

The Transformation of an English User into an Intercultural English User



Tahany Abdulaziz Aleisa

Abstract In our globalized world, intercultural competence has increasingly become an essential skill for foreign language (university) students. Literature relating interculturalism to linguistic and cultural competence is expanding; the findings suggest that the most common problem among learners in multicultural contexts is that they hold an ethnocentric attitude, as they tend to idealize their own cultures and ignore cultural diversity. This intercultural trend has motivated a new language institute at a Saudi public university to develop its curriculum based on an intercultural learning approach that aims at promoting cross-cultural sensitivity within the educational spaces by preparing EFL learners to become responsible global citizens. This chapter investigates how the English program offered for Foundation Year students integrated an intercultural syllabus, with sociocultural topics, designed to develop students' linguistic abilities and their critical thinking and intercultural skills. The chapter is based on reviewing a curriculum launched during the years of 2016–2018.

Keywords Interculturalism · EFL · Curriculum · Intercultural competence · Culture · Saudi Arabia · Communication · Language learning · Foreign language education

1 Introduction

Modern realities require knowledge of English in many jobs around the world due to constantly accelerating technological development and globalization with rapid dynamics which require education to keep up with these processes. In addition to the essential functions of mastering grammatical rules, reproducing phonetic

T. A. Aleisa (✉)
College of Education, University of Jeddah, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
e-mail: talbeiz@uj.edu.sa

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sounds, and developing communication skills, many additional components can be incorporated within the learning process and culture is one of them. Naturally, students get acquainted with the culture of many countries where the studied language is not their native language. Modern trends in building an intercultural society meet the requirements of social responsibility, and it becomes necessary to expand the cultural function throughout the learning processes. This chapter assesses an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum precisely in terms of culturalism and the intercultural aspects of this curriculum. This critical analysis will reveal the positive aspects of this curriculum, which in the future can help in the design of intercultural education.

2 Theoretical Framework

The issues and terms of culturalism and interculturality in education have recently assumed greater prominence. The concept of interculturalism was born in response to the concept of multiculturalism, which believes that each diaspora should preserve its own culture and language (Wang, 2017). Interculturalism reflects a model of integration in contexts of diversity, a way of thinking about globalized reality and intercultural dialogue, or an instrument of “positive interaction” (Catarci et al., 2020). This concept considers the multiplicity of identities and differences, but the focus is on the ways of coexistence of different cultures in the context of globalization. Thus, it turns out that interculturalism is at the equator between the concepts of multiculturalism and the theory of the “melting pot,” which implies the fusion of cultures into one new one (Elias & Mansouri, 2020). Echoing modern trends in the formation of new approaches at the intersection of disciplines, interculturalism has sought to make the best of the modern teaching methods.

The study of foreign languages, always at its core, contains communication, regardless of the approach. Vocabulary-based techniques provide sufficient rapid impact but not deep understanding (Itmeizeh & Hassan, 2020). Grammar-focused approaches are designed for more reliable and long-lasting results (Moradkhani, 2019). However, reading, listening, and communication combine approaches to teaching a foreign language. Communication, moreover, indirectly and explicitly develops several other functions and capabilities of the student: thinking skills, adaptation, flexibility, critical thinking, and pragmatic (e.g., politeness) communication skills (Khan & Alasmari, 2018). As a result, a particular type of thinking is formed from these skills, including cultural aspects. The study of a foreign language can be built on creating intercultural situations, within which the student will conduct a dialogue, be immersed in another culture, interact with it, and exchange experiences.

Nevertheless, this approach, focused on maximizing the potential for developing communication skills while considering cultural implications, is quite challenging to implement. It requires a sufficiently high teaching competence, the appropriate

training of students, the correct teaching model, and the relevance of the application (Park, 2020). The process of globalization, on the one hand, dramatically simplifies the establishment of intercultural contacts, and at the same time, creates the need to interpret socio-cultural events for a coordinated and respectful coexistence in the modern world (Yueqin, 2013). Therefore, several different techniques have already been successfully used.

First, intercultural learning is about creating an authentic atmosphere, using posters, maps, and other interactive material. The presence of another culture in the form of such artifacts within the educational process motivates students and engage them in the learning process (Makhmudov, 2020). Exposing students to the foreign culture is especially relevant in countries far from where the target language is native. Secondly, there are teaching techniques that can promote self-awareness, which are aimed at a deeper analysis of students' values and beliefs. These techniques promote cultural learning as a multi-level concept, where behaviour is only the tip of the iceberg, and values and thinking patterns are laid down at a deeper level (Toliboboeva, 2020), where understanding and recognition of differences serve as guides in communication. Third, the quiz technique in the study of new materials invites students to test their intuition and anticipate various cultural aspects in the educational process of learning a foreign language (Cinkara, 2020). Increased interest and involvement in the process are the strengths of this technique.

The fourth technique can be called drama – the straightforward process of staging intercultural scenes. Students experiment with different roles and can put themselves in the shoes of a different cultural 'other'. With the correct presentation by the teacher, while practising the language, such an interaction can engrave itself in the students' memory and, as a result, improve their intercultural sensitivity (Wuryandari, 2021). However, this technique requires a relatively long preparation period and the necessary will to participate, which not every teacher can demonstrate. Some other techniques are highly developed in universities such as project work. Students seek new information, present it in class, answer questions, and immerse themselves in the discussion. Project-based learning demonstrates highly positive results since students are encouraged to choose a topic of interest to them, which they should openly present to an audience and defend (Alavinia & Rahimi, 2019). However, traditionally training students in research skills only contributes to the grasp of the theoretical material without giving students ample time to try it in practice or to tackle the cultural aspects.

It is also worth considering the vast variability of views on the culture of a particular country. There are many of them: attitude towards foreigners, political system, public transport, geographical history, demographic situation, behaviour in restaurants, attitude towards the elderly, and much more (Çetin et al., 2017). The student should understand the phrases accepted by the etiquette of a given culture and beware of taboo expressions and actions to be able to perform appropriately in intercultural encounters. Unravelling the tangle of specific causes and effects leads to a much deeper understanding of culture and promotes student involvement in the learning process (Kostikova et al., 2018). In informal communication situations, grammatical incompetence cannot be a serious barrier to effective communication

as it can be easily compensated for by developing a sociocultural know-how that promotes a respectful and polite attitude towards the interlocutors.

Nowadays, intercultural interaction is becoming more and more relevant. Firstly, social networks are now connecting many people worldwide, and technology allows communicating via video link with any person on Earth who has the Internet. Moreover, students' communication on social media with people from different cultures helps improve their skills of learning English as a foreign language (Özdemir, 2017). Secondly, a global disaster in the form of a pandemic has rallied representatives of different states to fight against a common enemy. Distance education was forcibly worked out, which opened up opportunities for interactivity without being tied to one place. Of course, it is challenging to replace face-to-face communication with video communication since a specific part of non-verbal signs is lost, voice intonation is distorted, and much more (Sutiyatno, 2018). Nevertheless, in the process of distance learning, various advantages of this approach have been identified, which can be applied together with conventional classroom teaching. Technologies can and do contribute to the development of intercultural relations, in connection with which one should always consider the possibility of their implementation in the educational process.

Nevertheless, implementing culture in the educational process of learning a foreign language is not without specific problems. The interpretation of certain linguistic expressions in the English language requires a reflection of the cultural context they originate from. Lack of such intercultural knowledge can lead to misunderstandings or more severe consequences (Vetrinskaya & Dmitrenko, 2017). Moreover, the cultural aspects of language are not limited to patterns of behaviour and the context of phrases; non-verbal sign language also plays an important role. For example, in some cultures, it is customary to express interest in the interlocutor's speech with a continuous gaze directed at him, while this gesture is impolite in other cultures (Wahyuni, 2018). In this regard, the models for the integration of culture in the foreign language learning process should be implemented very carefully in a way that prudently attends to the complexity of the issue, as described above. Given all of the above, the EFL curriculum intended in this chapter will be critically described and assessed for unlocking the potential of intercultural interaction among students.

3 Critical Analysis

An analysis of the language curriculum of the English language institute (ELI) at a public Saudi university begins with the principles and vision that guided its founders. First of all, it should be noted that a relatively large amount of attention is paid to the development of thinking and communication skills. By involving students in critical dialogue, they can develop research and critical thinking skills necessary to perform as responsible global citizens. Such a diverse approach can consider almost all the critical roles of a student for the development of cultural interaction in the

framework of language learning. The ELI launched its newly structured EFL curriculum serving Foundation Year students. The two suggested levels target a blended framework composed of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) levels (B1-B2-C1) and the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB 4-5-6-7-8). The ELI has a vision of serving the wider community. It is committed to providing the students with a progressive language curriculum infused with thinking and communication skills. This mission is pursued through uniquely contextualized research and professional staff development which also extends to corporate business (Aburizaizah, 2021). Student engagement is a significant part of the curriculum as students will be engaged through the following components which lead to three significant categories of students' behaviour (intellectual work, engagement activities, student talk) as described below:

3.1 Intellectual Work

- Students' classroom work embodies substantive intellectual engagement (reading, thinking, writing, problem-solving and meaning-making).
- Students take ownership of their learning to develop, assess and refine their thinking.

3.2 Engagement Strategies

- Engagement strategies capitalize on and build upon student's academic background, life experience, culture, and language to support rigorous and culturally relevant learning.
- Engagement strategies encourage equitable and purposeful student participation and ensure that all students have access to and are expected to participate in learning.

3.3 Student Talk

- Students learn best by actively using the language they are learning.
- Student talk reflects genre-specific conventions of thinking and ways of communication.
- Student talk involves substantive intellectual work.

Students who take English as a mandatory subject are enrolled in the Foundation Year Program as a requirement before transiting to their subsequent academic specializations within the various university disciplines. The syllabus in its

semi-decentralized mode is organized at two English levels (levels 110 & 120) and around three overarching themes- Community, Academics, and Employment. These themes are developed in depth during the academic year through the study of related topics. These are explored in correlation with vocabulary development, as it is an essential component of the English program and a key factor in receptive and productive language development. A comprehensive and extensive list of vocabulary words has been designed for each level. The syllabus goes beyond the four core language learning abilities (i.e., writing, reading, speaking, and listening) and promotes presentation and thinking skills. Since one of the main goals of English curriculum is to develop students' communicative skills in relation to their future careers, many themes focus on business, society, and employment.

For a detailed analysis, it is necessary to disassemble the topics of the lessons and each aspect that they relate to. Students at the 110 level are expected to have a B1 level of English already and, as a result, be able to navigate the most common travel situations. This fact means that the program provides a deeper understanding of culture and intercultural relations that go beyond meeting simple travel needs, such as situations in restaurants, shops, and hotels. By involving students in role-play activities, they are trained to develop a clear idea about intercultural exigencies that transcend mere teaching about surface-level cultural features, such as tourist destinations and cultural traditions (Carbone, 2017). Therefore, a critical review of the language program will take this detail into account. Table 1 below provides an overview of some topics that students were encouraged to explore at both levels.

At level 110, the first topic of the lesson is about society, and “rules around the world” (see Tables 2 and 3) is chosen as the topic of discussion. The topic is quite extensive, but it is generally suitable for a good start and for involving students in the intercultural learning process. The interculturalisation process is raised immediately in the first lesson by allowing students to explore different “rules around the world”, without trying to cover the third-party vocabulary of emerging sub-topics. The vocabulary sheet provided can be significantly expanded through student research, such as the names of gestures or descriptions of mannerisms. In addition, the lesson must devote time to tone control and attitude involved. For the development of polite intercultural relations, this is one of the main aspects that allow a person to show their good side at once (Estévez-Saá, 2017).

It is noteworthy that the ELI English language program not only works with classical texts, dialogues, and other traditional forms of presenting information; it also includes tasks that require making a mind-map, working with lists, interviews, and presentations. Moreover, many of these assignments require some degree of critical media literacy, which is most important in our interconnected modern world (Shmakova et al., 2021). Involving students in project-based group presentations promotes students' public speaking skills, trains them in effective learning and promotes awareness of audience-oriented perspectives in public dialogue.

In the second week of this program, issues of the ecology of the planet are raised in terms of garbage handling and healthy eating (see Tables 4 and 5). Environmental responsibility in our time is put on a par with social responsibility, the requirements

Table 1 Culture-based topics and learning outcomes for levels 110 & 120

Topic	Summary of student learning outcomes (SLOs)
Rules around the world	<p>Make predictions and identify key information related to “rules around the world” based on prior knowledge and through skimming and scanning relevant texts and other educational materials.</p> <p>Map a visual outline of home/family rules and write an outline of home/family rules.</p> <p>Give short presentations to introduce some rules.</p>
The other face of trash	<p>Make predictions about a content related to “trash in community and how recycling makes a difference”.</p> <p>Connect prior knowledge to their predictions and identify and analyse key information from info-graphs.</p> <p>Brainstorm environmental problems related to trash and identify (causes and effects) and write sentences that include giving advice and making suggestions to the brainstormed problems.</p> <p>Present a list of recyclable materials and provide suggestions on how to reutilize them.</p>
We serve more than food!	<p>Make predictions, identify and analyse key information related to “Uncommon restaurants and supermarkets around the world”.</p> <p>Write a list of requests that can be emailed to any unusual restaurant and/or food market, asking for more information on their products and services and providing reasons for these requests.</p> <p>Present a list of requests which includes different orders and requests when dining or visiting an uncommon restaurant or supermarket.</p>
Tough jobs	<p>Make predictions and find key information related to tough jobs.</p> <p>Write a job description “as an employer/company owner” of the roles and responsibilities in that job.</p> <p>Present a specific TOUGH job of your preference to the class.</p>
Most expensive laptops in the world	<p>Make predictions, identify and analyse key information related to “the most expensive laptops in the world”.</p> <p>Write a summary on features of laptops over desktops.</p> <p>Present mind-maps or clusters where a comparison between two laptops is displayed.</p>
How photographers make Connections	<p>Make predictions and identify and analyse key information related to “the industry of photography and how photographers create unique moments”, including the language of images, photography quality, inferring emotions and moods within photographs, uncommon and most astonishing photographs taken around the world.</p> <p>Write an essay describing selected photography.</p> <p>Present descriptions of a picture indicating possible implied meanings.</p>
Global university education	<p>Make predictions, identify and analyse key information related to “global university education”. Information includes global trends in university education around the world, greatest development in universities, remarkable ranking of programs, colleges and academic fields.</p> <p>Write an essay comparing/contrasting two universities, colleges, programs using patterns of exemplifications.</p> <p>Design and present an info-graph which compares two universities, colleges, programs, fields of study based on specific categories.</p>

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Topic	Summary of student learning outcomes (SLOs)
Food as communication	<p>Make predictions and find key information related to “food as communication around the world”.</p> <p>Write a descriptive summary of a popular dish in a selected region and/or country.</p> <p>Give short presentations of a popular dish in a restaurant.</p>
Future living	<p>Make predictions and find key information related to “future living”.</p> <p>Write sentences about future predictions (students give their opinions).</p> <p>Present future technologies of their preference.</p>
Recruitment-the gold of business	<p>Make predictions and find key information from a specific content related to “recruitment and hiring human resources”.</p> <p>Write a job description.</p> <p>Present a summary of a selected job description in a form of a visual presentation including different required skills and qualifications.</p>
E-business revolution	<p>Make predictions, identify and analyse key information related to “E-business revolution and the internet shopping”.</p> <p>Write a summary interpreting a visual graphic or a chart on E-business.</p> <p>Deliver presentations using data from visual graphics.</p>
Social responsibility	<p>Make predictions and find key information related to “social responsibility”.</p> <p>Write a summary about a selected corporate initiative that promotes “social responsibility”.</p> <p>Brainstorm and present a social responsibility initiative that promotes “local social responsibility”.</p>
Take a selfie	<p>Make predictions and find key information related to “the modern face of taking selfies (self-portrait photographs)”.</p> <p>Describe in writing “injuries while taking a selfie”.</p> <p>Deliver a short presentation “describing the worst/best selfie you have ever taken”.</p>
Saudi Vision 2030	<p>Make predictions and find key information from a specific content related to “Saudi Vision 2030”.</p> <p>Write an essay on personal goals that fit into the Saudi Vision 2030.</p> <p>Present a mind map on individual contributions to participate in the Saudi Vision 2030.</p>
Second language learning	<p>Make predictions and find key information from a specific content related to (second language learning).</p> <p>Write a descriptive summary of a selected foreign language.</p> <p>Interview a classmate on the difficulties of learning a second language.</p>
Personality	<p>Make predictions and find key information from a specific content related to personalities through skimming and scanning.</p> <p>Write 2–3 paragraphs on describing a feature of personal character that a learner finds important.</p> <p>Design a presentation on how to describe one’s personality.</p>
International tests of English	<p>Make predictions and find key information from a specific content related to “the different proficiency tests of English” through skimming and scanning.</p> <p>Write a 2–3 paragraph composition on “how to improve language proficiency and increase test score”.</p> <p>Present a summary of language proficiency requirements in local and international universities.</p>

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)


Topic	Summary of student learning outcomes (SLOs)
The culture of coffee	Make predictions and find key information from a specific content related to coffee as a global phenomenon and its traditions around the world through skimming and scanning. Write a paragraph summary of a 2-page article on pros and cons of coffee. Present a short description of a favourite coffee.
Best business leaders ever	Make predictions and find key information from a specific content related to “best business leaders ever” through skimming and scanning. Write a 2-paragraph narrative about a selected business leader.
Reading for quality minds	Make predictions and find key information from a specific content related to reading for quality minds through skimming and scanning. Write a paragraph summary of a 3-pages article/research on “what reading does to our minds/how reading affects our brains.”
Problem- solving	Make predictions and find key information from a specific content related to problem solving through skimming and scanning. Write 2–3 paragraphs solving a problem, following problem solving steps as guided by the instructor. Give presentations identifying a problem and make suggestions based on a written or audio scenario.

of which must be met by both large companies and educational institutions (Aarnio-Linnanvuori, 2019). Naturally, garbage is a hot issue of etiquette in many cultures and countries, so tackling such a global issue will sensitise students to the need to be responsible global citizens by doing their parts in the protection of our endangered planet. Brainstorming technique can be used to fill gaps in students’ knowledge in relation to vocabulary development and ‘factual’ matters. The development of intercultural communication skills is nurtured by addressing the issue from a global perspective.

In the weeks that follow, students also deal with business and study topics. At these stages, their ability to express their own opinions is developed and evaluated. The students are trained to be able to maintain a reasoned dialogue with their interlocutors while defending their arguments in a rational way. The intercultural approach also includes adjusting one’s own speech following the possibility of showing respect for the interlocutor’s views (perspective shifting) and avoiding cultural conflicts (Steinfatt & Millette, 2019). This section also develops critical thinking skills by training students to be more open to cultural diversity by reading texts about people from different cultural and national backgrounds. Academic topics alternate with business and employment topics so that the cultural aspects discussed during classes are associated with all spheres of human life where contact with strangers is required. This program also progressively develops verbal skills of description, storytelling, and reasoning. Group work fosters the team orientation and collective reasoning often required in the workplace (Bravo et al., 2019; Feldman, 2017).

The theme of education is also presented in this program, with reference to cross-cultural diversities in global contexts. As a result, education and the specific features of its process form a significant part of a person’s sociocultural identity. By understanding this socialising aspect of education, students can look at language learning

Table 2 Main learning outcomes and vocabulary (rules around the world)

Pacing guide – week 1				
Level	ELI_110			
Total class hours	18			
Total ONLINE enriching hours	4			
Target levels	CEFR (B1-B2) – CLB (6) – IELTS (4.5)			
Essential thinking skill	Making predictions Activating prior knowledge			
Essential study skill	Skimming and scanning Mind-mapping Note-taking			
Essential presentation skill	Using proper voice tone Using proper posture			
Theme	Community			
	Topic: Rules around the world			
Material	Available on ELI E-inventory & extra materials as provided by instructor			
Vocabulary list	Relax (relax the rules) Compulsory Recommend Especially Competent Appropriately	Respect Awkward Elderly Rude Rule(s) (n.) Civilized Thorough	Convert Implement Trial Manners Behaviour Etiquette	Actually Dangerous Enough License Gestures Block (v.)
Main SLOs				
By the end of this week, students can:				
Make predictions about content related to “rules around the world”.				
Connect prior knowledge to their predictions.				
Find key information from a specific content (recording, passage) related to “rules around the world”.				
Use modal verbs of prohibition in meaningful contexts.				
Ask wh-questions in meaningful contexts.				
Use suffixes that change verbs into nouns in meaningful contexts.				
Use listed vocabulary in meaningful contexts and sentences.				
Write an outline of home/family rules.				
Interview a classmate and present home/family rules to the class.				

from a multi-perspective relativist stance. By realising how languages display huge diversity, students learn to respect the idiolect and sociolect particularities of each language variety and its native speakers. However, various aspects of linguistic manifestations must be explored explicitly (Shaules, 2019). In addition, this section provides an opportunity to sharpen critical thinking when comparing the two universities in the writing part of the week.

Table 3 Specific learning outcomes (rules around the world)

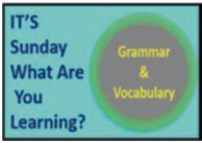


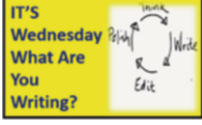


Weekly plan – 1	
Skill/language	Specific SLOs
	<p>Use modal verbs of prohibition in meaningful contexts: <u>Make-stop-keep-prevent-encourage-discourage-expect.</u> Ask wh-questions in meaningful contexts: <u>Who, what, when, where, why</u> Use suffixes that change verbs into nouns in meaningful contexts. Use listed vocabulary for the week in meaningful sentences and contexts. Identify parts of speech.</p>
	<p>Make predictions about a listening text related to “rules around the world” based on prior knowledge, supporting visuals and other cues. Identify key information through skimming & scanning. Identify the basic genre or type of a listening text.</p>
	<p>Make predictions about a reading text on “rules around the world” based on prior knowledge, supporting visuals and other cues. Find key information using skimming and scanning.</p>
	<p>Map a visual outline of home/family rules. Write an outline of home/family rules, using modal verbs of prohibition and proper nouns. (6 rules only) Use grammatical patterns for this week and necessary vocabulary. Employ proper rules related to spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Guidelines for instructors: Instructor provides a model outline/mind-map. Students brainstorm ideas on mind map. Main task: Students produce the first draft of writing an “outline” of own home/family rules. At home, students edit and rewrite their work based on instructor’s feedback and upload/send their final drafts to the instructor. Instructor scores students’ written pieces and hands to students next class. Students compile their work in their portfolios.</p>
	<p>In pairs, interview a classmate to find out key information about home/family rules through using wh-questions (3 questions only per student). Take notes on classmates’ answers. Give a short presentation to introduce a classmate’s home/family rules. Use proper tone and posture during presentation. Guidelines for instructors: Instructor divides students in pairs. Instructor provides sample interview questions. Students brainstorm interview questions on worksheets. Main task: Students present their classmates’ answers and instructor scores their presentations using a scaled checklist. Scored sheets are kept with the instructor till the following week. Students compile their work in their portfolios.</p>

Table 4 Main learning outcomes and vocabulary (the other face of trash)

Pacing guide – week 2				
Level	ELI_110			
Total class hours	18			
Total ONLINE enriching hours	4			
Target levels	CEFR (B1-B2) – CLB (6) – IELTS (4.5)			
Essential thinking skill	Making predictions Activating prior knowledge Identifying causes and effects			
Essential study skill	Skimming and scanning Graph analysis			
Essential presentation skill	Using proper voice tone. Using proper posture.			
Theme	Community			
	Topic: The other face of trash			
Material	Available on ELI E-inventory & extra materials as provided by instructor			
Vocabulary list	Guaranteed Incineration Properly Nutrients Outcome Equal Global	Pressing Bacteria Disease Disgusting Forest Dump Ever	Ocean (Un)Treated Contaminate Acid rain Cause Community	Garbage Environment Recycling Energy Disposal

MAIN SLOs

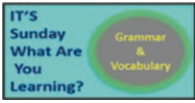

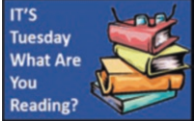
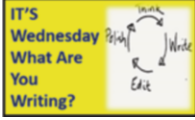


By the end of this week, students can:

- Make predictions about a content related to “trash in community and how recycling makes a difference”.
- Connect prior knowledge to their predictions.
- Identify and analyse key information related to “trash in community” from an info-graph.
- Identify and use language patterns of giving advice and making suggestions.
- Use listed vocabulary in meaningful sentences and contexts.
- Brainstorm environmental problems related to trash, and identify causes and effects.
- Write sentences that include giving advice and making suggestions to the brainstormed problems.
- Present a list of recyclable materials and provide suggestions on how to reutilize them.

Given the reciprocity of globalization and technological development processes, many employers in the modern world target specialists remotely. This fact is facilitated by the pandemic, which led to forced self-isolation. During this time, various means of communication have developed, making it possible to work comfortably from anywhere in the world, conduct video conferences, and exchange instant messages and information. In this regard, intercultural learning has become a necessary component of foreign language learning as employment situations have increasingly become a global institutional space. If the earlier cultural dialogue was

Table 5 Specific learning outcomes (the other face of trash)

Weekly plan – 2

Skill/language	Specific SLOs
	<p>Identify and use patterns of giving advice and making suggestions in meaningful sentences and contexts as: <u>Should, shouldn't, ought to, could</u></p> <p>Use listed vocabulary for the week in meaningful sentences and contexts.</p> <p>Identify parts of speech.</p>
	<p>Make predictions about a listening text related to “trash in community” based on prior knowledge, supporting visuals and other cues.</p> <p>Identify purpose, main ideas, specific details through skimming & scanning.</p> <p>Identify the basic genre or type of a listening text.</p>
	<p>Make predictions related to “trash in community” from related info-graphs and based on prior knowledge & supporting visuals.</p> <p>Identify and analyse key information from info-graphs.</p> <p>Identify causes and effects.</p>
	<p>In pairs, brainstorm a list of 2 environmental problems related to trash.</p> <p>In pairs, brainstorm their causes and effects.</p> <p>In pairs, write a list of 5 sentences that include giving advice and making suggestions to the brainstormed problems.</p> <p>Use grammatical patterns for this week and necessary vocabulary.</p> <p>Notice proper rules related to spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.</p> <p>Guidelines for instructors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor divides students into pairs. Instructor provides a model answer. Students brainstorm ideas on worksheets. Main task: Students produce ‘first draft’ of their writing. At home, students edit and rewrite their work based on the instructor’s feedback and upload/send their final drafts to the instructor. Instructor scores students’ written pieces and hands to students the following class. Students compile their work in their portfolios.
 	<p>In groups, brainstorm a list of <u>2 recyclable materials</u> in environment/ community.</p> <p>In groups, present 3 suggestions on how to reutilize each recycled item.</p> <p>Use language patterns of giving advice and making suggestions and necessary vocabulary.</p> <p>Use proper tone and posture during presentation.</p> <p>Guidelines for instructors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor divides students in groups. Instructor provides model brainstorming techniques/shapes. Students brainstorm ideas on worksheets. Instructor gives instant feedback. <i>Main task:</i> Students present their brainstorming output and the instructor scores their presentations using a scaled checklist. Scored brainstorming sheets are kept with the instructor till the following week. Students compile their work in their portfolios.

possible only in companies of the scale of the international market or while travelling, now it is available to almost everyone (Dauletbekova et al., 2020). In this regard, the importance of intercultural communicative skills needed to appropriately interact with other co-workers should be prioritised.

This program also touches upon issues of the future, telemedicine, and technologies of the future. Given that it was difficult to imagine the current progress even twenty years ago, the questions are relevant. Considering them in the context of intercultural relations, new, rarely discussed aspects arise. Many educational materials are devoted to the development of technology and the works of science fiction (Gravemeijer et al., 2017). However sociocultural issues of the future are rarely raised. In this program, it is necessary to pay more attention to this topic to promote students' prediction and problem-solving skills.

In the third week of the 120 English language program, discussion of previously tackled issues deepens by encouraging students to think about corporate responsibility in the workplace, using the brainstorming technique. Corporate responsibility includes social and environmental issues, etiquette, and respect for the multicultural and pluriversal worldviews workers may bring to the workplace. Developing the topic of intercultural relations in the fourth week, students raise the topic of selfies. It would seem that the once-popular trend has become entrenched in the culture of most of the people active on the Internet. Students are invited to conduct a more thorough and detailed analysis of this cellphone craze phenomenon from a cross-cultural perspective by unwinding its history, and understanding the possible views about selfie-taking across global contexts. This topic presents the teacher with an ample opportunity to sensitise students to the cultural implications of globalization. Moreover, students will learn to distinguish between global trends that may be unacceptable for a particular culture. In order to avoid unpleasant situations during intercultural dialogue, the study of this aspect can lead a group of students to a deeper analysis of such global trends. In this sense, the issue of globalisation is explored in relation to cultural diversity to help students to decentre and relativise the soundness of culture-based attitudinal behaviours.

In the sixth week, students discuss the Saudi Vision 2030 program, which addresses many environmental and social issues (Thompson, 2017). Here students tackle several issues pertaining to areas such as education, ecology, Saudi dependence on oil to generate income, the creation of more jobs for women, the advancing of the tourism sector in Saudi Arabia, and healthcare. This course unit contains a set of reforms that promise to 'modernise' the country and improve the wellbeing of Saudi citizens. Here, cultural dialogue has several dimensions that are worth considering. First, it is a dialogue between the state and the people: how much will the new changes affect the established conservative traditions? Secondly, this is an invitation to explore how such ambitious plans can be achieved and in what way they might set a model to emulate for other neighbouring or foreign countries. The ability to meta-analyse is essential for students to develop critical thinking.

Another topic addressed in the 120 course is the importance of studying a foreign language. Developing skills in describing a foreign language contributes to a deeper understanding of its structure. However, often in the language itself, many cultural aspects are accessible only to those who understand this language at a high level. We are talking about the etymology of words or contextual expressions and the assumptions that can be concluded based on the material studied.

In this program, the gradual transition from global issues to more local ones, up to the study of personality, is implemented. Students are encouraged to express their views about different contemporary societal issues from a cultural and personal perspective. Self-awareness is a life-long critical skill as it is grounded in an intuitive sense of emotional intelligence. A high indicator of this skill is appreciated in many professions and among leaders. Moreover, leadership qualities are discussed further in the training plan as a separate topic.

Human resource management is a responsible task. The student should be prepared not only for stressful situations but for possible situations of disagreement in which they will have to make difficult decisions. Conflicts can arise due to misunderstanding or failure to appropriately understand cross-cultural conventions and rules. Hence, students are prepared not only for ordinary situations of reasoning and communication in which cultural issues are embedded. As future leaders, they need to be able to act as cultural mediators and help resolve such conflicts, taking into account each party's diverse interests.

Finally, the program moves from leadership skills to a concluding discussion of the cognitive skills that develop with reading. Here, the topic of self-awareness continues; students explore themselves under challenging situations and look for ways to become effective readers. Completing the course with a discussion of further development can contribute to students' continuous learning and involvement in the intercultural learning process. After defending the final group projects, a test is carried out according to the program to determine the new level of students' knowledge. With proper teaching and support of teaching materials, the results of the program would be satisfactory.

4 Discussion

The program is relatively well structured and affects the main aspects of teaching a foreign English language. The program covers all general and more advanced grammar topics. The vocabulary is represented by a somewhat limited number of words for each unit; however, constant tasks with in-depth research of the topic imply a more significant expansion of the students' vocabulary. Each unit includes reading, listening, writing, and speaking on a chosen topic. Expanded use of brainstorming, mind-map, presentations, and infographics brings additional interactivity and allows better understanding of the language and the skills necessary for professional aptitude.

On the development of intercultural competence and intercultural relations, in general, the course meets the requirements of effective intercultural learning, touching on the most pressing issues. Extensive topics are covered in curriculum 110; critical discussions of controversial topics are encouraged as the level of students advances in curriculum 120. The structure is consistent; however, the disclosure of some topics may be criticized. First, the topic of culture, as such, is not touched upon when discussing the future. Topics such as advertising, restaurants, coffee and much else illuminate the types of the culture of many countries and peoples. However, the future is being discussed in terms of technology. As labour automation and other technological issues are inevitable processes of globalisation, the social and cultural aspects need to be discussed by students in class Socratic circles.

Secondly, although the course is focused on developing the future career of students and is more focused on issues of employment and professional skills, there are no explicit topics with a discussion of culture. Cultures such as cuisine, travel, attitude to the environment, and many other things are touched upon in the program to varying degrees. However, no study time is allocated to define the category or concept of culture itself. Since the program should be focused on the development of interculturalism, students need to be trained in becoming cultural mediators. In this vein, the curriculum addresses international education, culture-sensitive leadership, self-awareness and empathy towards cultural others. The definition of culture should also be included in discussion topics to highlight better the themes of religion and art, values, and traditions, which also have a significant impact on the formation of an individual's personality and are the regulator for many of their attitudes and behaviours. Students should be trained to develop effective critical thinking skills to advance their views in a rational way in environments of conflict of opinion.

5 Conclusion

Studying English at the university is not devoid of specific problems, but every year the development of pedagogical methods, including those oriented towards the promotion of intercultural competence might facilitate learners' overall competence. The EFL program delineated in this chapter aims at transforming students into intercultural mediators and contributes to the development of their sociolinguistic skills necessary for easy performance in workplace environments. Students are trained to be fluent in the foreign language, improve their meaning negotiation skills while interacting with their interlocutors, and develop emotional intelligence, critical thinking, and leadership skills. While an implicit promotion of native-speakerism is challenged in most lingua franca teaching contexts and EFL textbooks, Saudi English curriculum developers tend to adopt a more English as an International Language-informed pedagogy to prepare learners to become successful intercultural mediators.

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Tahany Abdulaziz Aleisa (Ed D, the University of Pittsburgh, USA) currently works as Professor in EFL Education at the Faculty of Education, University of Jeddah. Her recent research is a co-authored paper published at *Comparative Education Review*. Her research interests include EFL literacy, cultural awareness, and educational policies. Email: talbeiz@uj.edu.sa