others. (TAMER Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic¹¹⁷)

People in general are scared of strangers and it is possible that they might not accept them, but I am one of those people who do not look at a person based on his color, religion, or race, but based on his behavior and personality. (ISSAM, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic¹¹⁸)

A lot of people get satisfied when they attack and judge other people, they feel safer actually. I never judge people because I know it could hurt. (AMEEN, Journal 1, original excerpt in English)

As we have seen so far, most of the students reflected on why other people could have such biased attitudes towards others; however, few students took this reflection one step further by internalizing this new perception and deciding to make personal changes in their own attitudes and behavior. The following are testimonies from some students:

This activity taught me my own perception on judging other people, through not judging them based on looks or anything else. (SALMA, Journal 1, excerpt translated from Arabic¹¹⁹)

The reason that makes people discriminate in the world is religious and racial fanaticism. This research helped me understand racial discrimination and tread over it

¹¹⁷ Original in Arabic: "اعتقد ان الاشخاص الاخرون يستخدمون هذا التشبيه النمطي [الطبقة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية] من اجل التعرف على شخصية الاشخاص الاخرين، وانا لا استعمل هذا النوع من التشبيه النمطي لانه من الممكن ان يزعج الاشخاص الاخرين."

¹¹⁸ Original in Arabic: "الناس بشكل عام تخاف من الغرباء ومن الممكن ان تتقبلهم، لكنني من الناس الذين لا ينظرون للشخص عاساس لونه او دينه او عرقه بل ينظرون له عاساس تصرفاته وشخصيته."

¹¹⁹ Original in Arabic: "النشاط هذا علمني كيفية فهمي في الحكم على الناس من خلال عدم الحكم عليهم من الشكل او اي شي."

and not resort to discriminating between people. (TAMER, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹²⁰)

The previous activity helped me have many reflections on arrogance, and encouraged me not to be arrogant. (ADEEB, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹²¹)

Self-reflecting is an important skill that is needed in order to be able to recognize the root of one's attitudes towards others. Results showed that students could have used more guidance in the process of self-reflecting. The teacher reported asking them to rethink and clarify what they were writing in class, still students' writings showed that they lacked reflective skills, or as the teacher claimed, that they were not interested in putting an effort into writing. The issue of lack of reflective skills is a central implication that we can infer from this study, and it will be discussed further in Chapter 5, Section 2.a.

• ***Students reflected on how they judge other religions***

An incident with the Humanities Class misguided students' reflections on the second activity about religious intolerance. For this reason, I am presenting these reflections in a separate section here. The journal guidelines were set to guide students in their reflective process; however, a mistranslation of the third point in the guidelines of the second activity resulted in students passing negative judgment on other religions. The guidelines were given to the students in English, and it is not uncommon for students to write short translations next to questions or points they do not fully understand. Such notes or translations were found all over the journals from the Humanities Class, but they were rarely found on journals from the Scientific Class.

The problem, as mentioned earlier, was in the translation of the third¹²² point in the second journal. Twelve students out of 15 in the Humanities class have written either one of those translations on their journal papers. One translates to: "*What are the things that make you judge a religion to be bad?*" The other one translates to: "*What makes you judge a religion to be bad?*" It is not known why students

¹²⁰ Original in Arabic: "السبب الذي يجعل الأشخاص يتجهون الى التمييز هو التشدد الديني او العرقي في العالم، ولقد افادني هذا البحث في فهم التمييز العنصري وتخطيها وعدم اللجوء الى التمييز بين الناس."

¹²¹ Original in Arabic: "النشاط السابق ساعدني بمعرفة العديد من الافكار عن التكبر وحفزني على عدم التكبر."

¹²² 3) Tell your journal if the activity helped you better understand why people can be prejudice and intolerant. Do you know now why you yourself might have prejudices against others, if you do? How would you feel if you realized that you prejudice against people based on their religious beliefs or background?

translated this guiding point that way. The researcher pointed out this issue to the teacher during the interview in order to find a possible explanation. However, the teacher reported that he did not notice it as the students were left alone in class that day while writing their reflective journals. He reckons that students could have been helping each other out with English translations, as they normally do. Nonetheless, it is a phenomenon that is worth exploring, since students responded differently to this guiding point despite the mistranslation.

ELLEN, MALIK, and YOUNIS were the only three students in the Humanities Class, who did not write a mistranslation of the guiding point, in addition, the two boys did not reflect on it. ORAIB did write a mistranslation, but her answer reflected a different view than the rest of her classmates. She wrote: "*I do not pass any negative judgment on religions, so that other religions would not judge mine. All religions are good and boon*" (ORAIB, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic¹²³).

Some students wrote that they judge a religion based on whether and how that religion discriminates against others. For example:

I judge others' religion based on whether that religion discriminates against other religions. (MELANIE, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic¹²⁴)

The things that make me judge religions is that they are biased a lot and they discriminate against people based on religion. (ZAHRA, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic¹²⁵)

The way they discriminate against other religions, the way they consider other religions to be religion of infidels, and the way they view other religions as bad. (MARIA, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic¹²⁶)

¹²³ Original in Arabic: "انا لا احكم اي حكم سلبي على الاديان كي لا تحكم الاديان الاخرى على ديني فجميع الاديان خير وبركة."

¹²⁴ Original in Arabic: "بحكم على دين الاخرين اذا كان في التمييز عنصري في الدين وبين الاديان الاخرى."

¹²⁵ Original in Arabic: "اشياء اللي بتخليني احكم على الاديان انهم عنصريين كثيرا وتميز بين الناس عن طريق الاديان."

¹²⁶ Original in Arabic: "طريقة التمييز بين الاديان، طريقة اعتبار الدين الاخر كافر، والنظر للدين الاخر بنظرة سيئة."

Others mentioned how they would judge a religion based on its teachings and the behavior of its followers. It is possible to notice the reference to violence in some of their writings about religions, since the activities took place during the violent and terroristic acts of the self-claimed Islamic State (DAESH). Here is what some of them wrote:

If they teach on judging and violence and not loving, this is bad religion. (AMEEN, Journal 2, original excerpt in English)

The things that make me judge other religions to be bad is the behavior of the followers of that religion like bombing and killing. (JAMAL, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic¹²⁷)

The things that make me judge a religion is the way people act towards others different from them. (SALMA, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic¹²⁸)

Basically, students managed to reflect on the root of their attitudes and the reasons for their judgment, but they failed to reflect on how reasonable, how justified, and how biased their reasons might be. This again could be due to lack of guidance and feedback throughout the reflection process.

As for the Scientific Class, such mistranslation and redirected reflection was not found in any of the students' journal papers. Still, nine out of 17 students in that class did not reflect on root of their attitudes towards other religions. Students reflected on the root of people's intolerance towards others from a different religion, but rarely did they reflect on their own. Those who did, stated that they do not have any prejudices against other religions, like YASMIN, who wrote: "*I am the type of person who does not like to ask people about religion, because I interact with people based on their personality and how they act*" (YASMIN, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic¹²⁹).

¹²⁷ Original in Arabic: "الأشياء التي تجعلني ان احكم بالاديان الاخرى على انها سيئة هو التصرفات التي يفعلونها الناس الذين يتبعون هذا الدين مثل التفجيرات والقتل."

¹²⁸ Original in Arabic: "الأشياء التي تجعلني احكم على الاديان هو طريقة تصرف الناس التي تتصرفها في الناس المختلفين عنهم."

¹²⁹ Original in Arabic: "انا من النوع الذي لا يحب ان يسأل الناس عن الديانة لانني اتعامل مع الاشخاص على اساس شخصيتهم وطريقة تعاملهم."

Students who reflected on the root of people's intolerance wrote about religious entitlement and rejection of faiths based on difference from one's own. Here is what some of them reported:

I think people can be prejudice for their religion and faith, and what they believe in is the truth and everyone different from them is an infidel [...] There is not an intolerant religion, but there are people intolerant with others simply because they are different from them. (NANCY, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic¹³⁰)

It [the activity] also helped me know why people discriminate between religions, and that is because of religious fanaticism and because every religion sees that it is the most true in life, and often they move from religious discrimination towards killing or aggressiveness." (TAMER, Journal 2, excerpt translated from Arabic¹³¹)

Believing in your own religion is something good, but believing that other religions are wrong and not respecting them is bad, and that is why people are prejudice and intolerant. (NICOLE, Journal 2, original excerpt in English)

Although students managed to reflect on how religions and followers of those religions can be intolerant, none of them reported anything about their own religion, neither did they reflect on how their religion or followers of their religion might be intolerant towards others different from them. Students did not receive interactive guidance or feedback on their reflections, especially self reflection, and this could be the reason why their reflections were limited.

Religion was a sensitive case for most students. As the teacher reported, faithism and sectarianism prevailed in classroom discussions with students often saying phrases such as "*Is Catholicism or Orthodoxy the true Christian faith?*" and "*Islam is the only true faith.*" When the teacher asked them what religion they would choose, the majority responded that they would choose their own, with only a

¹³⁰ Original in Arabic: "انا اعتقد ان الناس يمكن ان يكونوا متعصبين حول ديانتهم ومعتقداتهم وما يؤمنون به هو الصحيح وكل من يختلف عنهم هو كافر [...] ليست هناك دين غير متسامح ولكن هناك اناس غير متسامحين مع الاخرين فقط لانهم يختلفون عنهم."

¹³¹ Original in Arabic: "وايضا ساعدني على معرفة لماذا الناس يميزون بين الاديان وذلك بسبب التشدد الديني وان كل دين يرى انه الاحق في الحياة، وقد يتجهون في التمييز بين الاديان غالبا في القتل او العدوانية."

few saying that they would rather live without religion as they felt that it is a source of *bad things* in the world.

4.8. Emerging Intercultural Competences Related to *Values*

Two micro competences emerged from students' written productions that correspond to the macro competence of values. The first competence is *Values of equality and peaceful coexistence*, and the second competence is *Motivation for positive change in self, society, and the world*.

a) Values of Equality and Peaceful Coexistence

In this study context, this competence means *showing values that promote or support social justice and peaceful coexistence*. It emerged in the written works of 14 students (44%), and it was coded 22 times as seen in Table 4.26.

Table 4.26: Number and nature of instances coded under (V1) *Values of equality and peaceful coexistence*.

CODE: V1	Values of equality and peaceful coexistence			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	0	22	0	0
Number of Students	0 (0%)	14 (44%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	22 instances emerged in the works of 14 students (44%)			

Students showed attitudes of equality. They also emphasized the need for tolerance and for peaceful coexistence. Students expressed their views on equality in several ways. Their common message was that all human beings are born equal and should not be discriminated against under any circumstance. Here are some examples of what students reported:

Humans are equal and are born free and should not be discriminated against for any consideration. (MELODY, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

We are all humans and equal. (ELLEN, Journal 2, original excerpt in English)

Humans are one and do not differ from each other, no matter what, they are nothing but body and soul. (ADEEB, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹³²)

Moreover, students showed understanding of the importance of tolerance in order to have peaceful coexistence, following are examples from students who have expressed such ideas in their written works.

I learned that there are many more religious beliefs in the world than I expected, so that it's important to have religious tolerance in order to live peacefully together. (JACOB, Journal 2, original excerpt in English)

We (Christians and Muslims) should [...] stay together as one hand and to make tolerance between each other, and to stay together. (MARCO, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

In our society we find all the types of discrimination, and there is only one way to stop it, it's that we all have to start to feel like humans, and not like Arabs or Europeans, Christians or Muslims, we are all humans and when everyone start [sic] to understand that a good life is the life of love and peace, then and only then the discrimination will vanish from the world, and the world will evolve to be a better world were all humans can live in peace. (SAWSAN, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

b) Motivation for Positive Change in Self, Society, and the World

This competence means *showing motivation to change one's own behavior and way of thinking, as well as motivation to change the current injustices and social bias in one's own society, country, and the world*. It emerged in the written works of 22 students (69%), and it was coded 31 times as can be seen in Table 4.27.

¹³² Original in Arabic: "الانسان واحد ولا يختلف عن غيره مهما كان فهو ليس الا جسد وروح."

Table 4.27: Number and nature of instances coded under (V2) *Motivation for positive change in self, society, and the world.*

CODE: V2	Motivation for positive change in self, society, and the world			
Nature of Instances	◆ Developed Competence	● Demonstrated Competence	■ Showed Rejection	▲ Showed Lack of Competence
Number of Instances	8	23	0	0
Number of Students	8 (25%)	18 (56%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	31 instances emerged in the works of 22 students (69%)			

Students reported that, in order to have equal rights and peaceful coexistence, there is a need for positive change. Students showed motivation to change themselves and also change their community to be more open and understanding towards difference and diversity. There are those who suggested starting with one's self; for example, LAURA wrote: "*We can start by changing ourselves before changing community, because we (the youth) are the foundation of this community*" (LAURA, Essay 3, original excerpt in English). MARWAN shares the same view as he wrote:

We should work on our self at first so we can see the change in others and I see that there is many discrimination in my culture and in my daily life like Islamophobia and hatred against women and I see that's not good and we have to change this thing.
(MARWAN, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

As students showed their motivation for positive change, they also suggested ways to bring about this change in their community. Students clearly understand that education and knowledge of *the other* is a key element in fighting intolerance and promoting understanding and coexistence. They also understand the important role children and youth have in realizing such change. Here is what some of them wrote:

We can eliminate this problem by make [sic] society that help the oppressed people from discrimination and make classes to spread awareness that help to stop this discrimination and to spread peace and forgiveness between people. (TAMER, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

We can fight discrimination by giving lectures in schools and universities and by making anti-racism organizations around the world and by investigation justice around the world and by put [sic] an [sic] penalties against racism people. (SALEEM, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

Every person in this world [is] born with tolerance and goodness and love qualities, and no one in his childhood hated others, so if we want to stop or cancel the racism, we should teach little children that we all [are] one and to love and respect others. (ISSAM, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

We spread awareness and tolerance among people by not discriminating between them, and through research and knowledge of the world, because each region and each state is different from the other in customs and traditions and way of life. So That people become fully aware of what is happening around them, and also becomes equality between people and non-racial discrimination. (MARIA, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

Students do understand the importance of knowing about others and other cultures, and some of them suggested contact and dialogue as means to promote coexistence. One student's writings are worth mentioning here, since this notion is reflected throughout her work. ELLEN is a girl who participated in peace building programs between Palestinians and Israelis. The intercultural experience she gained from this program is reflected in her ideas throughout her written work. In her first essay she wrote: *"The best way to solve a problem is to hear both sides of the conflict"* (ELLEN, Essay 1, original excerpt in English), and in her third essay she wrote: *"There are so many ways to fight against discrimination in general but first of all we have to listen to people who judge and people who are being judged"* (ELLEN, Essay 3, original excerpt in English).

She shows intercultural qualities by emphasizing the need for contact, dialogue, listening to the other side, and working together to resolve conflicts. She also wrote in her third essay: *"By bringing people from different nations for a dialogue they may talk about their personal stories and they can make friends"* (ELLEN, Essay 3, original excerpt in English), and went on to suggest ways to bring people

together: "By organizing an international sport team they may make friends talk and play sports so they lose together and they win together" (ELLEN, Essay 3, original excerpt in English).

Another student who also showed awareness of the important of contact is FARIS. He also showed good understanding of the concept of *the other*. His final essay is worth presenting under this category of analysis, since it not only presents an example of values of equality and motivation for positive change, but also shows global values. Two other students showed global values. ISSAM wrote that difference does not matter "*we both share humanity*" (ISSAM, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹³³), and SAWSAN wrote that discrimination will stop "*if they remember that they are human before they are from a certain religion or certain country*" (SAWSAN, Journal 3, excerpt translated from Arabic¹³⁴), yet FARIS was the only student who clearly stated that humanity comes first. Here is what he wrote in full:

Discrimination with its different types is found everywhere: at home, at school, on streets and on internet. Stopping discrimination is a long path, but is possible. One of the ways to reduce it is to have open-minded people who can accept different people. Hearing about different people at school is not enough to accept them. Meeting them and exchanging ideas with them will make the process of accepting them much easier. Different people might be people from another country or city, people with other religious beliefs, people with different shape and people from different social classes. If all these differences get to meet each other, discrimination will be hugely reduced. Promoting tolerance must begin with children. Teaching children humanity at first is better than teaching them about their origin, their religion and their race. Because humanity comes before all. After teaching them humanity we must teach them respect and equality. Because respecting human as a human is the key for closing discrimination door. (FARIS, Essay 3, original excerpt in English)

Many students mentioned the importance of contact and getting to know the other personally. Knowing the personal experiences of ELLEN as a peace activists and FARIS as an exchange student, it is

¹³³ Original in Arabic: "كلانا نشترك في الانسانية."

¹³⁴ Original in Arabic: "اذا تذكروا انهم بشر قبل انهم من ديانة او بلد معينة."

possible that they reported this notion, because they realized how their experience contacting and interacting with others have changed them. However, we can only assume or infer that, as it is not directly reported by the students.

In conclusion, the results of the study have provided evidence that students' interculturality is indeed complex and can be contradictory at times, fluctuating between positivity and negativity depending on the topic of discussion. Results have also revealed that students showed new competences as well as competences that have been mentioned by scholars in literature. Nonetheless, the study has presented us with a unique and different perspective on intercultural education and the assessment of adolescents' interculturality, as it has pointed out major contextual factors (e.g. personal, social, educational) that influence students' interculturality in a traditional classroom in a minimal-cultural-gap environment. It has also shed a light on the role of the teacher in this complex educational process, as well as the different attitudes parents have towards intercultural topics and intercultural education. In sum, not only have the results presented a glimpse of students' intercultural competences, but they have also provided crucial information about factors influencing their competences and their intercultural learning process. In the following chapter, the results presented here will be discussed in relation to the available literature in order to provide answers to the questions proposed in this research study.

5. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous chapter presented a detailed analysis of data resulting from the implementation of a series of reflective intercultural activities with adolescent students from a minimal-cultural-gap society. These activities took place in a traditional teaching-and-learning classroom environment in a Palestinian high school. As seen in Chapter 4, data from this study revealed a lot about students' intercultural competences in such a unique and previously unexplored context, which helped provide answers to the study's research questions. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the study set out to investigate the following research questions:

In traditional teaching-and-learning classrooms in minimal-cultural-gap contexts,

- 1) what intercultural competences do high school students demonstrate during a series of reflective intercultural activities?
- 2) what type of factors influencing intercultural competence does students' engagement in reflective intercultural activities reveal?

In this chapter, I will first discuss data that emerged from this study in relation to the available literature in order to provide answers to the two research questions and propose recommendations for future studies on interculturality. Afterwards, I will discuss some of the challenges and limitations faced throughout the process of conducting this research study, and I will end this thesis with my own personal remarks on interculturality and intercultural education.

5.1. Students' Intercultural Competences

As has been noted by many in literature (e.g. Borghetti, 2017; Barrett, 2016), it is impossible to assess every single aspect of interculturality due to its complexity and multidimensionality. In fact, Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) have identified 325 differently defined components of interculturality. Their work, as well as the recent work of Griffith et al. (2016), illustrated how each intercultural model assesses interculturality based on its own set of components, thus differing from one model to the other. As argued in the data analysis section, previous research studies often adopted one or two existing models as a framework of analysis, which limited the assessment of learners' interculturality to a set of specific pre-defined intercultural competences based on the components or constructs of the adopted

intercultural models, thus any other competences that learners might have demonstrated at the time of assessment were ignored. In simple words, using the same lens (one single set of intercultural competences) to look at the different types of students, will not reveal the wide range and the unique competences that different people possess. Zotzmann (2010) has already criticized the way intercultural education focuses on a uniformity of outcomes that marginalizes others and disregards the importance of diversity.

This study acknowledges the fact that we are only able to assess aspects of interculturality. Therefore, to capture as many aspects of students' interculturality as possible, and to find a balance between conformity and uniqueness, a distinct framework of analysis was adopted based on four fixed macro-level competences derived from literature (i.e. *Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills, and Values*) and flexible (emerging) micro-level ones. As stated in the data analysis section in Chapter 3, a deductive analysis of the macro-competences was first conducted, followed by an inductive analysis, which revealed the emergence of 14 micro-competences. The inductive analysis was valuable on two levels; first, it allowed for a deep examination of students' unique competences, and second, it allowed for the detection of competences new to literature. The similarities and differences between these emerging competence and competences found in literature will be discussed in this section, always considering that all these competences were elicited during a specific type of intercultural activities, from a specific type of students, and in a specific type of learning environment.

a) Intercultural Knowledge

Knowledge is a key element in the formation and development of interculturality; not only knowledge of others and other cultures, but also knowledge of oneself, one's cultural background, and where one stands in between, which constitutes one's *third place* culture. Two knowledge-related competences emerged from students' works in this study context, one is related to cultural knowledge and one is related to sociolinguistic knowledge (see Chapter 4, Section 4.5).

The first emerging competence is *Knowledge of culture-specific information in own and other cultures*. Such competence has been mentioned in many models of interculturality under similar titles. For example, Gudykunst et al. (1994) simply use the umbrella term *Knowledge*, Byram (1997) calls it *Knowledge of self and of others*, Deardorff (2006) refers to it as *Cultural self-awareness*, and Lambert

(1994) specifies it as *World knowledge*. It has become clear that taking part in any intercultural activity will eventually lead to some level of increased knowledge, as it is a natural process of learning. However, the real question here is: how could this increased knowledge affect one's interculturality?

There is no doubt that cultural knowledge is crucial when it comes to interacting and communicating with others who are different from us. Nonetheless, it is not possible to predict the impact of such knowledge on individuals, or how their reaction would be upon receiving such knowledge. Some individuals may receive cultural knowledge positively with amazement and openness, but often, such knowledge could bring on a cultural shock that could trigger rejection and negative feelings towards others and other cultures. It could also reinforce their conviction in the supremacy of their own culture, values, and beliefs. For example, in this study, students were tasked to research and present information on a religion different than their own. After being exposed to new information on the different religions of the world, some students came to realize the importance of gaining such information, and they received this knowledge with complete open-mindedness. This does not mean that they accepted these religions to be true, but rather accepted that there are people who believe them to be true, and that one should respect other people's beliefs. Nonetheless, there were other students who were shocked by some cultural information regarding the religious traditions of others, and they could not accept the idea that such religions could be someone else's truth. These students expressed complete rejection and negative feelings to certain religions, while simultaneously emphasizing that their religion was the only true faith.

The competence of knowledge is at the core of most intercultural models; nonetheless, I believe that it is not the first step towards building learners' interculturality. Deardorff (2006) and Byram (1997) implied in their models of intercultural competence that attitudes are a fundamental starting point that come before knowledge. They indicated that one needs requisite attitudes such as openness and curiosity to facilitate the development of knowledge competences. In my opinion, such attitudes are indeed primary in the formation of one's interculturality, but I would also add reflective skills as a major factor affecting the development of knowledge competences, especially knowledge of self and other. In order to process and understand the significance of new cultural knowledge, one needs the ability to reflect on how this newly-acquired cultural knowledge relates to and reflects in one's own life and the life of others.

The second knowledge-related competence detected in this data is *Knowledge of correct cultural terminology in own language and foreign language*. This competence is directly related to communication rather than interaction, since it is about the use of language in society. This type of competence varies in definitions among scholars, but still focuses on the use of language. For example, Byram (1997) calls it *Linguistic competence of foreign language*, while Lambert (1994) calls it *Foreign language proficiency*. Whereas these two terms purely focus on linguistic proficiency; Deardorff (2006) took it one level up and called it *Sociolinguistic awareness*, focusing more on the use of language rather than only on proficiency, defining it as the "*awareness of relation between language and meaning in societal context*" (Deardorff, 2006, p. 250). All in all, most intercultural models focus on foreign language proficiency and use, which comes as direct result of the continuous and limited view of *the other* as someone who speaks a different language and who is from a different nationality.

Available intercultural models do not consider sociolinguistic knowledge of one's native language. However, this study has allowed us to observe the emergence of an interesting and important competence related to sociolinguistic knowledge, because students used both their native language (Arabic) and a foreign language (English) to express themselves in their written works. Some students used inappropriate terms to describe others (such as شاذ جنسيا [shādh jənsiæn] *sexually aberrant*), and some used certain terms incorrectly in their own native language (such as using التمييز العنصري (al-tamyeez al-'onsori) *racial discrimination* as an umbrella term). This revealed the importance of also focusing on the use of native language, and on gains in sociocultural knowledge in native language. Interculturality should begin in one's immediate environment. What type of intercultural person would one be if s/he uses appropriate language when speaking to others in a foreign language, and in the meanwhile uses offensive language when speaking to *others* in one's own mother tongue? Hence, it is vital to prepare young people to be able to avoid derogatory terms and use inclusive language (i.e. free from stereotyped, prejudiced, or derogatory views of people), which will help them communicate effectively and appropriately, not only in foreign languages, but also in their own native language. In order to achieve that, it is crucial to shift the focus away from linguistic and national *otherness* and start acknowledging local *otherness*.

b) Intercultural Attitudes

Attitudes are definitely the most important and yet the most complex of all competences, as they are very subjective and constantly changing. They also form part of our personal characteristics, thus putting them at the center of the ethical debate in relation to the assessment of interculturality, as Borghetti (2017) and others have recently argued. This study managed to capture six attitudinal competences that students demonstrated in their written works (see Chapter 4, Section 4.6). It is important to keep emphasizing that the analysis captured students' attitudes in a specific time and place regarding specific topics that they engaged with during the project's intercultural activities.

The first competence is *Respect for other cultures*. This competence is probably the most common in intercultural models and the least disputable one in literature, since respect is a key humanistic ingredient for coexistence and peaceful interactions among people. Scholars agree that an intercultural person ought to have and show respect to others who are different and also show respect to the notion of diversity. Deardorff (2006) sums both notions together as she defines the competence of *Respect* as *valuing other cultures and diversity*. Koester and Olebe (1989) call it *Display of respect*. Chen and Starosta (2000) refer to it as *Respect of cultural differences*, while Hunter et al. (2006) call it *Respectfulness of diversity*. These are all different terms with basically the same meaning.

The second competence that students demonstrated is *Appreciation of similarities and acceptance of differences*. This specific competence is related to two macro competences, knowledge and attitudes, but most scholars consider it attitudinal. While some prefer dividing them, many see them as related and overlapping competences. For example, Byram (1997) classifies it under intercultural knowledge as he refers to it as *Knowledge of similarities and understanding of differences*. Gudykunst (1993) also classifies it under knowledge as *Knowledge of similarities and differences*. On the other hand, other scholars classify it under intercultural attitudes, such as Howard-Hamilton, Richardson, and Shuford (1998) who refer to it as *Appreciation of other cultures*, Wang et al. (2003) who call it *Acceptance of cultural differences*, and Fuertes (2000), who embedded both aspects in one competence called *Acceptance of both similarities and differences*.

Intercultural education puts equal emphasis on appreciating similarities and accepting differences, yet results showed that students in this study seemed to focus on cultural differences more than similarities.

There were very few incidents in students' works showing appreciation of similarities. I agree with UNESCO's (2014) view on the importance of finding commonalities across cultures as a way to help people connect and empathize with one another. However, this does not mean less focus on understanding of differences, but rather a modified perspective that includes focusing on one's attitude and reaction toward differences (positive vs. negative and accepting vs. rejecting). This competence is not a simple case of black or white. As this study has demonstrated, the same student can show various levels of understanding and acceptance depending on the topics, like KHALID, who showed acceptance of homosexuality and rejection of all non-Abrahamic religions.

Furthermore, this attitudinal competence can be an ambiguous one and it raises some ethical questions. Firstly, how fair would it be to judge someone as intolerant for not accepting certain differences? Ferri (2016) has previously pointed out that equaling acceptance of cultural differences to tolerance, and lack of acceptance to intolerance, without considering the context is seriously problematic. Intolerance may be a result of lack of acceptance, but lack of acceptance does not necessarily lead to intolerance. In the end, it all depends on how this lack of acceptance manifests itself in communication and in act. Many students rejected other religions, but the way they verbalized their rejection differed. Some simply said that they found other religions illogical (what we may see as a positive rejection), while others wrote that their own religion is the only truth and everything else is wrong (which could be seen as a negative rejection).

Secondly, to what extent are we willing to promote the acceptance of differences when it comes to critical issues, such as honor killings, female genital mutilation, or the execution of homosexual people? As discussed in the literature review, accepting cultural differences may present a dilemma in regards to traditions and practices that can be considered a violation of basic human rights. Using cultural difference as a defense mechanism to justify conflicts and crimes against humanity has been a common practice around the world (e.g. Sheybani, 1987; Chiu, 2006). Debating cultural values has been going on since the dawn of history and will always continue alongside the debate of which practices are considered *ethical* and which are *unethical*. Cultural values and the practices that come with them change over time; and what was once unacceptable is now considered normal and vice versa. Although this point did not show up in students' data, it is very important to discuss it and consider it in future research.

The third competence, which is *Curiosity and interest in learning about intercultural topics and other cultures*, and the fourth one, which is *Openness and eagerness to interact and live with others from different cultures* are very much related and are often found to be overlapping in literature. Different scholars have different definitions of the same concepts. For example, Gudykunst (1993) specifies it as *Openness to new information*. Hunter et al. (2006) call it *Openness to new experiences and diversity*. Byram's (1997) *Openness and curiosity* competence suggests willingness to engage with others, interest in discovering, willingness to questions, experience, and adapt. It is a very broad definition comprising of multiple layers and more than one competence. Deardorff (2006) splits such competence into two: *Curiosity and discovery*, which according to her, also signifies tolerating ambiguity, and *Openness* to intercultural learning and to people from other cultures, as well as withholding judgment. It is important to note that there is a fine line between the competences of interest, curiosity, and openness. Interest is willingness to pay attention to something or someone, while curiosity is a desire to know more, it is basically an active interest. Openness to learn could stand as an independent competence; however, it can often overlap with the competences of interest and curiosity during assessment, whereas openness to others, to diversity, and to different experience is a much easier and clearer competence to assess.

Intercultural competences such as interest and curiosity are very hard to accurately capture. It is not enough to assess learner's interest or curiosity. First of all, they might not be genuine, as learners might want to give their teachers or assessors what they are looking for in order to get a good mark on the intercultural task they are taking part in. For example, nearly all students wrote that they were interested in the topics of the activities, but the teacher reported that some of them were often complaining and questioning the point of doing the activities. There is no way of knowing their true attitude toward the topics. Furthermore, students showed different levels of interest and curiosity across the three activities; for example, we find the same student expressing interest in one topic and lack of in another. It brings us to thinking, how frequently should one show interest and curiosity to be considered intercultural? Does not showing interest in certain topics qualify as lack of competence?

Second, even if students' interest and curiosity are genuine, their ulterior motives may not be clear. As assessors/teachers, we should ask ourselves this question; is the learner's interest or curiosity aimed at

building knowledge to better understand the other?, or is it aimed at gaining knowledge to discredit the other? In this study, some students were indeed curious to know about other religions, but they used the information they learned to discredit these religions and argue for the superiority of their own. I cannot suggest any practical advice on the assessment of these two competences at this stage, but I would recommend that teachers/assessors encourage learners to reflect on the motives behind their interest and curiosity. Comparing and contrasting cultures is inevitable in intercultural education. Therefore, curricula and teachers should aim to guide this process from a mere comparing and contrasting of cultures toward the understanding of other cultures in relation to one's own, without presenting one culture as superior or inferior to the other.

The fifth attitudinal competence that the students demonstrated in this study is *Readiness to reserve judgment and suspend disbelief about other cultures*. It is a key competence commonly found in many intercultural models. Byram (1997) refers to it as *Readiness to suspend disbelief and judgment with respect to others meanings, beliefs, and behaviors*. Deardorff (2006) calls it *Withholding judgment*. Fantini, Arias-Galicia and Guay (2001) also calls it *Suspending judgment*, whereas Hunter et al. (2006) focus directly on performance as they call it *Nonjudgmental reactions*. Most recently, Griffith et al. (2016) suggested calling it *Suspending judgment*, which according to them means active refrainment from preconceived cultural schema interfering with information processing.

Students in this study showed contradictory views regarding suspending judgment of others. On many occasions throughout their written works, they indicated the need to stop judging others before getting to know them first, but, at the same time, they were unable to suspend judgment of other religions and religious practices. I believe that suspending judgment is an attitude developed best through reflection on reverse situations. For example, many students indicated that they do not judge others based on stereotypes, because they do not want to be judged in the same way, especially those who have experienced judgmental reaction from others and know the hurt it can cause. Nevertheless, this was not the case with religion. Students passed negative judgment on other religions without any reflection on how others might pass the same judgment on their own religion. I think students needed to realize that they have to look at themselves with the same lens that they use to look at others.

The sixth and final competence is *Dispelling of mistaken preconceived notions about others*. This competence has not been mentioned in any of the models reviewed in literature as an intercultural competence in its own right. It has been suggested by many to be an outcome of the intercultural learning process. For example, Lambert (1994) indicated that *approval of other cultures* suggests the creation of a favorable view of other cultures, or at least the dispelling of negative stereotypes. Byram et al. (2002) wrote that stereotypes are to be challenged before an individual begin to discover the essence of the other, and teachers ought to help learners challenge their prejudices, and make the basis on which they make their judgment explicit. Moeller and Nugent (2014) talked about making students aware of their preconceived notions about others and reflect and question them, but no models ever mentioned it as a competence.

The main discussion found in literature regarding this particular issue is about allowing learners to reflect and be aware of their own preconceived prejudices/notions. There is no mention of learners' ability or willingness to challenge and change these preconceived negative notions. I strongly believe that being able to change one's own attitude and preconceived notions after learning about others is a key competence that many do not possess, and it should not be considered a default result to increased knowledge. Results from this study showed that intercultural education could influence this competence. According to the teacher, the students showed changed preconceived notion about Jews and Judaism after the History teacher explained to them the difference between Judaism as a religion and Zionism as political movement. Furthermore, those students who researched Judaism and Jehovah's Witnesses in the second activity reported better understanding of their cultures and religious beliefs and practices—considering that they live near them and knew little about them.

Educators should aim to directly nurture and sharpen this competence in their learners, and scholars and researchers should include it in their assessment measures. This brings us to a point mentioned by Borghetti (2017) in regards to competences and outcomes. I agree with her that many intercultural models confuse competence and performance when they describe and assess the constructs of interculturality. Competences are qualities and abilities, while performance is an outcome of those qualities and abilities; it is the manifestation of those competences in communication and behavior. Scholars and researchers could opt to measure the constructs of interculturality as competences (i.e. having quality or ability) and/or as outcomes (i.e. acting on that quality or ability), but that should not

affect the reality that a particular construct/competence such as *Dispelling of mistaken preconceived notions* ought to be nurtured and developed in the same way it is done with other constructs/competences of interculturality.

The last two attitudinal competences discussed above are very much connected. As this study showed, they both require knowledge, meta-cognitive awareness, and reflection. The results in this study showed that students' meta-cognitive awareness was not active, as very few students managed to show understanding of why people, including themselves, think and act the way they do. I suppose that such meta-cognitive awareness requires an active dialogic reflection facilitated by a skilled intercultural teacher. Activation of such awareness has been encouraged by many scholars; for example, Byram (1997) talked about making students aware of the socialization process; Cortazzi and Jin (1999) talked about understanding the reasons for people's actions and beliefs. It has also been successfully done in other studies. For example, a study by Nasie, Bar-Tal, Pliskin, Nahhas, and Halperin (2014), which was conducted on Israeli students of Jewish and Palestinian decent, revealed that raising participants' awareness to their cognitive limitations increases openness to the adversary's narrative, even in contexts of ongoing conflict. Interestingly, they achieved changes in attitudes and way of thinking without making any direct reference to the rival or the conflict itself. They achieved that by raising their participants' awareness to the psychological bias of naïve realism (the belief that one's view is objective and others are uninformed irrational and biased). They basically taught them how to think, not what to think, as Mead (1928) suggested.

This ought to encourage intercultural scholars and educators to develop learners' intercultural competences without resorting to comparing and contrasting cultures and cultural differences. In the end, all is needed for intercultural development is an intercultural mindset that allows for intercultural growth (e.g. Deardorff, 2006; Byram, 1997, Bennett & Bennett, 2003; Guilherme, 2002; Virkama, 2010; Della Chiesa, 2012, Osler & Starkey, 2005). Attitudes are at the foundation of interculturality, for intercultural attitudes, such as the ones emerging in this study, could be cornerstones in one's intercultural development, as the right mindset facilitates the process of receiving and internalizing knowledge, as well as the process of adopting and nurturing of intercultural skills and values.

c) Intercultural Skills

Literature mentions various types of intercultural skills, which I believe, could be divided into two types, intrapersonal and interpersonal, taking into account that both types ought to incorporate a critical element. An intercultural skill remains useless until it becomes critical. For example, what is the point of being able to listen without being able to critically comprehend? What is the point of being able to observe cultural elements without being able to critically process their significance? Many students in this study showed that they had the ability to observe and notice things around them, but they either did not or could not critically process and express the relevance or the impact of these observations. Byram (1997) talks about critical awareness as a *savoir* on its own; others (e.g. Fantini & Termizi, 2006; Matsumoto et al., 2001; Della Chiesa, 2012; Osler & Starkey, 2005) also see critical awareness and critical thinking as crucial components of interculturality. In my opinion, criticality is an overlapping element in all competences. Being critical is a mindset, it is a way of being (*savoir être*), and it can be activated while processing intercultural knowledge and while employing an intercultural skill.

The intercultural skills that were recorded in this study are more intrapersonal than interpersonal in nature. The type of activities and the context of the study (in terms of no observation by researcher to maintain a natural learning context) allowed neither for interpersonal skills to surface in students' writings, nor for measuring and observing such skills in the classroom. The reason for that is because the activities were focused on self-learning and self-reflection more than interaction and reflection on interaction. Despite being a classroom of minimal cultural gap, the different religions, genders, and also personal traits resulted in heated discussions and interactions in class; yet for several reasons that will be discussed in the Challenges and Limitations Section in this chapter, these interactions did not make it into the evaluation of interpersonal skills. Nonetheless, four interesting intrapersonal intercultural skills were found in students' written productions, which bring us to think about new skill competences that we should consider in intercultural research and in intercultural education practices.

The first competence found in students' written works is *Ability to observe cultural elements in own and other cultures*, and the second one is *Ability to analyze and interpret cultural elements in own and other cultures*. Once more, the context and what the students chose to reveal about themselves directed these two competences. In literature, such competences are differently grouped. For example, Deardorff (2006) suggests these two grouped competences: *To listen, observe, and interpret*, and *To analyze*,

evaluate, and relate. Byram (1997) discloses them as *The ability to observe, analyze and interpret documents or events in the other culture and in their own, drawing upon their existing knowledge.* Ting-Toomey and Kurogi (1998) sum it up as *Mindful observation.* I believe that each skill could stand as a competence on its own. The context dictates which competences might emerge and whether they can be measured or not, as this study has already demonstrated. For example, in this case study the ability to listen could not be measured, and the ability to relate did not clearly emerge in students' works. Nonetheless, it is important to indicate that students tended to report on cultural elements from their own culture. They could easily spot biases in their own society, but they rarely reported observing biases in other cultures, on T.V., or in books.

The third skill competence that emerged in this study is *Ability to express critical issues in own and other cultures.* This competence does not exist in the literature on interculturality. The closest that I could find were competences listed by Spitzerg and Changnon's (2009) in their collection of construct of interculturality; these are *Expressiveness, Emotional Expressivity, and Self disclosure,* yet the intercultural models that use these components are not stated. However, in literature on intercultural citizenship, similar competences can be found. For example, Trotta Tuomi et al. (2008) call it *Develop a critical attitude toward the unequal distribution of development and rejection of inequalities between individuals and peoples of the world.* Byram (2013) in his intercultural citizenship model mentions it as *Criticality of our and their culture combined with action.* In my point of view, I think that it is important to think of being expressive and critical as an intercultural skill, since it directly relates to other intercultural abilities. One must first be able to observe a cultural phenomenon/element; second, one must be able to critically process it and analyze it; and third, one must be able to communicate and express his/her critical thoughts about it, either verbally, or through action, as Byram's competence indicates (Byram, 2008a; Byram et. al, 2013). Most students in this study wrote about the injustices they and others around them face. Yet again, most criticism was focused on injustices in their own direct environment.

The fourth and final skill competence that showed up in this study is *Ability to recognize, question, and analyze the root of one's attitudes and practices.* This competence has been previously mentioned in literature; however, not as a competence to be measured, but as an end result quality of an interculturally competent person. After analyzing students' works, I found out that students had

different levels of this competence (see Chapter 4, Section 4.7.d), which suggests that it is a competence that can be developed and sharpened. Some scholars like Spitzerg and Changnon's (2009) and Deardorff (2006) call it the *Skill to evaluate*, but there is much more to it than just mere evaluation.

Other scholars expressed it in a more specific way, but they did not consider it to be a competence, they rather described it as an outcome. For example, Byram (1997) mentions *The ability to decenter*, and *The ability to critically evaluate perspectives, practices and products* as qualities of an intercultural person. Fantini and Tirmizi (2006) call it *The ability to decode the etic and emic perspectives of self and others*. However, they do not actually target it in their developmental models of interculturality. Students in this study showed this competence in their works; however, the majority focused on analyzing the root of others' attitudes, beliefs, and practices, and could not or avoided analyzing their own. They recognize their own thoughts and actions towards others, but they do not question the reasons behind them.

d) Intercultural Values

Values were often talked about in intercultural models, yet never as a competences in their own right. Values have been always considered as something that supports other competences. There is no doubt that scholars agree on the crucial role values have in building interculturality, yet one cannot see them in their full form in intercultural models. It is most probably due to how sensitive the issue of values is; after all, it is the most debatable topic of all time: Whose values are we promoting through intercultural education? Unlike interculturality scholars, many intercultural citizenship scholars agree on values being a competence; for example, Barrett (2016) included it in his model. Others, like Trotta Tuomi et al. (2008) and Starkey (2015) have also promoted the development of general human values for creating global intercultural citizens. Even so, it is an ethical challenge to judge people's values, since each group sees their own values as valid and true. Therefore, in this case study, the competences measured were international human values of social justice and peace, taking into consideration that these, too, can be seen from different perspectives.

The first value competence that showed up in students' written works is *Values of social justice and peaceful coexistence*. Up-to-date, I have not seen this value mentioned in intercultural research. It is at the center of peace education and international dialogue research, which is, in my opinion, one type of

intercultural education, but, to my knowledge, it has never been brought up as a central competence of interculturality. Byram et al. (2002) consider values as complementary to the other three competences (skills, knowledge, and attitudes), but it is Trotta Tuomi et al. (2008) who clearly consider it as key competence of intercultural citizens, calling it *Commitment to social justice and equity*. In this study, students often showed values of equality and peaceful coexistence. Considering that the study took place in a conflict area, there is no doubt that such competences might come to surface. These Palestinian students face political, religious, and gender discrimination on a daily basis, they feel tired of such injustices, and they recognize the value of a peaceful and just life.

The other value competence that showed up in this case study was *Motivation for positive change in self, society, and the world*. Although the competence of motivation is mentioned in many intercultural models (e.g. Ting-Toomey (1999): *New comers motivation*; Arasaratnam (2008): *Motivation*; Kupla (2008): *Motivation*), yet these terms do not have the same significance as in this research. In these models, it signifies motivation to interact with others or to learn about others, which is similar to the competences of openness and eagerness. However, some of the relatively new models of intercultural citizenship have managed to capture and represent this competence. For instance, Trotta Tuomi et al. (2008) describe it as *Being highly motivated for change and willing to influence decision-making processes at global and local levels*. Byram (2008a) also focuses on change in his modified version of intercultural citizenship, as he calls it *Critical reflection and planning for change*. These competences describe outer change that influences societies in specific and the world in general; yet there is no mention of inner change, or personal behavioral change. I assume that many scholars would call this adaptability, but I do not necessarily see it that way. One adapts to an already existing situation, law, or culture, but motivation for change means having the will and taking action to create a new culture, improve a situation, or simply change unfair laws and traditions. Students in this study showed strong motivation for change. Their experience in a conflict area drives their motivation to better their own world. In their written works, they presented recommendations on how to make their society better, like educating young children on equality, and getting to know the religion of their neighbors. Very few reported motivation for self-change, but almost all reported motivation to change their society and the mentality of their own people.

To sum up, it is normal that learners be introduced to the values of their own country and their own religion and traditions, but it is also important to offer them a chance to learn about the values of other cultures. It is important to offer learners all the tools they need in order to be able to look at their own values and the values of others with a critical eye, to be able to evaluate these values and judge them reasonably, and to allow them to make their own choices without prejudice. This might be an easy task in a democratic pluralistic country, but in many parts of the world, that choice is not available, and sometimes it could even be impossible.

5.2. Factors Influencing Students' Intercultural Competences

The second research question that this study set out to investigate is related to the factors influencing students' intercultural competences. Previous research studies on intercultural education tended to focus only on students' emerging intercultural competences giving minimum to no regard to what actually might influence the emergence and also the development of these competences. It is common knowledge that issues such as context, motivation, personal characteristics, and cultural background could affect any learning process, including intercultural learning. However, considering that this study ventured in a previously unexplored context (i.e. minimal-cultural-gap and traditional classrooms), no assumptions were made, and thus no causal relationship between personal and contextual factors and interculturality was measured. The exploratory nature of this study aimed at the identification of such factors rather than the examination of how and why these factors affect students' interculturality.

Indeed, students' engagement in the study's intercultural activities revealed a few issues that could be considered as key influencers in students' intercultural development and the emergence of their intercultural competence, as revealed by students' written work and their teacher's feedback on the implementation process. These issues or factors are directly related to the students themselves and their context. This study showed that certain personal and contextual factors were major players in students' intercultural learning process. These issues identified by this study are worth further investigation in the future in order to find out the scale and the type of effect they have on learners' intercultural process, both in similar and different contexts.

a) Personal Factors

Borghetti (2017) has already emphasized the idea that learner's personality and their emotional and mental state of mind at the time of examination affects the results of intercultural assessment. As an assessor, I was only able to notice this issue after I had the interview with the teacher who gave me details on each one of the students. Hence, it is important for assessors to know the students being assessed, their personalities, their likes and dislike, their family background etc., because all of this reflects on the intercultural competences they demonstrate. Students' personality and family background are important factors to consider, but the data in this study did not show any clear correlations between background and interculturality. Hence, it is not possible to discuss it or make any generalizations at this point, as a larger sample of participants and more data are needed. The only two issues that were visible in students' written works, and could be clearly recognized as factors influencing students' intercultural competences, are related to students' reflective skills and to their linguistic and communicative skills.

- ***Students' reflective skills***

Reflection is a key ingredient in intercultural education. It is an intercultural competence that could be developed and assessed, and it is also a tool for assessing other aspects of interculturality. Reflective abilities are important to process new knowledge—acquired from education or interaction—, and also to comprehend or justify one's own attitudes and actions and those of others, as well. Furthermore, used as an assessment measure, reflective work reveals a lot about learners' intercultural competences. In this study, the students who reflected well on the activities and on themselves revealed more about their intercultural competences compared to those who did not. These reflections provided insights on students' attitudes and other competences. In a way, it is safe to say that the more elaborate the reflection was, the more intercultural competences were detected—regardless of whether they were positive or negative.

Unfortunately, not only the majority of students did not elaborate much on their own points of view, but they also demonstrated lack of critical reflective skills, especially self-reflection skills. They wrote about the *other*, they analyzed the *other's* way of thinking and behaving, but they rarely analyzed their own actions and beliefs in the same manner. It is unclear whether this issue is related to their age as adolescents, or to their lack of self-reflecting skills. It is obvious that they did internalize certain

information or knowledge; however, they rarely showed any reflective abilities to critically understand the reasons behind their own views and attitudes and relate them to their surroundings and cultural background. For example, many identified the types of *Isms* they see in their own community, but very few reflected on the impact of those *Isms* on them, personally, and on others. In addition, the majority of students did not reflect on why they themselves might be biased against others. Their work showed their ability to identify and observe bias, but not their ability to interpret or analyze it. They mentioned and discussed bias performed against them or bias performed by one group against another, but almost never did they mention their own biases against others or the reasons behind them.

The reflective journals that were requested from the students in this study contained a few questions that were designed as guidelines to help them reflect on their learning process and self-reflect on some of their own attitudes, knowledge, and abilities. However, the majority of students did not think of them as guidelines for reflection, but rather as exam questions to be answered. They treated the reflective journals as an assignment instead of a dynamic outlet for writing reflections and observations. While very few students wrote a page full of personal reflections, the majority simply wrote one- or two-line answers. This could be related to either the students' teaching-and-learning environment, which is exam-oriented, or it could be considered as simple as mere laziness and unwillingness to do the work, as the teacher once stated. Nonetheless, the question remains regarding student's inability to reflect: Is it unwillingness to do the work? Is it lack of reflective skills? Is it lack of critical thinking abilities? Or is it a combination of two or all of those?

It is important that scholars and researchers working in the field of intercultural education come to realize that critical and analytical reflection is not only an outcome of intercultural education; reflective abilities are prerequisite skills that help students develop other aspects of their interculturality. Reflective work is also a tool that enables assessors to see a fuller picture of students' intercultural competences. Critical reflective skills ought to be the focus of intercultural education from day one, and it needs constant nurturing and development throughout the process of intercultural learning. Furthermore, it is also important not to take for-granted the idea that critical thinking is being nurtured in schools through modern day educational policies and practices. In a large portion of the educational systems around the world, critical thinking is under-nurtured, and in some, it is even frowned upon.

In fact, reflection requires a great deal of assistance, it is the key to successfully sharpening students' intercultural competences, and it is not only the educational system that could allow for the development of such skills; teachers also have a central role in this process. Indeed, they have a great responsibility in developing and encouraging critical and reflective thinking. In regards to this research study, the teacher involved is someone who promotes such skills in his language classrooms as much as he can within the limitations imposed by the national educational system. However, this study did not intend to examine the teacher's role, which is something I will address in future research. Classroom observations of teacher and students were not part of this study, as the intention was the examination of intercultural education in a natural learning environment.

- ***Students' linguistic and communicative skills***

Linguistic and communicative skills are not only necessary for intercultural development as discussed earlier in Section 5.1.a of this chapter, but they are also necessary for the assessment of intercultural competences. Students chose to reveal different aspects of themselves in their writings. Sometimes, they seemed to write whatever popped in their heads, whether relevant or not. Other times they seemed to struggle to find the words and the right expressions to describe their feelings. As seen in their data, many times they just wrote about utopian values and behaviors, about the world they wished they lived in. Intercultural competences can easily emerge in reflective writing; nonetheless, the more students write, the more they may reveal about themselves, and the better they write, the better their intercultural competences may be recognized, categorized, and assessed.

It is not easy to express oneself in a foreign language, especially with a low level of fluency, and for that reason I allowed students to write their reflective journals in Arabic, their native language. Despite that, their language skills were not that good, and, in many occasions, they wrote in colloquial spoken Arabic. It is not an easy task for an assessor to evaluate someone's intercultural competences, when sometimes their writings make little sense.

In the end, intercultural scholars and assessors have to keep in mind these two issues. First, students have different ways of expressing themselves. So if their foreign language skills are low, they will not be able to communicate their true thoughts as their choice of words might be limited to what they already know, or it could be a word-for-word translation from their own native language. Second,

students are very selective in what they reveal and what they conceal about themselves, and this affects the intercultural competences that show up in their written works. After discussing the students with their teacher, I found out that some students presented certain views during classroom discussion, and then presented a different view in their writings. It could be either peer pressure, or fake reporting. Either way, it is not possible to know which of those is their true attitude or view. It just serves to show how selective students can be when it comes to exposing their personal views and beliefs to their peers on one hand, and to their adult teacher or assessors, who may be strangers to them, on the other hand.

b) Contextual Factors

Borghetti (2017), Dervin (2016), Abdallah-Preceilli (2012), and other scholars have already emphasized the importance of considering contextual factors in the assessment of interculturality, as they also pointed out their effects on one's emerging intercultural competences. However, these scholars mostly discuss interactional contexts and assessment of performance. There is not really any discussion in literature in regards to the development and assessment of interculturality in the different contexts (e.g. sociocultural, educational, geopolitical, etc.). This is probably due to the fact the great majority of research on intercultural competence, as well as the leading voices in intercultural education come from relatively similar contexts that are westernized, high on the diversity scale, and employ modern educational practices. There is barely any theory or research on contexts other than the one previously mentioned (see gaps in Chapter 2, Section 2.7).

The confinement of intercultural research to such context overlooks several aspects of interculturality and does not offer any chance to understand the network of relationship among interculturality, context of study, and the factors influencing interculturality. In other words, it is important to consider that different contexts of study (country, cultural gap, age, gender, educational system, curricula and activities, etc.) might present different factors; and the same factor might have a different influence on interculturality depending on the study context. For example, the country context of this study (Palestine) revealed that religion is indeed a factor influencing students' interculturality. Hypothetically speaking, religion may be an influencing factor in Palestine, but not in Ukraine; and the way religion influences the intercultural competences of Palestinian students may differ from the way it influences the competences of Mexican students.

Therefore, it is recommended that further studies be done to understand what factors have what type of influence on interculturality in the various contexts. There are not any such studies, but recently I came across one that was done in Georgia. Malazonia, Maglakelidze, Chiabrishvili, and Gakheladze (2017) attempted to analyze contextual factors in relation to students' intercultural competence in high schools in Georgia, which revealed that students' level of interculturality is related to the diversity of their social context, their school environment, the pedagogical practices and curriculum, and their family environment. Considering that no other available studies have taken this issue into account, it is hard to present any comparisons between the context of this study and other contexts. Nevertheless, for future research efforts, this study draws attention to a few contextual factors that are related to intercultural education and learners' interculturality. These factors are related to the activities and topics of intercultural education, as well as the sociocultural context represented in religion, taboos, and parents.

- ***Activities and topics of intercultural education***

The students in this study took part in three activities associated with three different topics. Each activity managed to elicit different types of intercultural competences in students, individually and as a group (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4). It is possible to argue that the topics were the factor that triggered differences in the emerging intercultural competences rather than the activities themselves, considering that they were all writing activities. It is very common to find research in literature describing the effectiveness of the different types of classroom activities and topics in eliciting or developing learners' intercultural competence, but it is not common to find research that presents comparisons between those activities and topics, or describe the different type of intercultural competence that such activities and topics elicit. When I developed the activities, I had this notion in my mind, but I did not intend to do such comparisons due to the exploratory nature of this study. In the end, the results managed to highlight this correlation between the project's activities and the type of emerging intercultural competences. However, the nature of this relation is not clear, as other contextual factors—related to the students themselves and to the learning context—should be taken into consideration when developing curricula for intercultural education purposes.

What this study managed to reveal is that the use of different activities and different intercultural topics, not only managed to elicit different types of intercultural competence, but also managed to bring out a different version of each student's intercultural competences. Our participants revealed that students are

complex and contradictory; and they have different levels of acceptance, openness, and interest in the various topics. As we have seen in the results chapter, the same student showed openness and interest in one activity, and lack of them in another one. The same student showed acceptance of diversity in terms of race, nationality, or language, but lack of acceptance of religious diversity. Therefore, evaluating students' intercultural competences using one activity or one topic will probably not reveal the full true nature of their complex interculturality at the time of assessment. It is not possible to judge whether a student possesses this or that particular intercultural competence from one source only.

As this research has uncovered, some competences can be dormant and active at different points of interpersonal or informational encounter. Students' mood at the time of assessment, their personal interests, and even the topic itself could be possible factors that affect the emergence of a particular intercultural competence. Borghetti (2017) has previously stated the same issue in her paper. She further affirmed that generalizing competence to individuals can be problematic, as people manifest different levels of intercultural competences in different situations, depending on the contextual factors during the time of assessment.

The effects of the different types of intercultural activities and intercultural topics are worth further investigation. Using various activities and topics in intercultural assessment could allow for the discovery of students' unique competences, as this study has shown, and it could also help better understand the relationship between interculturality and context (in terms of activities, and in terms of the classrooms' cultural gap). For instance, it is possible to hypothesize that different activities and different topics might elicit different intercultural competences in the same group of students. Also, the same topic or activity might elicit one set of intercultural competences when conducted in minimal-cultural-gap context and a different set of competences when conducted in a large-cultural-gap context.

- ***Sociocultural context: Religion, taboos, and parents***

Religion, taboos, and parents are the main sociocultural factors that this study found to be key influencers in the intercultural educational process. As the material developer of this study's activities, I opted to avoid taboo topics, such as sex and sexuality, but I deliberately chose to incorporate a religious dimension out of conviction in its importance and as an attempt to uncover any relationship between religion and interculturality. Religion is a major player in the socialization process, and as Milot (2004,

p.94) said, "*it is always liable to arouse antipathy in believers and non-believers alike*", so it is important to find a way to make religious understanding and respect of others' convictions a part of one's interculturality.

In 2004, a group of scholars presented arguments during a conference in Oslo regarding religion and intercultural education, which called for the inclusion of a religious dimension in intercultural education. Scholars in this conference agreed that religion forms deep structures in our minds and cultures and; therefore, it is crucial to understanding cultures, humans, and their socialization process. One's beliefs are the most important part of one's self. Not only do they shape one's own identity and represent one's commitment to one's ultimate truth, but they also dictate one's behaviors and actions—actions that could possibly lead to harm. In the words of Haaland Matlary (2004, p.31), "*religion is a powder keg when invoked for political rationales, and it is the most effective mobiliser of hatred when instrumentalised.*"

Indeed, religion turned out to be a major influencer on students' interculturality and intercultural learning in this study, as the students related everything to their own religion. They judged everyone else based on their own personal convictions; and they were not willing to apply the same judgment to their own religious beliefs. The *Religions of the world* activity only required students to get acquainted with the different belief systems in the world and understand why religious intolerance exists. Nonetheless, they still looked at and judged other religions through the perspective of their own religious beliefs, with the majority of students firmly convinced that their religion is the only truth. In other words, students could not distance themselves from their personal convictions in order to try and perceive the other religions through the eyes of the followers of those other religions or convictions.

Similar to other contextual factors, the religious dimension is affected by the context of the country, society, school, and classroom where intercultural education takes place. According to Eidsvåg (2004), different countries have different needs based on their historical experience with religion, and this needs to be taken into consideration when planning intercultural activities and programs. In some countries, like former communist countries, religious education is absent. In other countries, it is incorporated within course studies on ethics and religion, which can either be an elective or core course in school years depending on the country's educational policies. In contrast, in countries like Palestine,

religion is a subject in its own right, where each religious group only learns about their own faith. For example, in mixed schools such as the one in this study, Muslim and Christian students go to different classrooms for their religion class. This calls the attention to the recommendation made by Rey-von Allmen (2004), which emphasizes two approaches to dealing with the issue of religion, the first being the introduction of a religious dimension to intercultural education, and the other is the introduction of an intercultural dimension to religious education. Some of the students in this study did actually criticize the fact that, in their own country, each one learns about their own religion and learns nothing about the religion of others around them; they attributed it to be the cause of religious intolerance in their own society.

In the end, it is important to recognize that, whether it is an intercultural dimension incorporated in religious studies or a religious dimension incorporated in intercultural education, it will elicit different reactions from students depending on the context of their country. Moreover, it may also reveal different layers of their interculturality and their intercultural needs. For it is related to not only how and what is taught in schools about religion, but also how much influence religion has on people's lives. Religion's influence varies depending on country and region, as it can range from being confined to the private sphere, at home or in religious houses, to having control over almost each and every aspect of people's civil and private lives.

This brings us to think about the social taboos, which are often related to religion. For example, in Palestine, sex and sexuality are not topics for public discussion, and, regardless of religious background, one is expected to follow religious teaching in this matter. Therefore, when I developed the activities, I avoided this topic, leaving only the term *homophobia*, in the list of the *isms* in the worksheet of the third activity. The teacher reported that, even though such topics were not planned as part of the project, the students did discuss them in class. They talked about homosexuality and pre-marital sexual relationships. The first topic appeared in the written works of two students, but the second topic did not appear at all in students' works, as it was recounted to me by the teacher during the interview I had with him. According to the teacher, students' opinions varied regarding homosexuality, as some were accepting, others fiercely rejected it, and some did not share their opinions on that matter.

Regarding the issue of pre-marital sex, the teacher noticed that male students voiced their opinions and had no problem with it, while female students remained silent. In societies where honor is at stake, girls have no choice but to either disagree with the idea of pre-marital sex or stay silent, in fear that, if they agree with it, they might be shamed and disgraced. This issue could be a clear example of how taboos and traditions affect interculturality. Firstly, certain intercultural topics may be rejected by the government, the society, or the students themselves. Secondly, if peer pressure and socio-religious traditions are at play, it is not possible to recognize learners' real attitudes, values, and perceptions on such sensitive topics in open classroom discussions. Each culture and subculture has its own set of taboos that could be religious, political, social, etc. and as material developers, educators, and also examiners, we have to take this into consideration throughout the process of intercultural education and assessment.

The final sociocultural factor influencing intercultural education that this study revealed is students' parents. As mentioned in the results chapter, the teacher reported that he received feedback and complaints from students' parents during the implementation of this study's project. It is not possible to make any generalization from this observation, but it brings us to think about the type of influence parents have on their children's interculturality. It was possible to observe that parents, who commended the teacher on doing such activities, had open-minded and receptive children; and parents, who objected to the activities, had negative children who were not convinced in doing the activities. Nonetheless, those negative students did not necessarily share their parents' views, as they showed acceptance to some topics and rejection to other ones.

In any educational situation, there are two major influencers at play. First, we have the curriculum and the educational policies of the country imposed by the government, which follows the religious and/or civil laws of the country as well as the educational policies of the different schools. Second, we have the parents who provide the first and primary sociocultural and intercultural education for children, and who pass to them their own social values and practices, that might differ from the social values and practices of others in their own society and country. However, a third party ought to influence education, which is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). It states that every child has the right to information, and the right to express oneself and to be heard. So, the question that we are left with is this: How can we reach a compromise between what knowledge the

government allows, what knowledge the school offers, what knowledge parents want their children to be exposed to, and the children's right to knowledge and to make their own choices?

This study has shown that particular personal and contextual factors have a degree of influence on students' intercultural competences, and thus affect the development and assessment process of intercultural education. It is important to emphasize again that these observations simply aim to highlight the connection between influencing factors, interculturality, and context. What this exploratory study has revealed is that context does, in fact, influence interculturality as many scholars have previously stated. However, at this point, it is not possible to make any generalizations, as further investigation is required to find out the type of relationship and the degree of influence that these factors have on different individuals in different context.

5.3. Challenges and Limitations of the Study

The major challenges faced during this research study were related to the educational context where the implementation of this study took place. It was very hard to find a school and a teacher willing to give time off of their assigned syllabus to do the implementation process. Even with willing participants, the time span that was given to the activities was too short to measure any intercultural developments as was initially intended, and this limited the study to data representing a photo caption of students' interculturality at a specific time and place. Furthermore, students' exam-oriented mentality restricted their willingness to fully engage in the activities of this study project resulting in many students giving minimum effort and less data than expected and hoped for.

It is possible to argue that additional information on students' interculturality could have been obtained had there been classroom observations by the researcher. However, observations—by a stranger—could have interfered with the natural environment of the classroom, and thus affect students' authentic words and reactions, which is something I, as the researcher, wanted to avoid. The plan was to explore the implementation of intercultural activities in a natural classroom setting without outside interference, and that was realized. Nonetheless, it was challenging to be involved and remain fully updated with the implementation process due to the limited communications from the teacher during that time, as explained in Section 3.3.d in the Methodology Chapter. Furthermore, the teacher's observation notes could have added to a more comprehensive understanding of students' competences, but, due to his

computer crashing, these notes were lost. In an ideal situation, action research conducted by a teacher with intercultural education expertise would have put restrictions to such challenges and limitations, which will be considered in future research.

Data in this study are mostly qualitative. It would have been of added value to have both qualitative and quantitative data to compare and contrast. However, that was not possible due to the lack of appropriate and satisfactory quantitative tools to collect data on students' intercultural competences as defined in this context (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3.c). Furthermore, the restrictive timetable of a PhD study did not allow for adapting and piloting one of the many existing quantitative assessment tools. In the end, what I initially considered a limitation served to highlight the need for quantitative instruments that can be adapted to the different contexts on the cultural-gap spectrum and age spectrum, and that can manage to reflect learners' intercultural competences, accurately and comprehensively.

Similar to any other qualitative research, subjectivity of data interpretation is a limitation by default. In this study, I have included my assessor self as an element in this intercultural experience, alongside, the teacher, the students, the activities, and the context. However, I did not discuss my influence on the data analysis, as it was not part of my study. I merely presented my own background and my own philosophy and perception of interculturality (see Chapter 3, Section 3.2.c), so as to enable the reader to make their own conclusions on how I maneuvered between subjectivity and objectivity in data analysis. Truth be told, the whole experience of intercultural education is relatively subjective. Those who dictate what it means to be *intercultural* are presenting their own perspective on interculturality, which also keeps changing over time. Those who implement and take part in intercultural education are once more translating their own perception of the intercultural activities and topics. In addition, those who assess interculturality are to some extent influenced by their own cultural background and interpretation of interculturality.

Finally, one major limitation in this study was the lack of students' input and feedback. It would have been of great value to the study if I was able to talk to the students and obtain feedback from them. Interviews with students were planned as part of the study, but it was not possible to carry them out, since students had already started their *Tawjihi* year, and the school advised not to disturb them.

5.4. Recommendations for Future Intercultural Education

This case study set out to investigate interculturality and intercultural education from a new perspective and in a previously unexplored context of traditional classrooms in a minimal-cultural-gap community. Although it is difficult to make generalizations from one case study, "*people can learn much that is general from single cases*" (Stake, 1995, p.85). This research study pointed out several gaps in intercultural research, criticized contemporary approaches to intercultural development and assessment, discussed the re-conceptualization of interculturality and intercultural education based on an inclusive, international, and ethical perspective, and presented arguments and recommendations for consideration in future research and theorization efforts in the field of intercultural education.

Throughout this chapter, I have presented arguments and recommendations based on the findings of this study for the consideration of scholars and researchers in the field of intercultural education. In short, findings from this study have highlighted (1) the need to reconsider the definition of interculturality and its constructs as well as the models and methods used to assess interculturality, (2) the need to consider context and contextual factors when developing and assessing interculturality, and (3) the need to be constantly aware of the ethical implications of the process of intercultural education. Following are general recommendations for scholars and researchers, as well as for the international community and policy makers around the world.

My main recommendation to my fellow researchers is to start studying interculturality in the different sociocultural and educational contexts employing different analytical approaches that allow for better understanding of the uniqueness of learners' interculturality in the different contexts. In this study, I utilized a new approach to investigate learners' intercultural competences comprised of pre-established macro-competences and emerging micro-competences. This allowed me to capture a more realistic picture of students' intercultural competence and showed the emergence of new competences that were not previously identified within intercultural models. Furthermore, it is important to focus on developing one's students' reflective and critical skills that will enable their intercultural growth, and to always be aware of falling into the trap of conformity as advised by scholars and in this research study.

As for the international community and policy makers, my recommendation is to consider the implementation of intercultural education at all educational levels and across all taught subjects, paying

special attention to its ethical implications. To do so, it is important to have teachers who are well-prepared and highly qualified, which requires teacher training programs to include courses focusing on intercultural education. Furthermore, international bodies sponsoring educational projects around the world, such as UNESCO and the European Council, ought to, first, invest more in project aiming at implementing intercultural education in schools, and second, encourage governments to consider educational reforms to allow access to knowledge, teaching for diversity, and the elimination of radicalization.

5.5. Final Remarks

This study ventured into a specific unexplored context managing to present data that contributes to the understanding of interculturality and intercultural education on a global scale. It has shown the complexity of one's interculturality, and it has also presented evidence and arguments in support of recent voices criticizing current efforts in intercultural development and intercultural assessment. After years of reading about interculturality, and after conducting this research and reflecting on my own personal journey towards interculturality, I have come to the conclusion that current efforts ought to change in order to better understand the complexity of interculturality, and, most importantly, in order not fall into a world of conformity that leads to new types of prejudices and discrimination.

In my opinion, interculturality is complex, and, to understand it better, we have to first realize that one's intercultural level is not a point on a single continuum that moves forwards and backwards. I see interculturality as an intersectional and multidimensional sphere consisting of many dimensions representing the various competences. Individuals float from one point to another within this sphere when the coordinates of each of those dimensions change as a result of an intercultural or life experience. In view of this, we have to stop looking at interculturality from an educational perspective only and start seeing it from psychosocial and anthropological perspectives.

I started studying intercultural competence from the perspective of foreign language education, but later I realized that interculturality is a human trait, and ought to be investigated as a sociocultural phenomenon. We all possess certain aspects and levels of interculturality, as it is first developed at home and within society, before one starts sharpening and developing it through intercultural education at school. We have to carefully study the effects of intercultural education on people and society. The

idea that intercultural education and intercultural citizenship education are promoting harmonious living might be appealing to a lot of people, but the question lies in how it is done in practice and what type of social change it is making. We have to understand that formal/explicit curricula of intercultural education developed by experts may differ from the operational curricula performed by the teachers, which also differs from the perceived curricula internalized by the students, as this study has demonstrated.

I am not arguing against intercultural education; I am only trying to draw the attention to the need for a different kind of research on intercultural education to better understand its possible positive and negative ramifications. Developing intercultural competence through education does not only result in cognitive and meta-cognitive changes; it also results in psychosocial and behavioral changes, which ought to be studied from perspectives other than foreign language education and intercultural communication. Furthermore, it is important to realize that intercultural education requires high ethical handling on the part of scholars, teachers, and assessors. I agree that intercultural education ought to be part of formal education, but I do not think it is ethical to formally assess it, at least not in its current format. I believe that, at this stage, the assessment of learners' intercultural competences ought to be performed for the purpose of providing a better intercultural education for them. We need to assess their needs in order to provide them with the appropriate intercultural activities/education that fit their needs and context, and that may help them open their minds to a world of diversity and possibilities.

Intercultural education should not aim to change learners' beliefs and values, but to offer them the knowledge of the other and of everything different, and to equip them with the critical skills necessary for them to develop their own perspectives of life and to choose their own set of values and beliefs. As the 17th century Czech scholar John Comenius said about education, in general, and international education, in specific, the aim is "*to emerge from ignorance by teaching 'everything to everyone', and 'from every point of view' "*" (qtd. in Hill, 2012, p. 246). Our duty as intercultural educators should be to actively encourage and facilitate the cultivation of learners' reflective and critical minds, so that they can understand that we are all a product of our socialization process. In this globalized world, almost all of us have our own unique *third place* culture that is somewhere in between the cultures we are exposed to during our lifetime. Misunderstandings and conflicts are bound to happen. It is good to have the knowledge to avoid them, but what it is more important is to have the right attitude when they

happen, and the right skills to deal with them appropriately and objectively. Being an intercultural person means knowing what to say and how to react to such conflicts and misunderstandings when they occur in order to reach a peaceful reconciliation.

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APENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Lesson Plans Provided by the Researcher to the Teacher

Activity (1): Stereotypes.			
Objective: To understand stereotypes, and deconstruct stereotypical images of one's own background and those of others around the world.			
Writing Genre: <i>Compare/contrast essay</i>			
Guidelines for Teachers			
Classes	Input/Materials	Activities	Notes
Class #1 (40-45 min)	-Stereotypes worksheet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher starts with a class discussion introducing the term 'stereotype': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -What does 'stereotype' mean? - On what basis do people build stereotypes? (gender, race, sexuality, etc.) - Can you give examples? - Do you think stereotyping people is harmful? Why? Why not? - How does stereotyping affect our behavior? - How can we avoid stereotyping people? - Teacher gives students worksheet, they discuss it and answer the questions. - Teachers encourage students to explain their answers. - Worksheet goes into portfolio. - Teacher gradually introduce the writing assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What kind of stereotypical image people have of you? Is it true? Why do you think they have this image? 	<p>Warm-up activities to introduce the topic. Students need to understand the term stereotype well before they can start writing about it.</p> <p>Encourage students to critically evaluate media outlets in their everyday life.</p>
Home assignment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teacher asks students to look for stereotypes in their textbooks, printed and cyber media, and bring them to class to share and discuss them with fellow students. - Teacher encourages students to ask parents, relative, friends...etc about what they think might be a stereotypical image of their society, and incorporate it in their essay if they wish or agree with it. 	Youngsters rarely ask adults for their opinions, this might be chance for them to exchanges their views and break the age barrier.
Class #2 (40-45 min)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher introduces the structure of compare/contrast essay and asks students to write an essay about themselves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Three ways they are similar to the stereotypical image of themselves, and three ways they are different and why. - Students start writing essay in class, and finish it at home. 	
Class #3 (40-45 min)	-Reflective sheet #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teacher asks students if they would like to share what they have learned about themselves and their society with the rest of the class or read their essay to them. - Students share their thoughts, and have a reflective discussion. - Students write their reflective journal and keep it in their portfolio. 	
		Teacher will grade writing assignments (the portfolio as a whole) at end of project not after each activity. Students' focus should be on achievement not on grade.	

Activity (2): Prejudice and Religious (In)tolerance.			
Objective: To understand the causes of faith-based prejudice and intolerance, and how ignorance of other faiths may lead to misunderstandings, disrespect and conflict.			
Writing Genre: <i>Short Report- PPT presentation</i>			
Guidelines for Teachers			
Class	Input/Materials	Activities	Notes
Class #4 (40-45 min)	-Worksheet: statistics on world religions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher asks questions to begin discussion, then distributes worksheet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -How many faiths are there in the world? - Can you name some widely-spread faiths? - Can you name some less commonly known faiths? - What do we know about them? - Do you agree that our religious beliefs affect our everyday lives? Can you give me examples? - How can we be respectful when we meet/talk to someone from a different faith or religious background? - Teacher explains the assignment and gives guidelines for writing a short report in form of PPT presentation. -Teacher remind students of the term "stereotype", and ask the students to avoid stereotyping images or ideas about the faith they are about to investigate. -Teacher divides class into groups of 2-3 students and asks them to choose one faith for their assignment. 	<p>Teacher need to emphasize the importance of being respectful towards the beliefs of others, while researching, writing, and presenting the report.</p> <p>Students should feel free to pick the faith they wish to study, because they need to explain their choice.</p>
Assignment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The assignment is to present a short report in PPT on a faith other than your own, and give advice on how to behave respectfully towards followers of that faith. - Students choose one religion or a religious denomination they are interested in. -Students research their topic and write the report, which includes info such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Core belief - Holy place and place of worship - History, origin, religious figures - Major feasts and their significance - Serving food (do and don'ts) - Religious practices (marriage, burial..etc.) - Greetings (do and don'ts) - Visiting their holy sites (do and don'ts) 	<p>Students are encouraged to use media (photos and videos).</p> <p>PowerPoint engages students' creativity in presenting their finding. Oral presentations helps students practice speaking and pronunciation.</p>
Class #5 + 6 (40-45 min)	-Reflective sheet #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students present their PPT presentation and share their finding with the class. - Classroom discussion and reflection on presentations is encouraged. -Students write their reflective journal essay and keep it in their portfolio alongside their PPT slides. 	<p>Number of minutes for presentation assigned by teacher depending on number of students in classroom.</p>

Activity (3): Discrimination and the ISMs.			
Objective: To be aware and able to recognize types of discrimination and promote tolerance through creative work.			
Writing Genre: <i>Creative writing</i>			
Guidelines for Teachers			
Class	Input/Materials	Activities	Notes
Class #7 (40-45 min)	-Worksheet #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teacher introduces the topic with a worksheet. - Teacher and students discuss new terminology and reflect on discriminatory situations in students lives and context. -Students work on the worksheet together or alone. - Teacher discusses creative writing and discuss the different types with the class. (song lyrics or rap, poem, cartoon, short story. etc.) - Teacher explains assignment and asks students to pick a theme for their creative work. - Depending on the genre, students can work alone or in groups. 	<p>Warm-up activities to introduce the topic.</p> <p>Encourage students to critically evaluate incidents when discrimination takes place.</p>
Assignment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are to write a creative work to highlight type/s of discrimination to spread awareness on how to fight it and promote tolerance and equality. -Students are encouraged to write about types of discrimination they see in their everyday life. 	<p>Group work depends on amount of work needed for genre writing.</p>
Class #8 (40-45 min)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students start writing in class with teacher guiding and facilitating work. -Students can finish work at home or in next class. 	<p>Give students opportunity to channel their creativity through their own choice of genre.</p>
Class #9 + 10 (40-45 min)	-Reflective sheet #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students present their work in class and reflect and discuss it with teacher facilitating. -Students write their reflective journal essay and keep it in their portfolio alongside their creative piece of work. 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher evaluates the three assignment and the portfolio and gives language feedback and a mark. 	<p>If the teacher wishes to do so.</p>

APPENDIX 2: Worksheet for Activity One

Examples of Stereotypes

Read the following statements that depict different types of stereotypes. Give more examples from your daily life.

Negative Stereotypes

- All blonde women are dumb.
- All politicians are corrupt.
- All teenagers are self-centered.
- All children hate healthy food.

Your example: _____.

Your example: _____.

Positive Stereotypes

- Asians are good at math.
- All African Americans can rap.
- All Italians love pizza..
- Europeans are rich people.

Your example: _____.

Your example: _____.

Racial Stereotypes

- All Arabs are Muslims.
- All Jewish people support Israel.
- French people are arrogant.
- Americans are stupid.

Your example: _____.

Your example: _____.

Gender Stereotypes

Women

- All smart women are not attractive.
- Women do not drive well.
- Women can marry older men, but men cannot marry older women.

Your example: _____.

Your example: _____.

Men

- Men are insensitive, they do not cry.
- Men are better at sports.

Age Stereotypes

- Young people are reckless.
- Teenagers are irresponsible.
- Old people cannot do sports.
- Old people cannot use new technology.

Your example: _____.

Your example: _____.

Socioeconomic status

- Rich people are unkind.
- Rich people live in big houses.
- People living in poverty are unclean.
- Poor people are uneducated.

Your example: _____.

Your example: _____.

Disability

- People with disability are a burden.
- People on wheelchairs cannot have children.
- Disability is always visible.
- Mental disability is a disease.

Your example: _____.

Your example: _____.

Religion

- He is a Christian, but he is a good person. He is Muslim, but he is open-minded.
- Secular people are not spiritual.
- Religious people are fanatics.

Your example: _____.

Your example: _____.

Can you think of other types of stereotypes that exist in your country and in your own culture?






Your example: _____.










Your example: _____.


Your example: _____.

APPENDIX 3: Information Sheet Provided for the Students for Activity Two

Religions of the World

Religion	Adherents/ followers	Symbol	History	Deity/God	Holy Texts
Christianity	2.2 billion		Life and teachings of Jesus, a Jew from Palestine under Roman rule. (c.30 CE)	One God, who is a Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.	Bible (Old and New Testaments)
Islam	1.6 billion		Based on the teachings of Prophet Muhammad; founded in 622 CE in Mecca, now Saudi Arabia.	One God (Allah in Arabic); the same God revealed in the Jewish and Christian Bibles.	Qur'an (sacred text) and the Hadith (tradition).
Atheism, Agnosticism, Nonreligious, and Secular	1.1 billion	None	Appears throughout history (including ancient Greek philosophy), but especially after the Enlightenment (c.1800s CE).	Atheism: There is no God or divine beings. Agnosticism: The existence or non existence of gods is unknown and unknowable. Secularism: The separation of religion and state (seculars can be religious).	None/depending on beliefs of individuals.
Hinduism	1 billion		The indigenous religion of India. Earliest forms (Vedic religion) date to 1500 BCE or earlier (c.3000 BCE).	One Supreme Reality (Brahman) manifested in many gods and goddesses.	Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, etc.
Buddhism	376 million		Based on teachings of Siddharta Gautama (the Buddha) c. 520 BCE, Northeast India.	Buddhist gods include buddhas, bodhisattvas, arhats and deities.	Tripitaka (Pali Canon) and Mahayana sutras like the Lotus Sutra; others.
Sikhism	23 million		Founded by Guru Nanak, c. 1500 CE, in Punjab, India.	One God: Ik Onkar.	Adi Granth (Sri Guru Granth Sahib).

Taoism	20 million		Based on teachings of Lao-Tzu, c. 550 BCE, in China.	Pantheism - the Tao pervades all.	Tao-te Ching and Chuang-tzu
Mormonism	15 million		Based on the revelations to Joseph Smith, in 1830 CE, New York, USA.	God the Father, the Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost are three separate individual beings.	Christian Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price.
Judaism	14 million		The religion of Abraham (born c. 1800 BCE) and the Hebrews.	One God: Yahweh/El	Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), and the Talmud.
Jehovah's Witnesses	8.3 million		Founded by Charles Taze Russell, 1879 CE, Pittsburgh, USA.	One God: Jehovah. No Trinity. Christ is the first creation of God; the Holy Spirit is a force.	New World Translation of the Scriptures.
Baha'i	7 million		Founded by Bahá'u'lláh, 1863 CE, Tehran, Iran.	One God, who has revealed himself progressively through major world religions.	Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and other Bahá'í leaders.
Jainism	4.2 million		Founded by Mahavira, c. 550 BCE, in eastern India.	Polytheism and pantheism. The universe is eternal; many gods exist	The teachings of Mahavira in various collections.
Shinto	4 million		Indigenous religion of Japan (c. 700s CE)	Kami: ancient gods or spirits	Kojiki (Records of Ancient Matters); Nihon-gi (Chronicles of Japan)
Cao Dai	4 million		Founded in 1926 CE in Vietnam by Ngo Van Chieu and others based on a séance.	God represented by Divine Eye. Founders of Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity are venerated.	Caodai canon
Zoroastrianism	2.6 million		Based on teachings of Zoroaster in 1000s BCE Persia. Official religion of ancient Persia.	One God, Ahura Mazda, but a dualistic world-view in which an evil spirit, Angra Mainyu, is almost as powerful.	Zend Avesta

Druz	1 million		Founded by Al-Darazi in 1000s CE, in Cairo, Egypt. Roots in the Isma'iliyya sect of Shia Islam.	Universal Intelligence (al-Aql al-Kulli) or Divine Essence	Al-Naqd al-Khafi (Copy of the Secret); Al-Juz'al-Awwal (Essence of the First)
Rastafarianism	1 million	None	Founded by Marcus Garvey in the slums of Jamaica in the 1920s and 1930s CE.	God is Jah, who became incarnate in Jesus (who was black); Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I was messiah.	Holy Piby (the "Blackman's Bible"). The Ethiopian epic Kebra Negast is also revered.
Note	Please Remember that each religion splits into different denominations and sects that differ from one another, not in core beliefs, but sometimes in traditions, values, and practices.				

c= circa: around/approximately

BCE: Before Common Era (or BC: before Christ)

CE: Common Era (or AD: anno domini = year of the lord)

APPENDIX 4: Working Sheet Provided for the Students for Activity Three

Discrimination and the Isms

Discrimination comes in many forms, for example; something you say or do, something you see in an image/photo, something you hear on TV, or read in a magazine. It can be direct and indirect.

Ableism: discrimination based on ability and disability.

Ageism: discrimination based on age.

Anti-Semitism: discrimination against Semitic people- specifically Jewish people.

Classism: discrimination based on social and economic status.

Faithism: discrimination based on faith/religion.

Ethnocentrism: the belief that one's own culture is superior to others.

Heterosexism (Homophobia): discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Islamophobia: prejudice and dislike of Muslim people.

Lookism: discrimination based on one's physical appearance.

Mentalism: discrimination based on mental health status.

Misogyny: hatred of women.

Misandry: hatred of men.

Nationalism: the belief that one's nation is superior to others.

Sexism: the belief that one gender is superior to the other.

Sizeism: discrimination based on shape, weight, or size.

Racism: discrimination based on race.

Xenophobia: irrational fear of foreigners.

Do you know any other types of discrimination? List them here:

Read the following situations. Can you find any types of discrimination?

Situation 1:

Tom loves reading. Since he is blind, he needs to read books in Braille. He went to the library to get books, but they did not have any books in Braille.

Situation 2:

Fatima and Ahmad have just moved to the UK for work. They are looking for an apartment to rent. They have good credentials, but their application is always rejected by the neighborhood committee.

Situation 3:

Karim is in love with Marwa. Karim's family is rich, but Marwa's family is not. Karim's parents want him to marry the daughter of his father's partner.

Situation 4:

In most countries around the world, fathers do not get paternity leave from work.

Situation 5:

As Roni was on his way to school, an elderly woman got on the bus. There was only one seat available next to Roni. The lady asked: "May I have this seat?". Roni shouted out: "YEAH, OF COURSE YOU CAN SIT HERE!" The lady covered her ears and said: "Goodness dear, I am not deaf."

Situation 6:

In the West Bank, there are roads for Palestinians and roads for Jewish settlers.

Situation 7:

"This is funny! Come look at those people in this video, their folk songs sound like a donkey's hee-haw."

Situation 8:

Lena is a short black woman who answers telephones in a call centre. She is passed over for promotion to work on reception because her manager thinks that black women do not perform well in direct-facing customer service roles.

Situation 9:

A member of Parliament said: " Women are weaker than men, they are less smart, and thus they deserve to get paid less than men."

Situation 10:

Sami suffers from depression. He wants to get treatment from a therapist, but his family rejected the idea. They told him: "Man up! Do you want people to think you are crazy?"

Key answers for teachers:

- 1- ableism
- 2- Xenophobia and Islamophobia
- 3- Classism
- 4- Sexism
- 5- Ageism
- 6- Racism (tell them about apartheid)
- 7- Ethnocentrism
- 8- Racism and sexism and also lookism and sizeism
- 9- Sexism and misogyny
- 10- Mentalism and sexism

APPENDIX 5: Guidelines for the Students with Expected Portfolio Content

Portfolio Content

- Portfolios are assessment tools used to document students' learning and show their development and growth over time.
- Portfolios are a good way to show evidence of your progress and achievements throughout the semester.
- At the end of the semester, portfolios will be collected and evaluated.
- Your portfolio is a representation of yourself, so be creative and feel free to add your personal touch.
- However, once a document is added to the portfolio, it **MUST NOT** be removed or replaced. If you need to make some edits, write them down on a slip of paper and staple it to the original document.
- You can add anything related to the activities to your portfolio, however, your portfolio should contain the following sections and items:

Section ONE: My cultural passport.

- 1- Your cultural passport sheet

Section TWO: Am I a stereotypical _____?

- 1- Any collected/researched materials
- 2- Any in-class worksheets
- 3- My final essay
- 4- My reflective journal essay

Section THREE: Living in harmony...

- 1- Any collected/researched materials
- 2- Any in-class worksheets
- 3- PowerPoint slides (your report)
- 4- My reflective journal essay

Section FOUR: Say NO to discrimination...

- 1- Any collected/researched materials
- 2- Any in-class worksheets
- 3- My creative work
- 4- My reflective journal essay

APPENDIX 6: Cultural Passport Guidelines Provided to the Students

My Cultural Passport

- Your cultural passport is your own forum to show us your cultural identity.
- You can add in whatever information that you think might help others better understand your cultural background and intercultural experiences.
- The following categories and items are mandatory for everyone, but you can add as many items as you wish.
- Feel free to be creative! You can create your own designs, use your favorite colors and perhaps add some photos of your travels and the places you wish to visit.

List of obligatory items:

Section A) About me...

- 1- My name (your photo if you wish)
- 2- My age
- 3- Gender
- 4- Date of Birth (dd-mm-yyyy) and place of birth (city and country)
- 5- Hometown (city and country)
- 6- Nationality/ies
- 7- Ethnic background
- 8- Race
- 9- My first language
- 10- My dialect
- 11- Other language I know (language- where did you learn it- how well do you know it)
- 12- My religious background
- 13- My religious beliefs
- 14- My hobbies and interests

Section B) About my family...

- 1- My Parent/s
(gender- race- ethnicity- nationality- education- occupation- languages they know)
- 2- My sibling/s (number and gender)
- 3- My order in my family (eldest -middle, third.... etc, youngest)

Section C) My travels...

- 1- Places I visited/lived in (city- country- duration of stay/visit- purpose of visit)
- 2- Places I would like to visit in the future (city- country- and why?)

Section D) People I have met...

- 1) List some of the people you met/talked to who are from a different cultural background
(please make a list- their cultural background- where you met them- and tell us what language did you use to speak to them?)

APPENDIX 7: The M-GUDS Questionnaire¹³⁵ as Administered to the Students

Please read the following statements and mark down how much you agree or disagree with what it is said. If you do not understand any of the questions, do not worry, give your answer and then put a little circle around the number of that statement, which you did not understand. Thank you!

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Slightly Agree	Slightly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I'd like to join an organization that emphasizes getting to know people from different countries. أنا اود الانضمام إلى منظمة تركز على التعرف على الناس من مختلف البلدان.						
2	I would like to go to dances that feature music from other countries. أود أن أذهب إلى الرقصات التي تلعب الموسيقى من بلدان أخرى						
3	I often listen to the music of other cultures. غالباً ما أستمع إلى موسيقى الثقافات الأخرى.						
4	I am interested in learning about the many cultures that have existed in this world. أنا مهتم في التعرف على العديد من الثقافات التي كانت موجودة في هذا العالم.						
5	I attend events where I might get to know people from different backgrounds. أحضر مناسبات حيث يمكنني التعرف على اناس من خلفيات مختلفة.						
6	I feel a sense of connection with people from different countries. لدي شعور بالارتباط مع الناس من مختلف البلدان						
7	I am interested in knowing people who speak more than one language أنا مهتم بمعرفة الناس الذين يتحدثون أكثر من لغة واحدة						
8	I am interested in going to exhibits featuring the work of artists from minority groups. أنا مهتم في الذهاب إلى المعارض يضم عمل الفنانين من الأقليات.						
9	I'd like to know more about the beliefs and customs of the different groups who live in this country. أود أن أعرف المزيد عن معتقدات وعادات المجموعات المختلفة التي تعيش في هنا						

¹³⁵ Adapted in Arabic from: Fuertes, J. N., Miville, M. L., Mohr, J. J., Sedlacek, W. E. & Gretchen, D. (2000). Factor structure and short form of the Miville-Guzman University Scale. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 33. pp. 157- 169.

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Slightly Agree	Slightly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10	I often feel a sense of kinship with persons from different ethnic groups. كثيرا ما أشعر بالقرابة مع أشخاص من مختلف المجموعات الإثنية.						
11	Becoming aware of the experiences of people from different ethnic groups is very important to me. إدراك تجارب الناس من مختلف المجموعات العرقية مهم جدا بالنسبة لي.						
12	I do not know too many people from other countries. أنا لا أعرف الكثير من الناس من بلدان أخرى.						
13	If given the chance, I would travel to different countries to study what other cultures are like. إذا أعطيت الفرصة، سأسافر إلى بلدان مختلفة لدراسة الثقافات الأخرى.						
14	I have not seen many foreign films. لم أشاهد الكثير من الأفلام الأجنبية.						
15	I am not very interested in reading books translated from another language. أنا لست مهتمة جدا في قراءة الكتب المترجمة من لغة أخرى.						
16	I would be interested in taking a course dealing with race relations. أنا مهتم بأخذ دورة تعليمية عن العلاقات العرقية.						
17	It deeply affects me to hear persons from other countries describe their struggles of adapting to living here. يؤثر فيّ عميقا سماع أشخاص من بلدان أخرى يصفون صعوباتهم للتكيف بالعيش هنا (في بلدي).						
18	When I hear about an event (e.g. tragedy) that occurs in another country, I often feel as strongly about it as if it had occurred here. عندما أسمع عن حدث (مثل المأساة) يحدث في بلد آخر، غالبا ما أتأثر بقوة كما لو أنه حدث هنا.						
19	I feel comfortable getting to know people from different countries. أشعر بالراحة عندما أتعرف على أشخاص من بلدان مختلفة.						
20	For the most part, events around the world do not affect me emotionally. في معظم الأحيان، الأحداث من أنحاء العالم لا تؤثر فيّ عاطفيا.						

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Slightly Agree	Slightly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21	Persons with disability can teach me things I could not learn elsewhere. يمكن للأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة أن يعلموني أشياء لا أستطيع تعلمها في أماكن أخرى						
22	I can best understand someone after I get to know how s/he is both similar and different from me. أستطيع أن أفهم شخص ما بعد أن تعرف كيف هو-هي مشابه ومختلف عني.						
23	Knowing how a person differs from me greatly enhances our friendship. معرفة كيف يختلف الشخص عني يعزز إلى حد كبير صداقتنا						
24	Knowing someone from a different ethnic group broadens my understanding of myself. معرفة شخص من مجموعة إثنية مختلفة يوسع فهمي لنفستي.						
25	In getting to know someone, I like knowing both how s/he differs from me and is similar to me. عندما اتعرف على شخص ما، أحب معرفة كيف يختلف عني وكيف يشبهني.						
26	Knowing about the experiences of people of different races increases my self-understanding. معرفة المزيد عن تجارب الناس من مختلف الأجناس يزيد من فهمي لذاتي.						
27	Knowing about the different experiences of other people helps me understand my own problems better. معرفة خبرات الناس المختلفة يساعدي على فهم المشاكل الخاصة بي أفضل.						
28	When I listen to people of different races describe their experiences in this country, I am moved. أتأثر عندما أستمع إلى الناس من مختلف الأجناس تصف تجاربها في هذا البلد.						
29	It grieves me to know that many people in the third world are not able to live as they choose. يحزنني أن أعرف أن العديد من الناس في العالم الثالث غير قادرين على العيش كما يختارون.						
30	I would be interested in participating in activities involving people with disability. انا مهتم بالمشاركة في الأنشطة التي تشمل الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة.						

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Slightly Agree	Slightly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
31	I place high value on being tolerant of others' viewpoints. أضع قيمة عالية على التسامح مع وجهات نظر الآخرين.						
32	In getting to know someone, I try to find out how I am like that person as much as how that person is like me. عند التعرف على شخص ما، أحاول معرفة كيف أنا مثل هذا الشخص بقدر كيف أن هذا الشخص مثلي.						
33	Getting to know someone from another race is generally an uncomfortable experience for me. التعرف على شخص من عرق آخر هو عموما تجربة غير مريحة بالنسبة لي.						
34	I am only at ease with people of my own race. أنا فقط مرتاح مع الناس من نفس عرقي.						
35	It is really hard for me to feel close to a person from another race. . من الصعب جدا بالنسبة لي أن أشعر بالقرب من شخص من عرق آخر						
36	It is very important that a friend agrees with me on most issues. من المهم جدا أن يتفق صديقي معي في معظم القضايا.						
37	I often feel irritated by persons of a different race. غالبا ما أشعر بالانزعاج من أشخاص من عرق مختلف.						
38	I have friends of different ethnic origins. لدي أصدقاء من أصول إثنية مختلفة.						
39	It does not upset me if someone is unlike me. لا يزعجني إذا كان شخص ما مختلف عني.						
40	Knowing how a person is similar to me is the most important part of being good friends. معرفة كيف الشخص يشبهني هو بالنسبة لي أهم جزء من كوننا أصدقاء جيدين.						
41	It is often hard to find things in common with people from another generation. غالبا يكون من الصعب العثور على أشياء مشتركة مع اناس من جيل آخر.						
42	I am often embarrassed when I see a physically disabled person. غالبا ما أشعر بالاحراج عندما أرى شخصا من ذوي الإعاقة الجسدية.						

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Slightly Agree	Slightly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
43	Placing myself in the shoes of a person from another race is usually too tough to do. ان اضع نفسي في وضع شخص من عرق آخر هو امر صعب للغاية.						
44	It is hard to understand the problems that people face in other countries. من الصعب فهم المشاكل التي يواجهها الناس في بلدان أخرى.						
45	I am sometimes annoyed at people who call attention to racism in this country. أنا أحيانا أنزعج من الناس الذين يلفتون الانتباه إلى العنصرية في هذا البلد.						

Thank you 😊

APPENDIX 8: Reflective Journals Guidelines

Journal Entry #1:

Write a few sentences in your journal to reflect on the activity you just finished, here are some guiding questions for you to think about:

- 1) Write in your journal about the new things you have learned about stereotypes in your own culture and around the world that you did not know before, if any?
- 2) Tell your journal if the activity made you interested and curious to know more about the topic of stereotypes. If yes, what did you do? Did you talk about it with other people outside classroom? Did you use to internet to learn more about it? What did you do?
- 3) Tell your journal if the activity helped you better understand why people judge based on stereotypes. Do you know now why you yourself stereotype others, if you do? How would you feel if you realized that you are judging people based on stereotypes?
- 4) Write in your journal about the different types of stereotypes that you started noticing in your own culture and around the world, in real life, or on T.V. and the internet, which you never noticed before this activity. How do you feel about them now? Tell your journal if the activity has helped you see things differently or not?

Journal Entry #2:

Write a few sentences in your journal to reflect on the activity you just finished, here are some guiding questions for you to think about:

1) Write in your journal about the new things you have learned about other religions in the world and about religious (in)tolerance in your own country and around the world that you did not know before, if any?

2) Tell your journal if the activity made you interested and curious to know more about the topic of religious (in)tolerance. If yes, what did you do? Did you talk about it with other people outside classroom? Did you use to internet to learn more about it? What did you do?

3) Tell your journal if the activity helped you better understand why people can be prejudice and intolerant. Do you know now why you yourself might have prejudices against others, if you do? How would you feel if you realized that you prejudice against people based on their religious beliefs or background?

4) Write in your journal about the types of religious tolerance or intolerance that you started noticing in your own culture and around the world, in real life, or on T.V. and the internet, which you never noticed before this activity. How do you feel about them now? Tell your journal if the activity has helped you see things differently or not?

Journal Entry #3:

Write a few sentences in your journal to reflect on the activity you just finished, here are some guiding questions for you to think about:

- 1) Write in your journal about the new things you have learned about discrimination and the different types of ISMs in your own culture and around the world that you did not know before, if any?

- 2) Tell your journal if the activity made you interested and curious to know more about the topic of discrimination and the different types of ISMs. If yes, what did you do? Did you talk about it with other people outside classroom? Did you use to internet to learn more about it? What did you do?

- 3) Tell your journal if the activity helped you better understand why people discriminate. Do you know now why you yourself discriminate against others, if you do? How would you feel if you realized that you are judging people based on how different they are form you?

- 4) Write in your journal about the different types of ISMs that you started noticing in your own culture and around the world, in real life, or on T.V. and the internet, which you never noticed before this activity. How do you feel about them now? Tell your journal if the activity has helped you see things differently or not?

APPENDIX 9: Guidelines for the Implementation of the Intercultural Project

Dear Teacher,

Here are some **definitions of key concepts in my study** that will help you understand what this research is trying to explore:

- **Intercultural competence** is "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes"
 - It emphasizes three common elements:
 - awareness, valuing, and understanding of cultural differences;
 - experiencing other cultures;
 - and self-awareness of one's own culture.
 - The ultimate goal is the development of ‘critical cultural awareness’, which is the ability to step back from one's own cultural background and critically identify the original cultural reasoning behind beliefs, actions and behavior.
 - It involves cognitive, affective, and behavioral development.

Attitudes	Attitudes of curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own.
Knowledge	Knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country.
Skills of interpreting and relating	The ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one's own.
Skills of discovery and interaction	The ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real time communication and interaction.
Critical cultural awareness	The ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

- **Education for intercultural citizenship** aims to promote tolerance, respect, intercultural dialogue, solidarity among people.
 - It focuses on the development of a global identity and a sense of loyalty to humanity through teaching about human rights and current world affairs e.g. social biases, and the development of learners' intercultural competencies through various intercultural topics and activities.
 - It enables reflection on learners plural identities by acknowledging the multiple levels of identity (personal, local, national, and global), and putting emphasis on connecting the local and the global to identify commonalities across cultures and sub-cultures.
 - Values shared by intercultural citizens:
 - commitment to social justice and equity,
 - respect for cultural diversity,
 - concern for the environment,
 - a sense of identity (multiple identities),

- empathy for others,
- taking responsibility for their actions,
- and motivation and willingness to influence change in the world (locally & globally).
- **Cultural identity** is the values and feelings we share with cultural or sub-cultural groups (e.g. age, occupation, gender, nationality...etc) we belong to or come in contact with.
- Individuals have multiple cultural identities that change over time and are always constructed and reconstructed through communication and intercultural interactions.
- If you are interested in further reading I would be happy to send you some articles. Also, if you have any inquiries, I am available to answer all your questions.

Before the implementation:

- Please ask the students to fill in the questionnaires.
- It is important that they fill them in class not at home. Please take away the questionnaires as soon as the students are finished.
- Please make sure they answer all questions.
- Please introduce the portfolio to the students and explain that we are going to do some language and culture activities. Please tell them that it will be a tool for them to show off their work and their achievements, and that you will collect their portfolios at the end of the year and evaluate it yourself. You can tell them something like this: During the last weeks of this semester, we are going on a cultural journey, through which, we are going to learn more about ourselves and about others from around the world. We are going to use a portfolio to document this journey and our progress of learning, inner growth, and maturity. Be creative!
- During the first two classes, the students should fill in the questionnaires and create their cultural passport. Then we start with the activities.

The implementation period:

- The three activities should take up around 12 classes. (we'll discuss this via Skype).
- Please introduce the activities to the students in the sequence presented by the researcher.
- At the end of each activity, it is very important that they write their reflections (the journal essays). Please make sure that they do that appropriately. It does not matter if they do it at home or in class. Please encourage them to reflect on their experience and their personal development

as stated in the journal guidelines. Tell them it is a freestyle tool and it will not be graded for language content.

-Please ask students to type their work on the computer. Please ask them to email it to you and to also print it out and put it in their portfolios. Later on, please forward these documents to me.

-We need to Skype frequently during the weeks of implementation to discuss the activities and your progress, and to answer any questions you have. I am interested in your feedback and I am here to help you in every step of the way. I am open to your ideas and suggestion -after all you know the students better- as long as they do not affect the data I am collecting and the objectives of the study.

- Please be creative, do not be afraid to add to the activities, but please contact me and inform me of any changes or additions you are planning for the course of activities.

- Please call me if anything interesting happens in class, I would appreciate your report, though it is not obligatory. We can Skype for just a few minutes and chat. However, it is important to schedule a Skype call at the end of each activity.

At the end of the implementation:

- I will collect the questionnaires from you, as well as students portfolios. Each portfolio should contain: Student cultural logs, three written productions, three reflective essays (journals), and anything else they wish to add.

In September/October 2017:

- I will contact the students directly to conduct interviews with them. It is possible that I might need their emails at that point, but we will discuss this matter when the time comes.

One last important note: through these activities, we are trying to develop students critical cultural awareness, and it is crucial that we as teachers try to remain on the fence; we should not let our own views and ideas influence those of the students. Also, we should not judge their views and beliefs as well. Our job is to help them think deep about everything happening around them, and reflect on their own self and others and understand the reasons behind their own values, beliefs, and actions, and those of others. What we are trying to do here is to offer them the knowledge and the skills they need to develop their own view of life.

APPENDIX 10: Parent Consent Form

السادة اولياء الامور المحترمين،

تحية طيبة وبعد،

انا طالبة فلسطينية مقيمة حاليا في اسبانيا بهدف اتمام رسالة الدكتوراة في علوم الانسانيات في جامعة Pompeu Fabra في برشلونة. مشروع دراستي يتعلق بموضوع التعليم العبر ثقافي (intercultural education) في صفوف اللغة الانجليزية في مدارس فلسطين. يتطلب المشروع مشاركة ابنائكم في الصف الحادي عشر في بحث تعليمي ممتع ويرجع بالفائدة عليهم.

يتضمن المشروع الفعاليات التالية:

- 1) التعرف على مفاهيم وامور حياتية تتعلق بالمجتمع والثقافات المختلفة كالتمييز الاجتماعي والصور النمطية و التسامح...الخ. وعمل بحث عنها بالاضافة الى حوار ونقاش في الصف باللغة الانجليزية مع معلم الصف.
- 2) تعبئة استمارة قبل البدء بالمشروع وعند نهاية المشروع.
- 3) عمل مقابلة أو استمارة الكترونية مع الطلاب في بداية السنة الدراسية الجديدة (تشرين اول/اكتوبر 2017).

من خلال التوقيع على هذا النموذج، فإنكم تمنحون ابنائكم الإذن بالمشاركة في هذا المشروع الدراسي، وتتيحون لي استخدام بياناتهم وتعليقاتهم في مشروع البحث الدراسي. نؤكد لكم التزامنا بأخلاقيات البحث العلمي، حيث سيتم المحافظة على خصوصية البيانات الشخصية التي يتم الحصول عليها من الطلاب. وإذا اقدمنا على نشر نتائج البحث، لن نستخدم أي من الأسماء الحقيقية، بل سيتم تقديم البيانات بشكل مجهول. لأي استفسار، يمكنكم التواصل مع ادارة المدرسة ومعلم/معلمة اللغة الانجليزية.

نشكرا لكم تعاونكم، ونأمل الافضل لطلابنا الاعزاء.

اسم الطالب/الطالبة: _____.

اسم ولي الأمر: _____.

توقيع ولي الأمر: _____.

التاريخ: _____.

Translation from Arabic¹³⁶:

Dear Parents,

Cordial greetings,

I am a Palestinian PhD student currently residing in Spain for the purpose of conducting a PhD degree in Humanities at the University of Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona. My research project is on intercultural education in English language classrooms in Palestinian schools. The study involves your children's participation in an educational and fun project that will be of benefit to them.

The project involves the following activities:

- 1) Learning and conducting research on concepts and themes related to life, society, and the different cultures, such as social injustices, stereotypes, and tolerance ...etc., in addition to holding in-class discussions in English with the teacher.
- 2) Filling in a questionnaire before the start of activities, and another at the end of the activities¹³⁷.
- 3) Answering a few interview questions or an electronic survey at the beginning of the new school year (September/October 2017)¹³⁸.

By signing this form, you give your child permission to participate in our study, and you give me permission to use his/her data and feedback in my research. We will keep data obtained from the students as confidential as possible. If we present or publish the results, we will not use any of their real names, data will be presented anonymously. For any further information, please contact the school administration or the English language teacher.

We thank you for your cooperation, and we wish all the best for our dear students.

Student's name: _____.

Parent/Guardian name: _____.

Signature: _____.

Date: _____.

¹³⁶ The consent form was written based on the common way it is done in Palestinians schools. Please note that this is roughly a word-for-word translation, as language and format in Arabic differs from English.

¹³⁷ The post test questionnaire was not part of this study, but it was collected for possible future investigations.

¹³⁸ It did not take place due to time restrictions, please see Chapter 5, Section 5.3.