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Carrera de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa

A Compilation of Ecuadorian Literature to teach English to Senior High School Students

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Resumen

Este trabajo tiene como objetivo principal compilar una lista de textos basados en la literatura ecuatoriana para que puedan ser usados en las clases de inglés como una herramienta que ayude a los estudiantes a mejorar la adquisición del inglés como lengua extranjera. Para la selección de dichos textos se aplicó encuestas a 32 estudiantes de bachillerato con el propósito de determinar sus posturas con respecto a la implementación de material cultural relacionado con la literatura ecuatoriana en las clases de inglés, así como para identificar sus preferencias en cuanto a géneros literarios y sus intereses. También se entrevistó a los profesores de inglés para obtener información respecto a la importancia que le otorgan a la literatura ecuatoriana como herramienta dentro del aula de clases. Los resultados obtenidos permitieron compilar una lista de cinco textos que son apropiados para enseñar inglés tomando en consideración los intereses y el nivel lingüístico de los estudiantes de bachillerato.

Palabras clave: Conocimiento cultural. Inglés. Lengua extranjera. Literatura ecuatoriana.



Abstract

The main objective of this work is to compile a list of texts based on Ecuadorian literature and culture in order to use them as a tool to improve students' acquisition of English as a foreign language. For the selection of these texts, surveys were applied to 32 high school students with the purpose of determining their position regarding the implementation of cultural material related to Ecuadorian literature in the English class, as well as to identify their preferences regarding literary genres and their interests. Additionally, English teachers were interviewed in order to gather information about the importance they place on Ecuadorian literature and culture as a tool to facilitate English learning. The results obtained allowed to compile a list of five texts that are appropriate for teaching English to high school senior students, taking into consideration the interests and linguistic level of the students.

Keywords: Cultural awareness. English. Ecuadorian Literature. Local culture.



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A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrea Lara".

Andrea Aurora Lara Ramírez

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my mother –who is my greatest inspiration- and to my two fathers, who helped me become the person I am today. To my grandmother Dalinda M., who never got to meet the person I became. And to Saulo Vanegas, who supported me through thick and thin. Thank you.



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Introduction

In 2016 the Ecuadorian curriculum for English as a Foreign Language introduced ‘Communication and Cultural Awareness’ as one of the five curricular threads that guide English education. The purpose of its introduction was to foster cultural awareness and to facilitate English learning through familiar contexts. Therefore, the main objective of this work is to compile a list of texts based on Ecuadorian literature in order to use them as a tool to improve students’ acquisition of English as a foreign language.

This document consists of five chapters. Chapter one deals with the background and states the problem that this paper aims to sort out. It identifies the research questions and the objectives that guided the document.

Chapter two references the concepts and research studies that were the foundation for this paper. It describes the benefits of integrating local-cultural material in the English classroom, and how students from other parts of the world have reacted such material. It sets forth the methods that are used for teaching about culture and highlights the good results that literature has had in this field. Finally, it provides criteria for selecting literary texts that students can work with.

Chapter three discusses the methodology that was used for collecting data and describes the instruments that were applied for this end. It states how the data collected was analyzed, sorted and organized. Chapter four shows the results of each instrument. This section is divided into three parts, which describe each of the applied instruments and the results obtained from them.



In chapter five the conclusions of this project are written down, as well as recommendations for future research. The list of literary texts that was compiled as the final achievement of this research paper can be found at the end of the appendices.



Chapter 1

Description of the research

1.1. Justification

1.1.1. Background

The Ecuadorian English curriculum that was implemented in 2016 added “Communication and Cultural Awareness” as one of its central axes for teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in primary and secondary school. The curriculum states that, “The Communication and cultural awareness thread aims to cultivate in learners the skills they need to study their world, to understand past and present social dimensions of life, to fulfill their civic responsibility of respecting and celebrating difference and to gain perspectives on, as well as question, their own cultural practices” (Ministerio de Educación, 2016, p.4).

Consequently, this new curriculum provides students with an intercultural background that is oriented to prioritize the understanding of the learner’s own culture and local background in order to approach foreign cultures in a more dynamic way. For this reason, one of the most challenging goals in the Ecuadorian EFL curriculum is to teach English in a way that reinforces students’ cultural identity. This approach is supported by Lessard-Clouston (1997) who claims that cultural awareness is essential to develop the way in which learners understand the dynamic nature of the target language in relation to their own culture. This aspect is especially relevant as Haboud (2009) stated that ignoring students’ cultural identity leads to poor performance in school, whereas the incorporation of the students’ culture into the school program results in better performance and achievement.



However, despite the closeness that students have to their socio-cultural context in Ecuador, high school students have a very poor understanding of their culture, especially in relation to literature (BSG, 2015). It is important to remark that even though learners were born into the culture and are familiar with it, they require a more distant and general look on their own culture to start reflecting on it before the target language's culture is introduced (Kramsch, 1993 as cited in Uddin, 2014). That is why teaching Ecuadorian culture in EFL settings is likely to facilitate the learning of the target language.

Regarding this matter, O'Dowd (2004) found out that literature is a very effective tool in order to teach culture as all literature is a reflection of a society, its background, history, beliefs, notions, and ideology, and it represents the way in which people have regarded their culture throughout time. For example, Ecuadorian literature is characterized by representing the way in which the common people live (Queirolo, 2008). Thus, through the use of Ecuadorian tales, novels, short stories and literature in general, students might be able to relate to their cultural heritage in a better way. Moreover, literature is a relevant and popular tool in the EFL classroom because it enhances basic language skills and areas, such as reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar (Murat, 2005). This aspect results really useful for students learning a foreign language. Additionally, when students learn about things that they are already familiar with their interest increases and it becomes easier for them to make meaningful connections and learn.

Thereby, by attempting to enhance students' performance in English through the use of Ecuadorian literature, the curricular approach to English learning would be in line with the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach, which stimulates teachers to deal with content subjects and teach them through a foreign language. Its aim is dual-focused, as it intends for students to learn the subject while simultaneously learning a foreign language



(Marsh, 1994). This approach is considered increasingly important because it targets two aspects that are the basis of a globalized society: the learning of a foreign language, and an improvement in their students' communicative skills (Lesca, 2012)

1.1.2. Statement of the problem

The teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has traditionally been a matter of getting to know not only the language but also its culture, as Byram and Fleming (1998) state. This perspective is the most popular one among teachers and linguists alike (Uddin, 2014), and it is based on the idea that English, like any other language, is “a means of communication and a carrier of culture” (Ngugi, 1946, p. 4), which means that language cannot exist independently from culture. Furthermore, Uddin (2014) believes that learning a new language without familiarity with its culture remains incomplete.

These approaches, however, leave out the learner's own culture, background, and values, as Rovira (2008) stated. This author also claimed that learning a new language, and thereby its culture, often results in the dismissal of the learner's own roots and identity, which leads to underachievement and failure in school (Haboud, 2009). Therefore, relegating Ecuadorian culture in favor of American culture in EFL classes might be linked to the poor performance that Ecuadorian high school students have in the subject of English (“El inglés: punto débil de los estudiantes”, 2013).

According to the EF report of 2017 presented in Quito, Ecuadorian high school students struggle with English and maintain a low-performance level, like that of previous years (Heredia, 2017). According to this report, Ecuador was ranked 55th out of the eighty countries that participated in the English Proficiency (EF) test. In addition, high school students of 600 different institutions around the country took this same test, achieving an overall score of 49 over



100, which means that the level of English of high school students in the country is average at best (Heredia, 2017).

It is implied that students find this subject to be particularly difficult, as a newspaper article by El Diario online journal (2013) states. According to the article, English is the weak spot of most Ecuadorian students. In Santo Domingo, students that were interviewed said that they are likely to fail this subject as they consider that it is too difficult, monotonous, and not interesting (“El inglés: punto débil de los estudiantes”, 2013). Consequently, there might exist a relationship between the students’ lack of interest in the subject and neglected cultural background, and the poor performance they show in class.

Thereby, this research will ask students and teachers alike about their perspectives and willingness to include Ecuadorian literature in the English class as a tool to facilitate learning, enhance performance and pick up the students’ interest in the language through texts that are relevant regarding their culture.



1.2. Research Questions

- ✓ What are the perspectives of Ecuadorian high school students and English teachers about integrating Ecuadorian literature into the EFL classroom as a means to enhance English learning?
- ✓ How can cultural awareness of Ecuadorian Literature help students improve their performance in English?

1.3. Objectives

1.3.1 General objective

To elaborate a compilation of Ecuadorian literature to enhance A2 students' English acquisition.

1.3.2. Specific objectives

- To determine what topics related to Ecuadorian literature high school students in a school in the city of Cuenca are interested in.
- To select translated pieces of Ecuadorian literature that are suitable for senior high school students in the city of Cuenca based on their preference.
- To determine if English teachers consider important to integrate Ecuadorian literature in their classes and if they do it.



Chapter 2

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1. Definitions of culture and identity

One of the main axes of this research deals with the concept of culture, which is a term that encompasses several different elements.

The term ‘culture’ was first used in 1871 by Edward Tylor, who stated that culture is “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor, 1871). Thus, it could be said that culture is everything. It refers to the beliefs and values of people, the way in which they think, how they behave and understand the world around them. It is the language, folklore, history, and even behavioral patterns that a group of people shares. It may be individual and specific to one determined person, or it may be global, in order to refer to a family, community, region, country or geographical location. Thus, “culture equals identity” (Tawfiq, 2017, p.164).

Consequently, what do we understand as ‘identity’? DeVos (1992) defines identity as “the individual’s concept of the self, as well as the individual’s interpretation of the social definition of the self, within his/her inner group and larger society”. Regarding that matter, Warschauer (2001) stated that “Language has always played an important role in the formation and expression of identity. The role of language and dialect in identity construction is becoming even more central in the postmodern era, as other traditional markers of identity, including race, are being destabilized” (as cited Cumming, 2012). Crystal (2000) summarized this idea by adding that language is the main register of identity since it expresses cultural distinctiveness.



2.2. Teaching target language culture vs. teaching local culture

Is it advisable to relegate one's culture, and therefore identity, in order to acquire a foreign language? Experts have three different views on this matter. First, Byram and Fleming (1998) stated that 'target language culture' should be taught along with English to acculturate language learners into the cultures of English-speaking countries. This view is the most popular one among linguists and teachers. However, two other views reject the idea of teaching the target language culture in EFL. The first one of these views supports the teaching of 'local' culture (McKay, 2003), while the second one states that English should be taught in a culture-free context as it is now regarded as a lingua franca (Alptekin, 2005; Seidlhofer, 2001).

Ridouani (2011), on the other hand, simplified these perspectives and stated that:

Teaching English as an international language is of two-folds: accepting it as a factor that contributes to the development or rejecting it as it threatens the aboriginal languages and cultures (...) English contributes to the development and at the same time tears down the natives' identity (p. 3).

Finally, the same author added:

Recently, in the name of multilingualism and multiculturalism, there has been almost a unanimous agreement among scholars, politicians, economists, and educators that English is willingly recognized as an international language (...) The question is what will be the fate of the other languages and the other cultures if the ostensible belief in multilingualism will turn out to be monolingualism, and multiculturalism will be transformed into monoculturalism (Ridouani, 2011, p. 3).



Nevertheless, it is evident that several experts highly value the importance of incorporating the learners' background in order to have a more dynamic class that will ensure that students learn a different language while remaining true to their origins.

2.3. Benefits of teaching local culture in cross-cultural communication

Wei (2005) proposed that it is beneficial to make students aware of their own culture instead of spreading and teaching American and British culture in the English classroom. Wei stated that by studying their own culture, learners become aware of cultural differences and similarities, and that helps them to maintain their cultural identity in cross-cultural communication.

Similarly, the Communication and Cultural Awareness curricular thread establishes the benefits that students will gain from this new approach: "As learners learn about others, compare their culture to those of others and find and appreciate the similarities and differences, they begin to understand themselves and others better. They become better global citizens, able to transcend differences and communicate with people across the globe" (Ministerio de Educación, 2016, p.5).

Such an approach is often called global education or global awareness. Regarding this newly introduced concept, the curriculum has stated that "teaching and learning with a global perspective means accepting that there is more than one answer to a problem. Global awareness is about finding interconnections among issues from a variety of places, times and people around the globe" (Ministerio de Educación, 2016, p.5).



2.3.1. Role of teachers in fostering cultural awareness

To create a classroom where different cultures meet and are given equal importance is a task that teachers must assume. For this reason, “teachers who are interested in fostering cultural awareness in their classroom should actively demonstrate to their students that they genuinely care about their cultural, emotional, and intellectual needs” (Lynch, 2014, p.1). They must be able to understand and show interest in the learner’s’ background. As the curriculum has pointed out: “They [teachers] must be willing to identify with the learners’ needs and interests, ask their opinions and be sensitive to their language concerns (...) especially with their “nonacademic” cultural life, while maintaining high expectations for learner performance” (Ministerio de Educación, 2016, p.5). Regarding this matter, Ellis (2003) added that teachers should encourage active reflection and cultural comparison in order to develop metacognitive and intercultural awareness (as cited in Uddin, 2014).

2.3.2. Previous research findings on the integration of L1 culture in the EFL classroom

Nasrabady and Bira (2011) led a revealing study about the perceptions that Persian high school students have regarding L1 culture and L2 culture. It aimed to establish what were the students’ perception about the importance of L1 in relation to their identity and whether learning EFL in an environment that prioritizes L2 culture has any effect on their self-conception. The research had three groups of participants, who were: high school students, undergraduate students, and graduate students; however, only the first group is relevant to this research as it deals with participants of similar characteristics. Thus, the research was applied to 30 high school students, and the instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire.

When asked if students experienced feelings of inferiority regarding their own culture while learning English and the target culture, 53,4% of Persian high school students said that



they had experienced feelings of inferiority. Only 26,7% of students said that they had not felt inferior; the rest of the students were neutral about this topic. Next, when asked if they believed that it was necessary to change their lifestyle to the one portrayed by the target culture while learning English, 46,7% of students agreed, and only 33,4% disagreed. Finally, even though 70% of students recognized the importance of learning the target culture in order to be more proficient, they still felt that Persian culture was inferior and regarded the target culture as a more prestigious way of living. Therefore, this research showed how learning the target culture might lead students to undervalue their identity and cultural roots. This is also supported by research done by Rezaei and Naghibian (2018) who interviewed 13 undergraduate students in Iran. When asked about which culture they considered themselves to be more attached to, 50% of students said that they identified more with the target language culture. Only 20% of students preferred Iranian culture over the target language culture, while the rest of the students were neutral.

For this reason, an intercultural and global approach like the one proposed in the Ecuadorian EFL curriculum becomes not only desirable but obligatory in order to place the target and native language at the same level. Leveridge (2008) has argued that even in today's society the idea that English is a superior language persists. A clear example is given below:

Creators of second language teaching policies must be sensitive to the local or indigenous languages not to make them seem inferior to the target language. English language teaching has become a phenomenon in Southeast Asia, especially in Taiwan. Most Taiwanese universities require an English placement test as an entry requirement. Foreigners (non-native Taiwanese) which are native English-speaking students, however, do not need to take a similar Chinese proficiency test, thus forwarding the ideology that



the knowledge of English is superior to the Chinese counterpart and that to succeed in a globalized economy; one must be able to speak English (Leveridge, 2008, p. 4).

Furthermore, Khan (2016) researched the role of local culture in the classroom. His research aimed to identify the points of view that students had about learning about Arabic culture during EFL lessons as well as what cultural aspects they would like to work with. The instrument of choice was a descriptive survey, which was applied to fifty participants who were first-year students at King Abdulaziz University, in Saudi Arabia.

The results of this study showed that 72,3% of students believe that there is no need to know about the target culture as they would rather work with the local culture. Nearly 64% of students also agreed that they would like to see more material related to Saudi Arabian culture in their textbooks since they do not feel engaged while learning about cultural backgrounds they are not familiar with. Plenty of students (73%) stated that they would prefer reading about a city in Saudi Arabia rather than a city in a foreign country. Finally, local information attracted the students more than information related to the target culture. Regarding this aspect, 76% of students said that they would like to work with material related to the local culture, such as Saudi Arabian food, dresses, dances and folklore. When asked about politics, sports, and entertainment, 55% of students agreed that would rather work with local figures. The results of this study showed that a large percentage of students prefer working with topics related to the local culture, the reason for this is that they feel more engaged and are able to relate better to content they are familiar with.

Similarly, a study led by Yilmaz (2007) at the Bogaziçi University of Turkey tried to find out the opinions of Turkish learners of English regarding their teaching the target language's culture in EFL learning. Senior high school students from five different institutions participated



in this research, which aimed to explore and compare students' opinions about teaching English culture in EFL. A semi-structured questionnaire was developed by the researcher and it was later applied to three hundred and eighty-five senior high school students across Turkey.

Not surprisingly, the results showed that, even though over 40% of students agreed that it was interesting to learn a foreign culture, a considerable percentage of students did not support this practice. "As for the reasons why, the participants disagreed on the teaching of the target language culture, the students stated 'cultural imperialism' and the importance of preserving their own identity and culture as the major reasons for their disagreement" (Yilmaz, 2007, p. 5). 'Cultural imperialism' is defined by the Oxford dictionary as "The extension of the influence or dominance of one nation's culture over others" (Cultural Imperialism). This opinion was shared by a third of the interviewed students.

Additionally, an important aspect of integrating L1 culture during EFL lessons is how it affects L2 performance. Thus, a study by Cummins (1986) showed that there is a need to recognize the connection between language, culture, and identity. He has claimed that ignoring or negating students of their cultural identity can lead to underachievement and failure in schools. On the other hand, the incorporation of the students' own language and culture into the school program lead students to enhance their self-concept and performance. As a consequence, emphasizing the students' culture and identity in the EFL classroom has the potential of boosting students' performance and proficiency in the target language.

What Cummins states is supported by Maryam and Zamanian (2014) who proposed the following research question: "Does the incorporation of L1 culture into L2 learning materials improve the L2 proficiency of EFL learners?" Their research had 48 senior high school students who were taking a pre-university course in Shiraz, Iran. The tool used for collecting data was a



focus group. The researchers divided students into an experimental group and a control group. Both groups were tested on their EFL performance after teaching one group with material integrating L1 and L2 culture, and teaching the other group with material consisting only of L2 cultural material. Participants of this study were a group of 48 female students with an average age of 17. The results of the post-test revealed that the experimental group had done considerably better than the control group.

Considering the obtained results, it was concluded that compared to materials containing only the second language culture, the culturally adapted materials were more useful for learners and were able to improve the overall learning of the EFL learners in a more effective way. So, to answer the first research question of the study, it can be claimed that incorporation of L1 culture can improve the language proficiency of EFL learners (Maryam & Zamanian, 2014, p. 1134).

2.4. How to integrate the local culture into the EFL classroom

Regarding the way and methods that teachers should use to integrate culture, there are several options for the techniques that have proved useful in EFL classrooms. However, the principal factor that must be considered is that the learner's own culture is dealt with in a participative manner. Byram and Fleming (1998) urge teachers to begin by reflecting on learner's own culture and only later introduce the target culture. For this reason, the technique he has recommended for developing intercultural competence is a comparative approach that should "provide a double perspective but not to evaluate to see which is better" (Byram and Fleming, 1998, pg. 189).

With that in mind, O'Dowd (2004) has found that Literature, and drama to a lesser extent, is a very effective tool for making students understand and get involved in culture and cultural perspectives.



2.4.1. Literature in relation to history and culture

Lorenzo (2014) believes that literature is a mirror of society and claims that:

Literature is the foundation of humanity's cultures, beliefs, and traditions. It serves as a reflection of reality, a product of art, and a window to an ideology. Whether it be poetry or prose, literature provides insight, knowledge or wisdom, and emotion towards the person who partakes it entirely (...) It is an embodiment of words based on human tragedies, desires, and feelings (pg. 1).

McFadden (1978) contributed by adding that literature is “a canon which consists of those works in language by which a community defines itself through the course of its history” (p. 56). Through these two concepts, the relationship between literature and culture becomes clear, as literature is a way to pass the cultural heritage of a community, society, group, or culture throughout the years. Eneawaji (2010) added emphasis to this statement by arguing that “sustainability of cultural heritage through literature is an integral part of nation-building” (p.1), and thus, of identity.

Regarding the importance of literature in relation to history and culture, Kirk (2012) stated:

History plays a fundamental role in shaping literature: every novel, play or poem one reads is influenced by the political context in which it is written, the people that the author knows and the wider society that frames the entire work (pg. 1).

Hence, providing EFL material based on Ecuadorian literature would prove to be an effective way to have students relate better to their own culture as they would be reading about topics that are relevant in regards their culture.



2.4.2. Benefits of reading local literature in the EFL classroom

By reading masterpieces from the past, people can have a general grasp and understanding of the country and the people as they were during that time, as well as other factors such as the political and cultural ideas; Ecuadorian literature, as expected, does show the context and the ways of living of the common man. Even though a vast majority of the themes present in Ecuadorian literature revolve around national events and are heavily influenced by social issues such as political conflicts, it does not fail to show the lexicon and ideology of the ordinary Ecuadorian man (Queirolo, 2008).

Nevertheless, literature itself is also a very valuable resource for teachers and students. According to Maley (1989), Weir (2009) and Sacawa (2017), Literature is a powerful resource in the EFL classroom because it is universal and has the potential to engage students' attention and interest. Furthermore, Literature is a tool for teaching both basic language skills (i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking) and language areas (i.e. vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation).

Regarding the EFL classroom, Murat (2005) explained:

“(Literature) is very popular within the field of foreign language learning and teaching nowadays. Moreover, in translation courses, many language teachers make their students translate literary texts like drama, poetry and short stories into the mother tongue (...) Translation gives students the chance to practice the lexical, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic and stylistic knowledge they have acquired in other courses” (p. 54).

This approach, if taken the other way around, could prove useful in EFL classrooms, as students could be presented with Ecuadorian literature and asked to translate to English. This is a process known as ‘prose-translation’, which is “the translation of novels, essays, fiction, short



stories, comedy, folk tale, hagiography, works of criticism, science fiction, etc” (Haque, 2012, p.97). On top of that, providing material that relates to the students’ own culture in the EFL classroom is a key factor in increasing students’ self-esteem and performance (Spangenberg and Pritchard, 1994).

According to Tanaka (2015), the use of L1 literature in translation serves a psychological function. He states that: “students have a scaffold to support them in their familiarity with their own cultures. When the cultural context is familiar, students gain the confidence to voice their opinions and lead the conversation” (p. 388).

Furthermore, Tanaka (2015) also added that:

Using L1 literature in translation in the L2 classroom allows for the benefits of using literature in the EFL classroom while lessening some of the challenges typically associated with it. The familiar cultural contexts give students the confidence to discuss the material in the classroom. It encourages them to actively think about language in a way that textbooks do not (p. 393).

Thus, we can see how it would benefit students to read Ecuadorian masterpieces translated to the target language: They would be learning and connecting to their own culture while studying and practicing the structures and vocabulary of the target language in a way that is likely to engage them.

2.5. Criteria for selecting texts to work within the EFL classroom

It is worth mentioning that teachers play a large role in this matter because although many students do not especially care about reading (Weir, 2009), there is a potential for them to get “hooked” on literature if the theme or topic is interesting for them (Sacawa, 2017). Thus, teachers have to be able to select texts that are not only appropriate but that will catch the



students' interest while helping them develop their language skills. Therefore, what are the criteria for choosing books that will have a long-term effect on students? Collie and Slater (1990) claimed that the books chosen should relate to real-life experiences, emotions, or dreams of the readers.

Accordingly, Hismanoglu (2005) has established some selection criteria that can be used by teachers in order to select texts that students will find appropriate and that will engage them. This author claimed that teachers should take into consideration the needs, motivations, interests and cultural background of the students as well as their language level and age.

Nevertheless, he places the most importance on finding a text that is able to provide personal involvement by arousing positive reactions from the learners. This is achievable by providing texts that are in a way familiar to the students' own experiences. In the words of Collie and Slater (1990), readers are "more likely to have a long-term and valuable effect upon the learners' linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge when it is meaningful and amusing" (p.6).

Taking the above citations into account, students are likely to feel more engaged by reading literary texts that more closely relate to or resemble their cultural background, which is why it is likely that texts that belong to the literature Ecuador has to offer will trigger the students' interest.

At this point, it becomes necessary to understand the students' perception of literature as a valuable resource for selection. This means that the texts should have one more aspect to take in consideration, which is the genre. This is, to understand what type of texts students prefer.

2.5.1. Preferred literary genre

As concluded by Akyel and Yalçın (1990), students viewed 'novel' as "the most effective literary form for helping them develop their linguistic skills and cultural awareness" (p. 175).



This means that students prefer prose fiction such as novels and short stories over poetry and drama plays.

This is also supported by a study made by Hirvela and Boyle (1988). They surveyed students' reaction to literary genres in order to identify which literary genres were preferred by the students and which aspects of literature were reported as being the most problematic to students. The results of their study pointed out that students preferred prose fiction over all other genres. These results can provide a better view for teachers to consider when selecting the most suitable literary texts for students while considering their preferences.

2.5.2. Do Ecuadorian students know about Ecuadorian literature?

According to an article published by El Mercurio Newspaper (2015), high school students in Cuenca do not know about national writers, and they prefer to read books published by foreign authors, as they are more popular and widely known. Even within the classroom, teachers may not promote Ecuadorian literature, as Kleber Farez (Literature teacher from Ciudad de Cuenca High School) said (BSG, 2015). For this reason, he mentioned that in Cuenca, as well as in Ecuador, teachers should emphasize national authors in order to improve students' awareness about national literature.

Even though the Ecuadorian curriculum regarding “Lengua y Literatura” includes Ecuadorian authors as part of the syllabus, they are explored briefly at the end of the book, which starts with material related to foreign literature (Greek, European and British literature for the most part), then Latin American literature, and only at the end Ecuadorian Literature. Thus, this information presents itself as a golden opportunity to foster cultural awareness about Ecuadorian literature and to help students with English learning.



2.5.3. Previous research findings on integrating L1 translated literature in Ecuador

A study led by Carchi and Pineda (2013) proposed the use of reading material based on traditional Ecuadorian legends as a tool to improve reading skills. This research was centered around the lack of motivation shown by students, who stated that they found reading in English boring. For this purpose, they used Ecuadorian literature, more specifically, Ecuadorian legends, as a means to teach reading comprehension in the classroom. The study had positive results.

The research was conducted at Shiña High School in Azogues, where a questionnaire was applied to 17 students in order to know if students know about Ecuadorian legends and if they would like to read them as part of their English classes. The results were that students liked to read, but they did not like to read in English. When asked if they would like to read Ecuadorian legends in the English class as a way to enhance learning, 88% percent of the students said ‘yes’. As for the reasons why they would like to include legends, they said that they are interesting and that they help them maintain their identity.

However, the most interesting data offered by this research is the perception students have about how this approach will benefit them. The results showed that 35% of students said that it will make them interested in reading, which confirms what experts said about integrating local culture and its relation to boosting students’ motivation and interest. The next 29% said that it will help them to practice reading in general, which in turn will help them enhancing their language skills.

A second study, performed by Martínez (2011) focused on the lack of reading habits in teenagers and in strengthening cultural awareness through storytelling. The author surveyed 17 female students from Catalinas high school in the city of Cuenca and asked them about their views on literature and Ecuadorian culture. Students were from the second year of Bachillerato,



their ages were 16 on average, and had an upper-intermediate level of English. Results showed that 88% of students said that they consider reading in the classroom as a very useful tool in the EFL classroom. Additionally, 100% of the students believed that it is important to be aware of self-identity, values, and culture. Finally, when asked about reading habits, 43% of the students said that their favorite genre was the novel. In this case, results were positive, too. Both of these studies show that students are open and feel enthusiastic about integrating Ecuadorian texts in the English classroom.



Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Approach

This research used qualitative and quantitative methods.

3.2 Research design

This research used an exploratory design that allowed the researcher to gain insights on the group's situation and opinion towards the implementation of Ecuadorian literature in the EFL classroom; it also allowed for a better understanding of how it would be best to proceed if implemented.

3.3 Participants

The participants involved in the research were sorted in two groups: high school English teachers and high school students from Unidad Educativa Fray Vicente Solano in the city of Cuenca, Ecuador, a public institution with a student body of approximately two thousand students from ages three to eighteen years old on average.

The group selected for the research were students from the second year of Bachillerato General Unificado, within an age group of fifteen to nineteen years old, who are able to use English at an A2.1 to A2.2 level according to the European Framework of Reference for Languages. Participants were chosen at random, both female and male students. In total thirty-two students were involved in this research. The reason why this research focuses on Bachillerato students is because they have achieved the necessary level to understand different literary genres in English. Furthermore, the reason why this research focuses on A2 students is that, despite curricular guidelines that state that senior students finish high school with a B1



level, the majority of students do not achieve a B1 level by the end of high school, as several studies and national-wide tests have pointed out (Heredia, 2018). For example, in 2018 Ecuador was placed 65th in a list of 88 countries that were tested using the EF proficiency test. Taking into account that the people who take the exam are senior high school students, it is evident that the reality in Ecuador is that students finish high school with a basic to a pre-intermediate level of English.

The second group of participants consisted of three English teachers who teach Bachillerato in three different high schools of the city of Cuenca but who preferred not to display the institutions where they currently work.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

This research consisted of three instruments: Two surveys and a questionnaire. The surveys provided both quantitative and qualitative data, and it was aimed to extract information from students. The questionnaire provided qualitative data only, and it was aimed to extract information from teachers. The purpose of these instruments was to evaluate teachers' and students' opinions regarding similar topics, which in turn allowed for a better perspective of the environment in which English is taught and how Ecuadorian literature plays a part into it.

3.4.1 Structure of the survey for high school students about including Ecuadorian Literature in the English class

For students, a four-question survey was available. All questions for students were carried out in Spanish. The reason for this is that the instrument did not aim to evaluate English skills: its main purpose was to collect information; thus, vital data might have been lost in



translation if students lacked the linguistic resources to successfully convey their thoughts, which would have ultimately interfered with the results.

Question 1 was meant to determine whether the students' English teacher includes Ecuadorian literature in their lessons. Answers to these questions were contrasted with the teachers' answers.

If students' answer to question 1 was 'yes', question 2, which dealt with the teenagers' personal enjoyment (or lack thereof) regarding activities based on Ecuadorian literature, was available. It asked students about their experience regarding Ecuadorian literature in the English classroom and whether they enjoy it, and why.

If students' answer to question 1 was 'no', questions 3 asks them if they would like the English teacher to include Ecuadorian literature in the classroom and why. This information is critical to ensure the success or failure if this approach to English learning is implemented, as the most important factor is whether students feel comfortable and motivated by reading Ecuadorian literature in the EFL classroom.

Finally, question 4 asked students about their points of view regarding the possible benefits that might go with this proposed method. It asked if they believed that including Ecuadorian literature during their lessons would facilitate target language learning. This question will help us determine if there is an interest in learning through Ecuadorian literature and why, which might provide an answer as to whether students consider their own culture as an important aspect of their education.

As for the piloting of this instrument, four students with similar characteristics to the target group were asked to review the questions. They said that it was easy to understand, to the point, and brief. They did not suggest any corrections.



3.4.2. Structure of the questionnaire for English teachers about including Ecuadorian literature in the EFL class

For teachers, a questionnaire made up of 4 questions in open format was available.

The first question asked teachers whether they include material related to Ecuadorian literature and how often. This information is likely to help identify if teachers are actively working their way to integrate cultural awareness or if they have taken a more passive attitude in the face of the new curricular changes. It also tells whether high school teachers are oriented towards a multicultural approach, as the Ecuadorian EFL curriculum advises.

Question 2 was meant to find out how do students react to lessons that include Ecuadorian literature in terms of attitude. The purpose of this question is to confirm what the literature states about how including culture-related topics boosts students' performance, self-esteem, and motivation.

Question three was designed to determine if teachers who have not integrated Ecuadorian culture into their lessons would consider doing it and why. This can provide insight into the reasons why other teachers who teach in similar contexts do not integrate cultural content in the EFL class. With this information, it would be possible for future research to seek possible solutions and alternatives that would make teachers interested in using Ecuadorian literature as a tool in their classrooms.

Finally, question four asked teachers to state if they believe that integrating Ecuadorian literature is a determining factor in boosting students' motivation in EFL, given that they would be reading and practicing the target language while learning more about their country.



This instrument was validated through piloting. Three teachers with similar characteristics to the participants were asked about the consistency of the instrument. They considered that it was clear, well developed, and organized.

3.4.3 Structure of the survey for high school students about their preferences regarding literature

Finally, it becomes necessary to know what are the students' preferences regarding literature in order to choose the material that they find interesting, as they will feel more motivated to read literature that interests them. For that end, a final survey was developed, which consisted of six questions; five of them were multiple-option, and only one was open-ended.

The first question asked students to select their preferred literary genre out of three options: Novel, poetry, and essay. Thanks to this question it will be possible to compare Ecuadorian high school students' preferences to the literature and to choose books or stories that belong to the selected genre. Students were allowed to choose only one option.

Questions two, three, and four mirrored each other in terms of finding out what is the preferred topic that students like to read according to their selected literary genre. Thus, if students selected novel, they had to choose among three topics: romance, real-life stories, and fantasy. If the students selected poetry, they had to choose among romance, fantasy, and strong emotions (such as poems depicting anger, sadness or frustration). Finally, if the students selected essay as their preferred literary genre, they had to choose one out of the three following topics: Politics, social issues, and biographies.

Questions five aimed to determine if students had read Ecuadorian literature in the past, and –if so- question six complemented question five by asking students to write down a piece of



Ecuadorian literature that they enjoy, listing the title and a short summary of the plot. Questions six was only available for those students that had read Ecuadorian literature in the past.

Piloting for this instrument was performed by handing the survey to four students with similar characteristics to the target group. The survey handed to them was shorter, made of only three questions, which asked for students preferred literary genre, and then for their preferred topics out of a longer list. Although students did not seem to find anything to change in the survey, when they tried to match their preferred literary genre to the topic they liked the most, it was evident that some matches were not going to work, which made the instrument inefficient and flawed. For example, given the structure of the survey, it was possible for a student to choose poetry as their literary genre and science fiction as their topic. This would have made selecting appropriate texts very difficult, as there is no such thing as a science fiction poem or a romantic essay. Thus, it was necessary to alter the survey in order to make it more specific and accurate. When asked for a second time, the piloting group stated that the survey was clear, accurate, understandable and specific.

Thanks to this instrument it was possible to select Ecuadorian literature that students find interesting, giving that the selected material matches their preferred literary genre and the topic that they like the most to read in that specific genre.

3.5 Data analysis

First, questions to the survey applied to students were tabulated into percentages and graphics, as the instrument provided students with multiple-choice format. All answers were sorted out into 'yes' and 'no' groups. Additionally, Dolnicar (2013) suggest survey question in yes/no format because they are exhaustive, mutually exclusive and do not allow ambiguity.

Answers to open questions given by students in the survey, on the other hand, were considered as



a free list, while the aspects that were common among the answers were reported through the use of category tags, which is the tool that Kawulich (2003) advises for coding qualitative data.

All open-ended questions collected from the questionnaire applied to teachers were transcribed and later sorted categories in order to be analyzed. For this reason, multiple tags were created in order to break down their discourse and better understand their points of view.



Chapter 4

Results analysis and interpretation

4.1 Results of survey for high school students about including Ecuadorian Literature in the English class

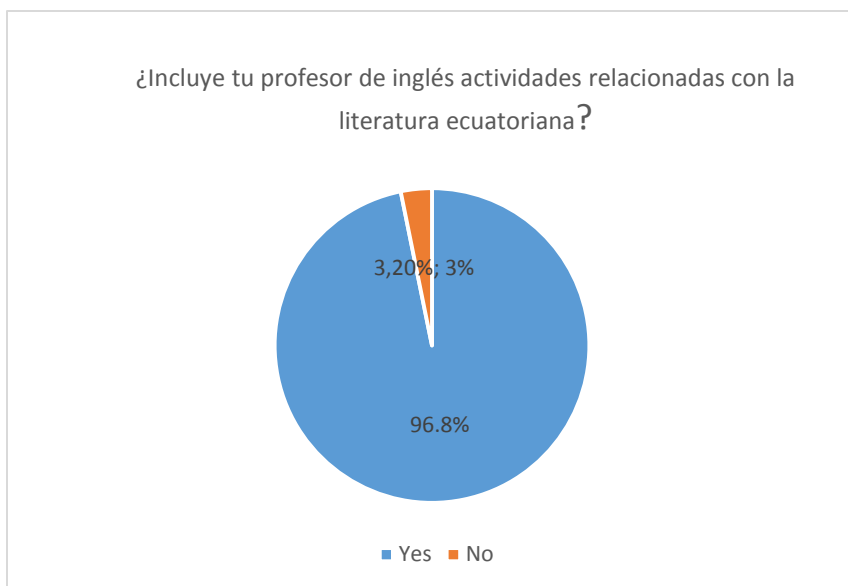
Results by age and gender	15				16				17				18				19			
	M		F		M		F		M		F		M		F		M		F	
	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no
Question 1	-	4	-	-	-	6	1	9	-	8	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1
Question 2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Question 3	4	-	-	-	6	-	8	1	6	2	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-
Question 4	1	3	-	-	6	-	8	1	6	2	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-

Thirty-two students of Fray Vicente Solano high school participated in the survey. Out of the 32 students involved, four were fifteen-year-olds, sixteen were sixteen-year-olds, nine were seventeen-year-olds, two were eighteen-year-olds, and one was a nineteen-year-old. The age group that showed a greater enthusiasm about integrating Ecuadorian literature in the EFL classroom was that of the students who were sixteen years old. Generally speaking, the results were very positive.



4.1.1. Question 1

¿Incluye tu profesor de inglés actividades relacionadas con la literatura ecuatoriana?		
Options	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	1	96.8%
No	31	3.2%

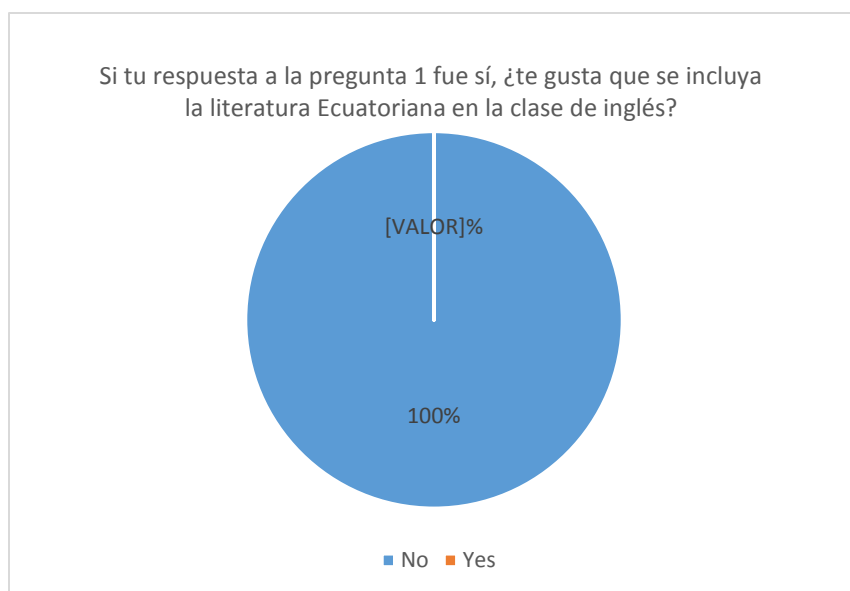


Almost all students agreed that their teacher does not include Ecuadorian literature as a part of the English class. Only one student said otherwise. This means that 96.8% of students agree that they do not have Ecuadorian literature as a part of their curriculum. This information is very valuable, as it tells that teachers are not integrating cultural material as the curriculum suggests.



4.1.2. Question 2

Si tu respuesta a la pregunta 1 fue sí, ¿te gusta que se incluya la literatura Ecuatoriana en la clase de inglés?		
Options	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	x	x
No	1	100%



Question 2 was available only for students whose answer to question 1 was “yes”; therefore, only one student provided an answer. This question was for students who said their teacher included Ecuadorian literature in class, and asked them about their opinion about it, whether they enjoyed it or no. This student said that she did not like to see Ecuadorian literature because she does not like literature. It is possible that the student’s answer is biased given that the reason for her answer is not that she does not enjoy Ecuadorian literature, but that she does not enjoy Literature in general.



4.1.3. Question 3

Si tu respuesta a la pregunta 1 fue no, ¿te gustaría que se incluya la literatura Ecuatoriana en la clase de inglés?		
Options	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	28	90.3%
No	3	9.7%



Here we can see that 90.3% of the students who said they did not have Ecuadorian literature as a part of their English class would like to include it into the class. This represents the vast majority of students, with only 3 students against Ecuadorian literature being implemented. Students who would not like Ecuadorian literature in the English class make up 9.7% of the students surveyed.



As for the reasons why students would like or would not like this approach, here is a list of the stated reasons. All reasons given by students have been sorted into five tags for positive answers, and two for negative ones.

Reasons for answers	
Yes	
Color tags:	“Tendríamos más conocimiento”
It is	“Porque así aprendemos más sobre nuestro Ecuador”
appealing/interesting:	“Para poder seguir aprendiendo sobre la literatura”
7	“Así se aprende más inglés”
Promotes cultural	“Son temas que ya hemos visto”
awareness: 6	“Para saber los dos idiomas”
Makes English easier	“Ya que aprenderíamos más sobre la literatura ecuatoriana”
to learn: 5	“Porque llamaría más la atención de los estudiantes”
Promotes	“Porque sería más dinámica la clase”
multiculturalism: 4	“De esta manera podríamos hablar inglés, pero de manera relacionada
Other reasons: 3	con nuestro país. Tendríamos acceso a personas extranjeras
Students who did not	haciéndolas conocedoras de la cultura ecuatoriana”
provide a reason: 3	“Porque al relacionar la literatura ecuatoriana con inglés nos
	facilitaría al estudiar, sería una estrategia”
	“Porque así serían más dinámicas las clases”
	“Para poder conocer más literatura”
	“Para aprender más del Ecuador que a la final es nuestro país y
	debemos saber más de él”



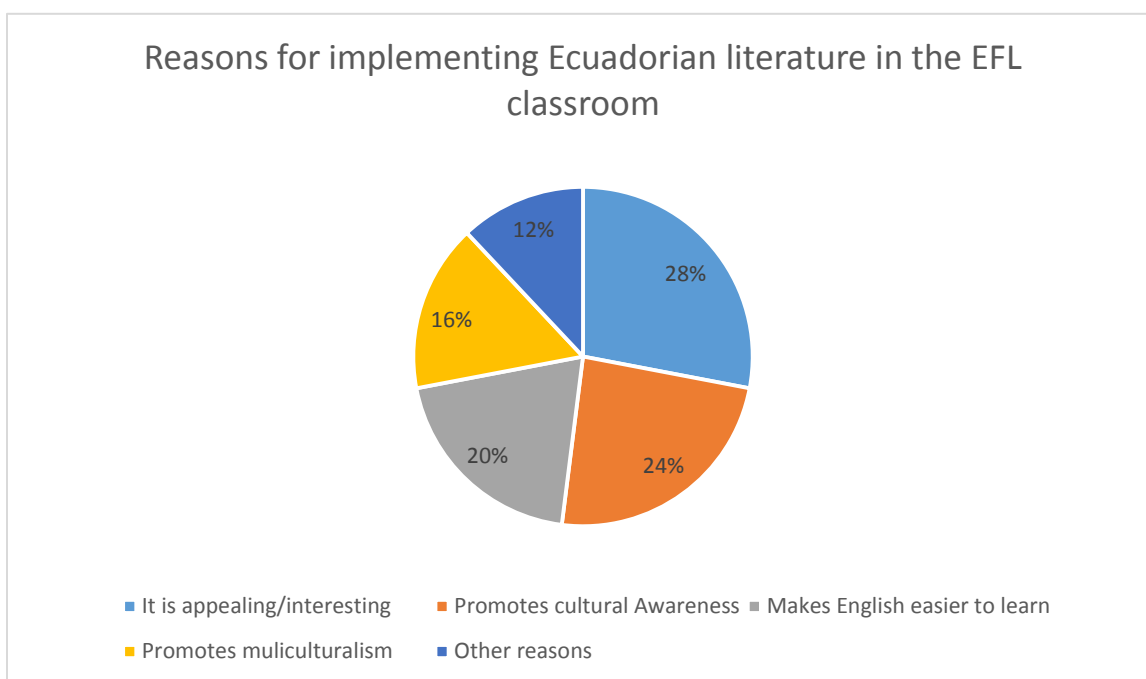
	<p>“Sabríamos hablar inglés, pero con historia de nuestro país”</p> <p>“Porque así podríamos relacionarnos con la literatura nacional y a la vez aprender inglés”</p> <p>“Porque así podríamos saber más sobre nuestras raíces poéticas”</p> <p>“Porque conoceríamos más sobre nuestra cultura”</p> <p>“Porque el inglés sería más dinámico y no solo materia”</p> <p>“Se adquiere aprendizaje de nuestra cultura”</p> <p>“Nos inculca la cultura y nos facilita el aprendizaje”</p> <p>“Sería innovador”</p> <p>“Enriquecer nuestro léxico en otro idioma”</p> <p>“Porque sería más interesante la clase”</p> <p>“Me gustaría aprender literatura en inglés”</p>
No	
<p>Color tags:</p> <p>Complexity: 2</p> <p>Personal reasons: 1</p>	<p>“No podríamos entender la información que nos quieren dar a conocer”</p> <p>“Porque no me gusta la historia”</p> <p>“Sería confuso”</p>

It is evident that almost all students would like to include English literature into the English class. What is most relevant about these results are the reasons given by students, which act as a window into the students’ minds and motivation. It also allows for comparison, so that it



is possible to see if the literature was right about the benefits of integrating cultural material into the EFL classroom. Moreover, it is helpful for teachers looking to implement Ecuadorian literature into their classes, because it lets them know what aspects of such an approach are the most interesting ones according to the students' perspective. Therefore, teachers will know how to best approach Ecuadorian literature based on what students perceive to be relevant aspects.

As previously shown, reasons given by students who said they would like to integrate Ecuadorian literature into the classroom were sorted into five major tags: It is appealing/interesting, promotes cultural awareness, makes English easier to learn, promotes



multiculturalism, and other reasons. The next graphics shows percentages to the reasons given:

As shown in this graphic, most students, 28% to be precise, think that they are going to be more interest in learning if they study Ecuadorian literature. They stated that the class would



be more dynamic. This might help with the issues stated in the literature, which said that students found English boring and monotonous.

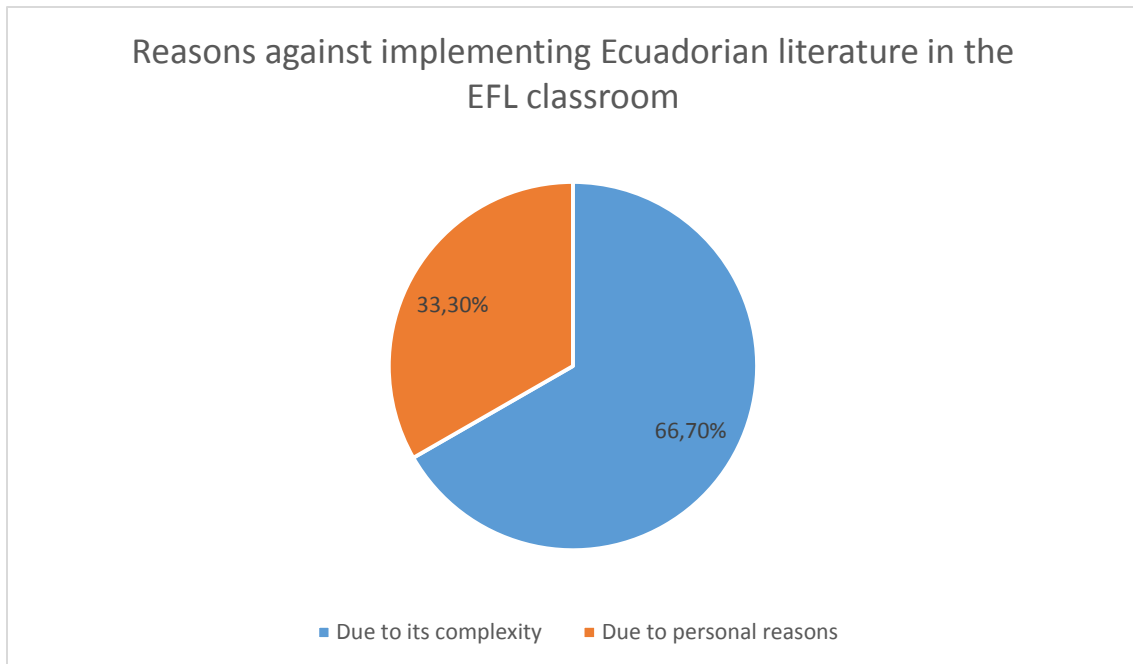
Second in list is cultural awareness, with 24% of students who believe that it is important to learn about their cultural background. This related back to the literature, as it shows that students feel the necessity to connect with their roots. As stated before, when students have their cultural background taken into account their self-esteem increases and so does performance.

The next reasons in favor of integrating Ecuadorian literature in the classroom is that it makes English easier to learn. This does not come as a surprise, as the literature says that it is easier to learn when they are shown meaningful content that is closely related to their personal experiences. One of the students added that it would help expand their vocabulary, which is also an indicator that they would be practicing their language skills.

Then, we have that it promotes multiculturalism, with 16% of students supporting this point of view. This perspective is in line with the EFL curriculum expectations, which aims for students to develop a sense of multiculturalism that is born within their own cultural background and identity, in order to better understand the target language and its culture. Students mentioned that it would be possible to speak to foreigners about Ecuadorian culture, and that they would learn English but speaking about the history of their country. This is exactly what the curriculum aims for.

Finally, 12% of students stated other reasons for implementing Ecuadorian literature in the EFL classroom. Their reasons were that they would be learning more about literature and that their overall knowledge would be greater.

As for students who did not show support for integrating Ecuadorian literature in the English classroom, their reasons are shown in the following graphic:

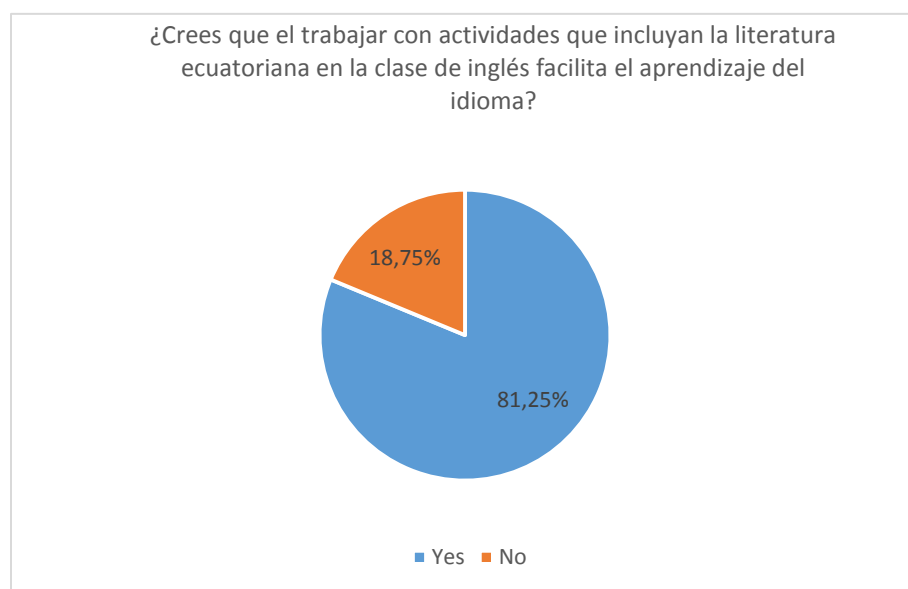


The main reason against implementing Ecuadorian literature in the classroom was its complexity. Students said that it would be confusing and that they would not be able to understand the texts. This might be due to poor performance in the target language, lack of vocabulary or lack of the linguistic elements that would allow students to understand a text. The second reason was labeled “personal reasons”. One student said that he would not like to study Ecuadorian literature in the English class because he did not like history.



4.1.4. Question 4.

¿Crees que el trabajar con actividades que incluyan la literatura ecuatoriana en la clase de inglés facilita el aprendizaje del idioma?		
Options	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	26	81,25%
No	6	18.75%



Results for questions 4 show that 81.25% of surveyed students say that they believe that including Ecuadorian literature in the English class facilitates English learning, while 18.75% are against this statement. Results to this questions could easily seem off as they show a greater percentage of students against including Ecuadorian literature in the EFL classroom in comparison to the results in question 3; however, the wording of the question plays a large role in understanding why this might be. This questions directly links Ecuadorian literature with enhancing English learning, and, if we take a look at the graphic of the reasons in favor of



including Ecuadorian literature in the English program, we see that “it makes English easier to learn” is the third most voted answer, which might explain why this graphic shows fewer people who support including Ecuadorian literature in the English classroom when it is directly linked to facilitating English learning. Additionally, there is one more aspect to be taken into account to understand these results: reasons provided by students. The reasons provided by students provide revealing data.

Reasons for answers	
Yes	
Color tags:	“Sería bueno aprender de escritores ecuatorianos”
Enhances language skills: 7	“Porque me parece más fácil y cultural”
Interest in cultural topics: 6	“Porque tiene más ventajas al momento de entender, leer.”
Association with previous cultural knowledge: 4	“Es más fácil asociar con casos conocidos para el entendimiento”
It is engaging: 4	“Facilita el aprendizaje, ya sea en la lectura como en el habla”
Students who did not provide a reason: 4	“Sería más fácil aprender el idioma”
	“Porque estamos familiarizados con nuestra cultura y se recordaría fácilmente”
	“Porque es nuestra esencia”
	“Nos ayuda a dominar más idiomas”
	“Porque son temas que ya conocemos y sería más fácil”
	“Podemos captar más rápido”
	“Las actividades facilitan el gusto de aprender”
	“Agiliza el aprendizaje”

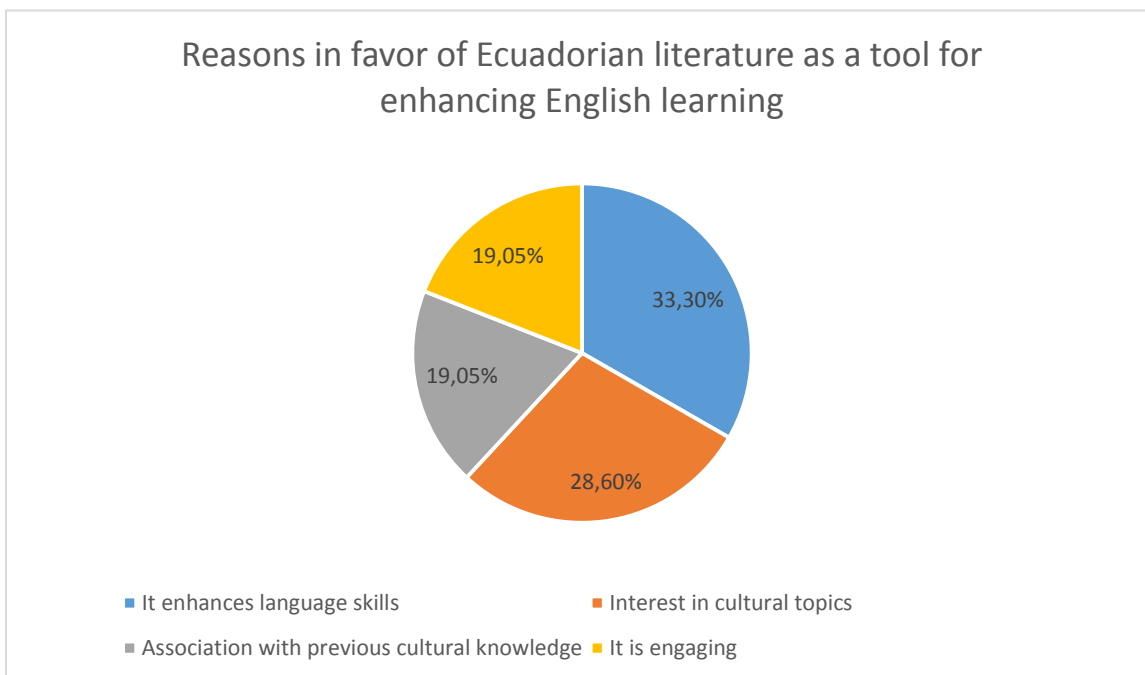


	<p>“Porque aprenderíamos más de lo nuestro y sería más fácil”</p> <p>“Porque así aprenderíamos más vocabulario en inglés”</p> <p>“Porque trata de nuestra cultura”</p> <p>“Porque aprendemos a leer y conocer nuevas palabras”</p> <p>“Prestaríamos más atención”</p> <p>“Aprenderíamos idiomas y literatura ecuatoriana”</p> <p>“Se comprende mejor el idioma”</p> <p>“Porque atrapa nuestra atención y facilita el aprendizaje”</p>
No	
<p>Color</p> <p>tags:</p> <p>It should not be implemented overnight: 2</p> <p>Lack of interest: 1</p> <p>Complexity: 1</p> <p>Personal reasons:</p> <p>1</p> <p>Students who did not provide a reason: 1</p>	<p>“Porque de nada sirve que se implemente esto solo en bachillerato, porque esto se debe implementar desde el primer grado y solo así podremos tener un buen aprendizaje de inglés”</p> <p>“Porque esto alteraría el ritmo de aprendizaje”</p> <p>“Porque a los estudiantes no les llama la atención la literatura”</p> <p>“Nos llevaría a confundirnos con la materia”</p> <p>“Porque no me gusta la historia”</p>



Most students agree that implementing Ecuadorian literature in the English classroom is beneficial, and they provide insights on what they consider reasons for supporting its implementation. Data collected through this instrument is important because it states how open, enthusiastic and willing students are regarding including Ecuadorian literature in the English program. Generally speaking, students are open to this idea and consider that it would affect their learning positively. Their reasons reveal what they consider to be the greater aspects of why Ecuadorian literature would improve their performance in learning the language. Similarly, reasons against implementing Ecuadorian literature are eye-opening, and they provide teachers with the necessary data in order to think of possible solutions or ways around any issues that may be detracting students from being open to the implementation of this project.

As for the reasons given for and against implementing Ecuadorian literature, students’



reasons were sorted into four major tags for both situations.



Most students who voted positively stated that if they had Ecuadorian literature in the classroom it would enhance their language skills in areas such as vocabulary, reading, comprehension, speaking and language learning in general. Students who stated this make up for the 33.3% percent of surveyed students. This shows that most students believe that the learning of English would benefit greatly from introducing Ecuadorian literature into the EFL classroom.

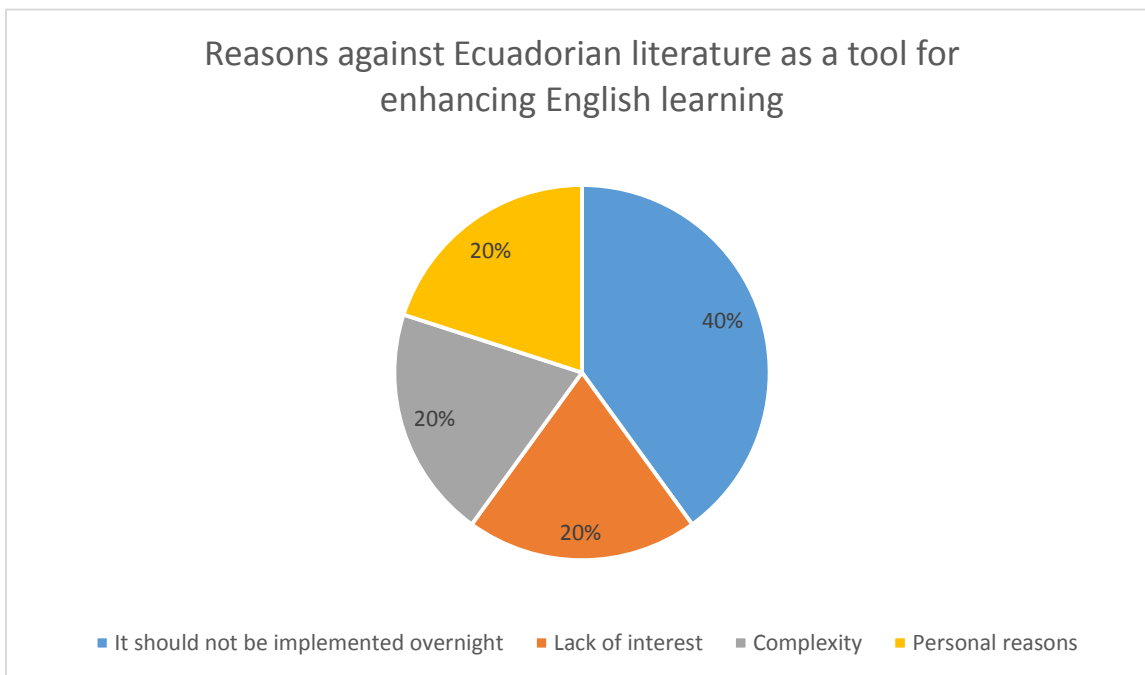
The next tag is “interest in cultural topics”, which makes up for the 28.6% of surveyed students. In this category students believe that implementing Ecuadorian literature in the classroom would enhance English learning because of their personal interest in all topics related to their cultural background. They said that it would be easier for them to learn about local authors and Ecuadorian literature; they also stated how it is important to know about their roots because it is their “essence”. This shows that most students have high regards for their own culture.

In third place we have that 19.05% of students believe that Ecuadorian literature would make English learning easier because of association with previous cultural knowledge. They mentioned that it would be easier for them to remember what they are learning if they know it beforehand. They too said that it they would learn faster since they are familiarized with the context in which the texts take place. This means that comprehension would come easily and students would be able to create meaningful connections to concepts and situations they already know.

Finally, 19.05% of students said that including Ecuadorian literature in the English class would be engaging. They stated that it would capture their attention; thus, making learning process easier and faster. All data provided by students is in line with the literature and what



experts say about the benefits of including cultural material in the classroom. As shown through this statistics, most students have notions of why and how implementing Ecuadorian literature in the EFL classroom would benefit their learning of the target language.



As for the reasons against this approach, we have the following graphic:

Here we have the most useful information provided by students so far. As shown in the graphic, 40% of students believe that they would not like to study Ecuadorian literature in the EFL classroom because it would disrupt their learning process; to avoid this, they state that this approach should be implemented since grade 1, and not only in the last years of high school.

Finally, we have three isolate answers sorted into the following categories: lack of interest, complexity, and personal reasons, each one holding the 20% of the graphic. One of the surveyed students said that he believed that fellow students were not interested in literature, while another student stated that it would be confusing to study both contents at the same time.



Last but not least, one student stated his opinion against Ecuadorian literature in the classroom due to personal reasons: he does not like history.

4.2. Results of the questionnaire for English teachers about including Ecuadorian literature in the EFL class

Results obtained through this questionnaire are discordant with those obtained from the surveys. Where a great majority of students showed to be willing and enthusiastic about implementing Ecuadorian literature in the EFL classroom, English teacher did not share such perspective. However, the information provided by English teachers might point at the reasons why they find problematic to introduce Ecuadorian Literature in the English class.

4.2.1. Question 1

Do you include activities related with Ecuadorian literature in your English lessons? How often do you include them?	
<p>How often do teachers include Ecuadorian literature?</p> <p>Rarely: 2</p> <p>Never: 1</p> <p>Other data collected:</p> <p>Reasons for not including Ecuadorian literature</p> <p>Suggested material to work with in class</p>	<p>“I rarely include topics related Ecuadorian literature, since we teachers tend to use the books, which almost never contain material related to literature, even less Ecuadorian literature. However, the times I do I procure of materials regarding Ecuadorian authors, biographies, and some inspirational lines of literature”</p> <p>“When the unit requires, I sometimes look for</p>



	<p>activities related to Ecuadorian literature, otherwise I concentrate on other topics even though I think it is important to integrate culture. Sometimes I contrast American culture with the Ecuadorian one to make the class more interactive” “I don’t include them”</p>
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Out of the three teachers who participated in the questionnaire, none of them include Ecuadorian literature on a regular basis. Two of them stated that they rarely include any cultural material, and when they do, it is only when the unit requires it. The remaining teacher said that he does not include Ecuadorian literature at all in his lessons.

The main reason why teachers do not work their way to actively include cultural material are because of the books and material they have to work with, which does not include much cultural material, much less Ecuadorian literature, Nevertheless, one of the teachers said he understands the importance of integrating and tries to compare Ecuadorian culture to American culture whenever possible. Another teacher suggested biographies as a material to work with in class.

These results are in line with students’ perception when asked if their teachers usually included Ecuadorian literature as a part of their lessons; 31 out of 32 surveyed students said “no”, which confirms data given by teachers.



4.2.2. Question 2

What is your students' attitude towards lessons related to Ecuadorian literature?	
<p>Student's attitude:</p> <p>Confused: 1</p> <p>Uninterested, bored: 1</p> <p>Other data collected:</p> <p>Teachers' concerns</p> <p>Teachers' suggestions</p>	<p>"I personally believe that Ecuadorian literature could be of help to support English lessons, however I think that one has to be careful the way the teacher manages such material. This is because literature sometimes can confuse students since it uses complex language that might put students into trouble. Still I believe that more simple material such as biographies that might be more adequate for students"</p> <p>"When it comes about culture they are not really interested, but activities need to be really dynamic so they get interested in the topic"</p> <p>"I haven't included Ecuadorian literature yet in my lessons"</p>



Here, teachers' answers clash with students' answers. Out of the two teachers who said that they sometimes include Ecuadorian literature in their classes, one said that students find Ecuadorian literature boring, while the other one said that they found it confusing. Teachers also explained some concerns they have regarding this topic and offered some suggestions. As a concern, one teacher claimed that literature is often complex and that teachers should handle it with care. As a suggestion, the teacher said that he would prefer to work with simple texts such as biographies. The second teachers mentioned that classes that include Ecuadorian literature should be dynamic in order to capture students' interest.

One more time it becomes apparent that teachers and students have different points of view regarding the same issue. While students stated that including Ecuadorian literature as part of their English class would pick their interest and make learning easier for them, teachers believe that it would be confusing and boring. On this particular case, students' answers agree with the literature, but teachers' perspectives do not.



4.2.3. Question 3

<p>If you are not currently doing it, would you consider integrating Ecuadorian literature in your lessons? Why?</p>	
<p>Would English teachers include Ecuadorian literature?</p> <p>Depending: 2</p> <p>Does not say: 1</p> <p>Other data collected:</p> <p>Teachers' concerns</p> <p>Teachers' perspective about teaching content</p>	<p>“Depending on the way it is integrated I might be up to the task.</p> <p>This is because integrating completely students to read and analyze works of literature might not be a good idea for both the teacher and students. Literature uses complex sentences, abstract concepts etc, that often have proven to be too difficult for their level. However, if the material is appropriate to their level, I would be completely willing to do it”</p> <p>“It would be a good idea, but there is some pressure that teachers have when trying to finish the content units”</p> <p>“Because it is important to educate our students. The fact that we teach English doesn't mean that we only teach how to speak and understand language. We can teach many different things by means of a foreign language, including philosophy, engineering, so why wouldn't we include literature from our own country? The problem is that it is difficult to find Ecuadorian literature in English”</p>

Regarding teachers' willingness to implement Ecuadorian literature into the English program we have conflicting points of view. While, generally speaking, teachers say that they



would be willing to integrate Ecuadorian literature into their lessons, they would only do it depending on external factors.

One teacher said that it would be a good idea but that the curriculum puts pressure on teachers: they have to stick to goals set by the book, and they need to cover content units within a certain time frame. Another teacher said he is open to innovation; however, he is concerned about the material and how it would be implemented. Once again, he mentions that literature is too complex and that he would feel more confident working with simple texts that he deems level-appropriate. The last teacher argued that it would be a good idea because teachers, as educators, are not limited to one subject and that they can integrate different contents as a way to make students learn more and have greater knowledge. However, he stated that is often difficult to find Ecuadorian literature translated to English. He did not mention if he would implement Ecuadorian literature.

On one hand we have that students would like to implement Ecuadorian literature and that they feel positive and enthusiastic about it; on the other hand, teachers are reluctant, leaning on the pessimistic spectrum. Even though they say they it is a good idea, they are quick to point out all the reasons why its implementation would be challenging. It is interesting to mention that students stated several reasons why they would like to work with Ecuadorian literature and that those reasons resonated with the literature, providing tags such as multiculturalism, cultural awareness, and how it would make English learning easier. In spite of this, teachers' reasoning does not provide much connection with researched literature.



4.2.4. Question 4

Do you believe that including Ecuadorian literature in our lessons would motivate students to learn English?	
Do teachers believe Ecuadorian literature would motivate students?	<p>“Yes, it would motivate my students because important people such as artists and writers generally have a very interesting life or anecdotes that want to share and students are often interested in that. Moreover, in literature we often come across beautiful works that more than once grab the student’s attention”</p>
Yes: 2	
Not certain: 1	<p>“It may be a very good idea, but I don’t think all of the students are going to feel motivated during the lesson since not all of them are interested in reading”</p>
Other data collected:	
Reasons in favor of including Ecuadorian literature	<p>“Of course they will be motivated, actually students get motivated simply by the fact of using a different language instead of just learning the structure and pronunciation. It is motivating to read and learn about different cultures, so why cannot we start with our own culture and literature”</p>
Reasons against including Ecuadorian literature	



Two teachers were positive about this issue, while one was not certain. Teachers who said that Ecuadorian literature would motivate students stated so because they believe Ecuadorian writers had interesting lives that students would like to know about; and because it would spice the class and stir students' interest if they are faced with learning about more than one culture. The third teacher mentioned that even though it would be a good idea, not all students like to read, and thus, they would not be interested in reading literature, Ecuadorian or else.

The most revealing aspect of this research is that it seems as though teachers are not aware of the many benefits that cultural awareness brings into the EFL classroom, as they failed to mention common perspectives shared by experts. On the other hand, students showed much more understanding of why Ecuadorian literature would make English learning easier and mentioned reasons such as that it would enhance their basic language skills and that it would make the target language easier to understand due to its close relationship to students' previous cultural knowledge.

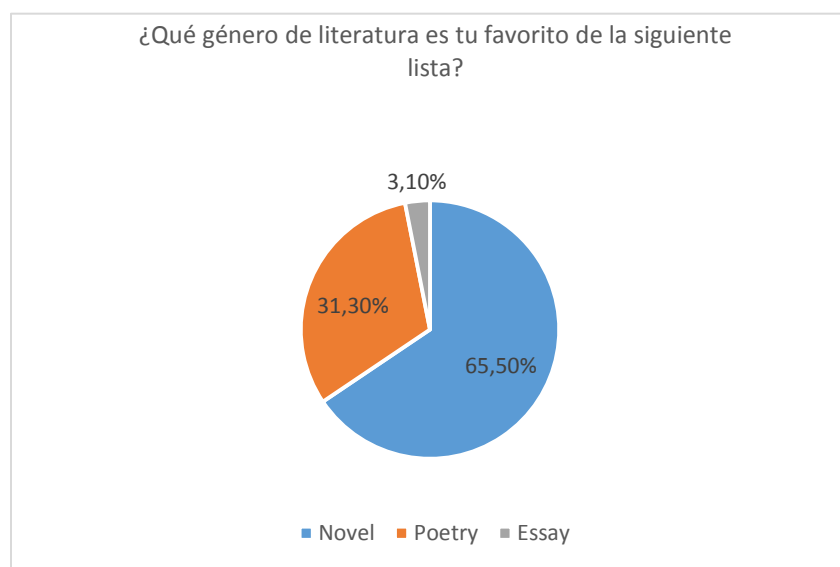


4.3. Results of the survey for high school students about their preferences regarding literature

The results of this survey showed students' preferences regarding literary genres and the topics that they would like to read within their selected genre. Thanks to this information it was possible to understand what material students would find the most interesting in order to compile it. It is worth highlighting that including students' interests as one of the main aspects for selection is crucial for this research, as reading texts that students find appealing will make it easier for them to engage and enjoy the activity.

4.3.1. Question 1

¿Qué género de literatura es tu favorito de la siguiente lista?		
Options	Number of answers	Percentage
Novel	21	65,6%
Poetry	10	31,30%
Essay	1	3,1%

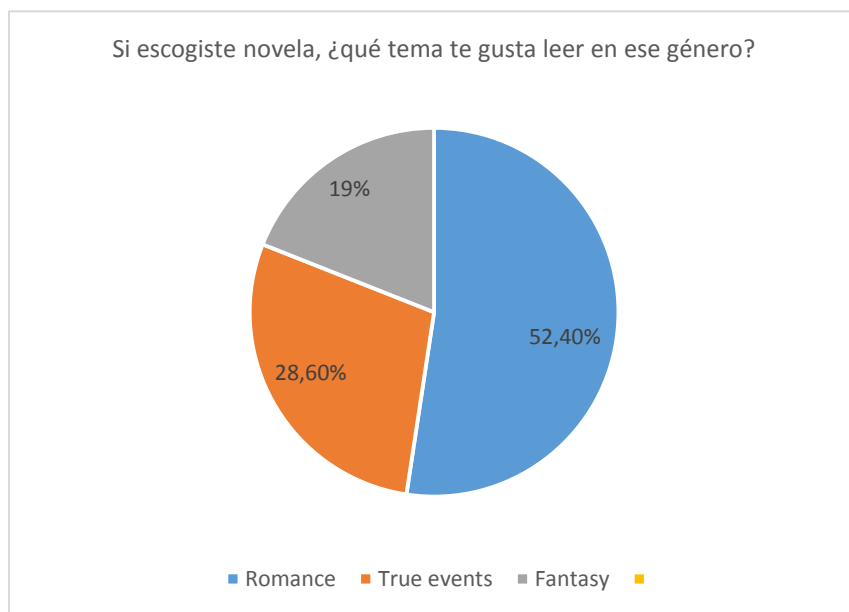




As shown in question one, over half of the surveyed students chose ‘novel’ as their preferred literary genre. The data obtained was the following: 65.6% prefer the novel; 31.3% prefer poetry; and only 3.1% prefer the essay. Thus, the information gathered complies to research done by Hirvela and Boyle (1988) and Akyel and Yalçin (1990) who state that the novel is the most popular literary genre among high school students.

4.3.2. Question 2

Si escogiste novela, ¿qué tema te gusta leer en ese género?		
Options	Number of answers	Percentage
Romance	11	52.4%
Stories based on true events	6	28.6%
Fantasy	4	19%

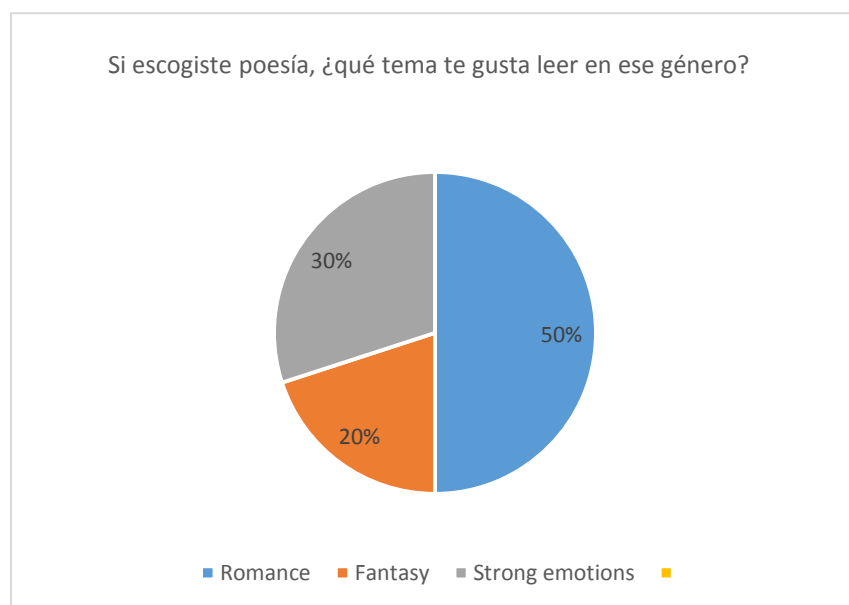




Students were asked to answer this question only if they selected ‘novel’ as their preferred literary genre. Out of 21 students who answered this question, 11 chose ‘romance’ as the topic that they like the most to read in this genre, which makes up 52,4% of surveyed students. In second place came ‘stories based on true events’, with 28,6% of students selecting this option. Finally, 19% of students preferred to read ‘fantasy’ novels.

4.3.3. Question 3

Si escogiste poesía, ¿qué tema te gusta leer en ese género?		
Options	Number of answers	Percentage
Romance	5	50%
Fantasy	2	20%
Strong emotions (anger, melancholy, etc)	3	30%

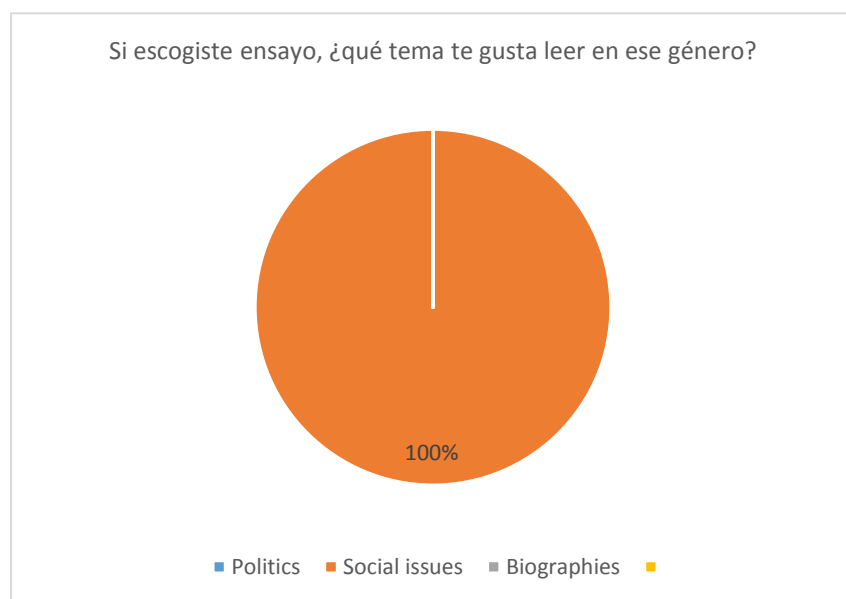




This question was available for students who selected poetry as their preferred literary genre. Five out of ten chose ‘romance’ as the topic that they like to read about the most, which makes 50% of the surveyed students. In second place came poetry depicting strong emotions (anger, sadness, dread, regret, and so on), with 30% of students selecting this option. Finally, only 20% of students chose fantasy as their preferred topic to read. Once again, fantasy was the last of the list.

4.3.4. Question 4

Options	Number of answers	Percentage
Politics	0	0%
Social issues	1	100%
Biographies	0	0%

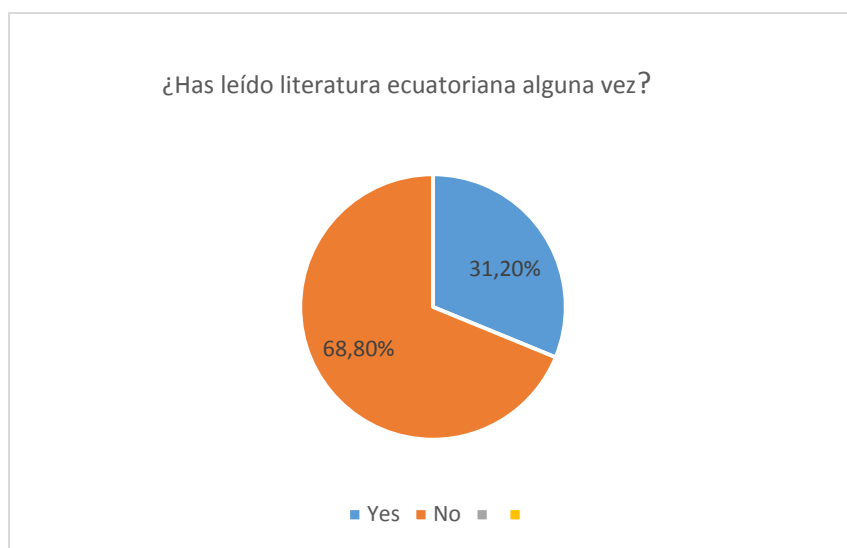




There was only one student who chose the essay as his preferred literary genre. Since there was only one student who chose this genre, the topic of ‘social issues’ makes up 100% of the results.

4.3.5. Question 5

¿Has leído literatura ecuatoriana alguna vez?		
Options	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	10	31,2%
No	22	68,8%



As shown by the results of this question, less than half of the surveyed students had read Ecuadorian literature before the survey was conducted. This is certainly shocking since the Ecuadorian curriculum for Spanish includes Ecuadorian authors and books in the material that Bachillerato students must read. Despite this fact, only 31.2% of students said that they had read Ecuadorian literature before, while 68.8% said that they have not read Ecuadorian literature in



the past. The results obtained through this question confirm what El Mercurio Newspaper (2015) published in an article about students' lack of knowledge regarding Ecuadorian literature.

4.3.6. Question 6

Question 6 was open-ended, leaving room for students to share their preferred piece of Ecuadorian literature. Out of 32 students surveyed, only four answered this question. Twenty-four students did not write anything, two said that -even though they had read Ecuadorian literature before- they did not remember the title or plot of what they had read, and two students wrote down Ecuadorian legends as texts that they had read before; however, they did not provide the name of any book containing those legends, which is why they were not included in the results.

The texts provided by students were the following:

Title	Author	Genre	Topic
Las Cruces Sobre el Agua (x2)	Joaquin Gallegos Lara	Novel	Based on true events
El Alma en los labios	Medardo Angel Silva	Poetry	Romance
Soñadora, Elena Soñadora	Jorge Dávila Vásquez	Novel	Fantasy/Romance

It is worth mentioning that “Las Cruces Sobre el Agua” was mentioned two times by different students. These texts are a great starting point that will allow teachers to understand students' preferences better. Furthermore, the novel was again the most popular genre, while romance was a topic shared by two of the given titles. Therefore, the results for this question are consistent with the data gathered in questions one and two.



Chapter 5

Conclusions and recommendations

4.1. Conclusions

After closely analyzing the results obtained through the instruments that were applied, it is interesting how teachers' and students' points of view are conflicted regarding the implementation of Ecuadorian literature as a tool for enhancing and facilitating English learning and performance. On one hand, students showed their willingness to learn English through Ecuadorian literature; whereas teachers seemed uncertain. Most importantly, the data gathered provides a starting point for future research.

Summarizing, the three main reasons that students stated in favor of implementing Ecuadorian literature: (1) It is appealing/interesting, (2) it promotes cultural awareness, (3) it makes English easier to learn. These positive answers provided by students are consistent with several studies that set forth the benefits of introducing local culture in the EFL classroom. For instance, Khan (2016) asserted through research that foreign language students prefer to learn the target language through the use of local material because they find it more interesting and relatable. On the other hand, the main reason against implementing Ecuadorian literature in the English class was its complexity. Thus, it is important to select material that is appropriate for the students' level, as Hismanoglu (2005) suggests.

Furthermore, students' perspectives about what they perceive are the benefits that Ecuadorian literature would bring into the EFL classroom are a great source of input. Thus, the two main reasons provided by students for considering Ecuadorian literature as a tool for enhancing English learning are: (1) It enhances language skills, and (2) interest in cultural topics.



Thus, students' claims are similar to those of Sacawa (2017), Spnngenber and Pritchard (1994), Tanaka (2015), and Maryam and Zamanian (2014), who urged teachers to integrate local culture in their lessons. Additionally, students specified that they believe that Ecuadorian literature should not be implemented only for Bachillerato, as it would interfere with the on-going teaching program. Instead, they believe that it should be introduced during the early years of English education. These results come out as a great opportunity for educators to think about what students would like to see in their curriculum.

Oppositely, teachers seem uncertain about implementing Ecuadorian literature. Although their general approach supports innovation, they are concerned regarding certain aspects of its implementation. Additionally, their points of view often do not coincide with students' nor experts' perspectives. In the first place, interviewed teachers rarely include Ecuadorian literature nor culture-related material into their lessons, even though 90.3% of students said that they would like the teacher to include Ecuadorian literature in their English lessons.

Second, English teachers do not seem to be aware of what are the potential benefits of including local culture in the EFL classroom. As seen before, those benefits include long-term learning (Collie & Slater, 1990), the ability to engage students' interest (Maley, 1989; Weir, 2009; Sacawa (2017), the chance to practice the language skills they have acquired in a meaningful context (Murat, 2005), heightened self-esteem and performance (Spangenberg & Pritchrd, 1994), and lessening the challenge of learning new language by providing students with a familiar context (Tanaka, 2015). It is interesting to note that students seemed to perceive most of these benefits while teachers did not.

Moreover, the concerns voiced by teachers were the following: (1) literary texts are complex, (2) there is no material to work with, and (3) teachers are pressured to cover units



within timeframes. Regardless, they state that they would be willing to implement Ecuadorian literature under the right circumstances and with appropriate material. This data is interesting as it shows the necessity for a compilation of level-appropriate material that teachers can use for their lessons.

As a final point, in order to select the material that teachers could use for their lessons, it was necessary to understand students' preferences regarding literature in order to make the selected texts interesting for students. Thus, the romantic novel was the most popular literary genre, closely followed by novels that are based on true events.

As a conclusion, it would be positive and viable to include Ecuadorian literature as a tool for enhancing English learning in the classroom since students are willing and optimistic about its implementation and the benefits they could get out of it. Therefore, the chances that students increase their performance through this method increase (Cummins, 1986; Maryam & Zamanian, 2014) given that they are interested in this approach, as revealed through the surveys. Furthermore, by providing material that is appropriate for the level and interests of the students, teachers would not need to feel concerned about a lack of material. Consequently, it would not result burdensome for them to start working with cultural-related material.



4.2. Recommendations

The research presented here could benefit from further exploration. For instance, its implementation would allow future research to expand on the benefits of using Ecuadorian literature in the EFL classroom, as well as demonstrating if there is any measurable improvement in students' performance. It could also show what hardships would arise during the lesson time, and how to overcome them.

Regarding the lack of material to work with and the difficulty to find Ecuadorian literature in English stated by teachers, it is important to mention that there are plenty of translated Ecuadorian texts that teachers could work with, especially those of the last century. Classical texts, such as Huasipungo, have been translated many times by different print houses. Similarly, there are independent translations of Ecuadorian authors here and there. For example, several books and plays by Jorge Davila Andrade, a local author who teaches at the University of Cuenca, have been translated over the years, and there are digital versions available for free. Furthermore, teachers who are concerned about the complexity of written texts should consider using the compiled material in this document.



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Appendices

Appendix 1: Format of survey for students 1

Encuesta para estudiantes sobre recursos al momento de aprender inglés

Edad:

Sexo:

1. ¿Incluye tu profesor actividades relacionadas con la literatura ecuatoriana en clase?

SI NO

2. Si tu respuesta a la pregunta 1 fue SÍ, ¿te gusta que se incluya literatura ecuatoriana en la clase de inglés?

SI NO

¿Por qué?

3. Si tu respuesta a la pregunta 1 fue NO, ¿te gustaría que el profesor incluya literatura ecuatoriana durante la clase de inglés?

SI NO

¿Por qué?

4. ¿Crees que trabajar con actividades que incluyan la literatura ecuatoriana en la clase de inglés facilita el aprendizaje del idioma?

SI NO

¿Por qué?



Encuesta para estudiantes sobre recursos al momento de aprender Ingles

Edad: 17

Sexo: Masculino

1. ¿Incluye tu profesor de inglés actividades relacionadas con la literatura ecuatoriana en clase?

Si No

2. Si tu respuesta la pregunta 1 fue si, ¿Te gusta que se incluya literatura ecuatoriana en la clase de inglés?

Si No

¿Por qué?

Por el hecho que me encanto los relatos que promueven nuestra cultura y enriquece nuestra cultura.

3. Si tu respuesta la pregunta 1 fue no, ¿Te gustaría que el profesor incluya literatura ecuatoriana durante la clase de inglés?

Si No

¿Por qué?

Existen varias razones entre las cuales estan enriquecen nuestro lexico en otro idioma.

4. ¿Crees que el trabajar con actividades que incluyan la literatura ecuatoriana en la clase de inglés facilita el aprendizaje del idioma?

Si No

¿Por qué?

Es mas facil asociar con cosas conocidas para el facil entendimiento.



Encuesta para estudiantes sobre recursos al momento de aprender Ingles

Edad: 17

Sexo: Masculino

1. ¿Incluye tu profesor de inglés actividades relacionadas con la literatura ecuatoriana en clase?

Si No

2. Si tu respuesta la pregunta 1 fue si, ¿Te gusta que se incluya literatura ecuatoriana en la clase de inglés?

Si No

¿Por qué?

Para conocer nuestro Ecuador de otra perspectiva

3. Si tu respuesta la pregunta 1 fue no, ¿Te gustaría que el profesor incluya literatura ecuatoriana durante la clase de inglés?

Si No

¿Por qué?

~~Para~~ Por que el ingles seria mas dinámico, y no solo materia.

4. ¿Crees que el trabajar con actividades que incluyan la literatura ecuatoriana en la clase de inglés facilita el aprendizaje del idioma?

Si No

¿Por qué?

Por que estamos familiarizados con nuestra cultura y se recordaria facilmente



Appendix 2: Format of survey for students 2

Cuestionario

1. **¿Qué género de literatura es tu favorito de la siguiente lista? Escoge solo uno.**
 - a) Novela
 - b) Poesía
 - c) Ensayo
2. **Si escogiste novela, ¿qué tema te gusta leer en ese género? Escoge sólo uno.**
 - a) Romance
 - b) Historias reales
 - c) Fantasía
3. **Si escogiste poesía, ¿qué tema te gusta leer en ese género? Escoge sólo uno.**
 - d) Romance
 - e) Fantasía
 - f) Emociones fuertes (tristeza, ira, etc.)
4. **Si escogiste ensayo, ¿qué tema te gusta leer en ese género? Escoge sólo uno.**
 - g) Política
 - h) Temas sociales
 - i) Biografías
5. **¿Has leído literatura ecuatoriana alguna vez?**
 - a) Si
 - b) No
6. **Si respondiste SÍ a la pregunta 5, escribe en el cuadro tu obra ecuatoriana preferida.**

Título	¿De qué trata? (Máximo 2 líneas)



Questionario

1. ¿Qué género de literatura es tu favorito de la siguiente lista? Escoge solo uno.

- a) Novela
- b) Poesía
- c) Ensayo

2. Si escogiste novela, ¿qué tema te gusta leer en ese género? Escoge sólo uno.

- a) Romance
- b) Historias reales
- c) Fantasía

3. Si escogiste poesía, ¿qué tema te gusta leer en ese género? Escoge sólo uno.

- d) Romance
- e) Fantasía
- f) Emociones fuertes (tristeza, ira, etc.)

4. Si escogiste ensayo, ¿qué tema te gusta leer en ese género? Escoge sólo uno.

- g) Política
- h) Temas sociales
- i) Biografías

5. ¿Has leído literatura ecuatoriana alguna vez?

- a) Sí
- b) No

6. Si respondiste Sí a la pregunta 5, escribe en el cuadro tu obra ecuatoriana preferida.

Título	¿De qué trata? (Máximo 2 líneas)
Legendas ecuatorianas	Legendas que se cuentan en el Ecuador.



Questionario

1. ¿Qué género de literatura es tu favorito de la siguiente lista? Escoge solo

uno.

- a) Novela
- b) Poesía
- c) Ensayo

2. Si escogiste novela, ¿qué tema te gusta leer en ese género? Escoge sólo uno.

- a) Romance
- b) Historias reales
- c) Fantasía

3. Si escogiste poesía, ¿qué tema te gusta leer en ese género? Escoge sólo uno.

- d) Romance
- e) Fantasía
- f) Emociones fuertes (tristeza, ira, etc.)

4. Si escogiste ensayo, ¿qué tema te gusta leer en ese género? Escoge sólo uno.

- g) Política
- h) Temas sociales
- i) Biografías

5. ¿Has leído literatura ecuatoriana alguna vez?

- a) Sí
- b) No

6. Si respondiste Sí a la pregunta 5, escribe en el cuadro tu obra ecuatoriana preferida.

Título	¿De qué trata? (Máximo 2 líneas)
No me acuerdo.	



Appendix 3: Interviews to teachers

English teacher 1

1. Do you include activities related with the Ecuadorian literature in your English lessons?

How often do you include them?

I rarely include topics related Ecuadorian literature, since we teachers tend to use the books, which almost never contain material related to literature, even less Ecuadorian literature. However, the times I do I procure of materials regarding Ecuadorian authors, biographies, and some inspirational lines of literature.

What is your students' attitude towards lessons related to the Ecuadorian literature?

I personally believe that Ecuadorian literature could be of help to support English lessons, however I think that one has to be careful the way the teacher manages such material. This is because literature sometimes can confuse students since it uses complex language that might put students into trouble. Still I believe that more simple material such as biographies that might be more adequate for students.

2. If you are not currently doing it, would you consider integrating Ecuadorian literature in your lessons? Why?

Depending on the way it is integrated I might be up to the task. This is because integrating completely students to read and analyze works of literature might not be a good idea for both the teacher and students. Literature uses complex sentences, abstract concepts etc, that often have proven to be too difficult for their level. However, if the material is appropriate to their level, I would be completely willing to do it.



3. Do you believe including Ecuadorian literature in your lessons would motivate students learn English? Why?

Yes, it would motivate my students because important people such as artists and writers generally have a very interesting life or anecdotes that want to share and students are often interested in that. Moreover, in literature we often come across beautiful works that more than once grab the student's attention.

English teacher 2

1. Do you include activities related with the Ecuadorian literature in your English lessons?

How often do you include them?

When the unit requires, I sometimes look for activities related to Ecuadorian literature, otherwise I concentrate on other topics even though I think it is important to integrate culture. Sometimes I contrast American culture with the Ecuadorian one to make the class more interactive.

2. What is your students' attitude towards lessons related to the Ecuadorian literature?

When it comes about culture they are not really interested, but activities need to be really dynamic so they get interested in the topic. They have a very good level of English, so their performance is pretty good.

2. If you are not currently doing it, would you consider integrating Ecuadorian literature in your lessons? Why?



It would be a good idea, but there is some pressure that teachers have when trying to finish the content units.

3. Do you believe including Ecuadorian literature in your lessons would motivate students learn English? Why?

It may be a very good idea, but I don't think all of the students are going to feel motivated during the lesson since not all of them are interested in reading.

Questionnaire to English teacher 3

1. Do you include activities related with the Ecuadorian literature in your English lessons?

How often do you include them?

I don't include them.

2. What is your students' attitude towards lessons related to the Ecuadorian literature?

I haven't included Ecuadorian literature yet in my lessons.

3. If you are not currently doing it, would you consider integrating Ecuadorian literature in your lessons? Why?

Because it is important to educate our students. The fact that we teach English doesn't mean that we only teach how to speak and understand language. We can teach many different things by means of a foreign language, including philosophy, engineering, so why wouldn't we



include literature from our own country? The problem is that it is difficult to find Ecuadorian literature in English.

4. Do you believe including Ecuadorian literature in your lessons would motivate students learn English? Why?

Of course they will be motivated, actually students get motivated simply by the fact of using a different language instead of just learning the structure and pronunciation. It is motivating to read and learn about different cultures, so why cannot we start with our own culture and literature.



Appendix 4: List of selected texts

This section consists of a list of five Ecuadorian texts that can be used by teachers in the English classroom. The texts presented here were selected through the following criteria: Novels written by Ecuadorian authors in English that suit students' interests and are appropriate for their English level (A2). It is worth mentioning that these books have not been translated; all of them were written in English by English teachers who wished to provide their students with supporting literary material that was easy to understand, and that allowed them to engage in the reading. Therefore, the texts are written with careful detail to grammar, tenses, structures, and vocabulary, so that high school students can take advantage of them as a tool for improving their English skills. For this reason, the texts do not use obscure words nor difficult literary figures; instead, the texts rely on simple day-to-day dialogues, literal meaning, and high-frequency vocabulary.

According to the European Framework of Reference (EFR) and the Ministerio de Educación (2016), the skills that students should master with an A.2. level are the following: they can narrate events of the past, describe places, describe people, talk about their hobbies, agree or disagree, make comparisons, make predictions, and talk about achievements. Additionally, the structures that they can use are: the simple tense in all its forms, simple past with regular and irregular forms, time expressions, past progressive, there is/was, time conjunctions, imperatives, modals of obligation and advice, comparatives and superlatives, compound words, future tense, use of will and going to for future, present perfect and past participle forms.

Additionally, the texts selected do not engage in violence, sexual content, rude vocabulary, or controversial topics such as religion or politics.



Blood type (2002)

Blood type is a novel written by Bermudez (2002) for Speak English Enterprises, which requested that the novel be written using only the present simple tense in order to be read by basic and intermediate learners. Even though it is a relatively sort novel, it does not stray from topics that every teenager should be aware of, such as social issues and romance.

The plot is about a young businessman and his son, who does not want to continue the family business. Instead, he wants to be a teacher, but his father does not approve of his decision. In spite of that, the main character finds a way to work as a part-time English teacher in his free time. There he falls in love with one of his students: a young immigrant girl from a poor family. It is a story that revolves about romance, social issues, family problems, as well as the fear of letting down the people you care about the most. The intensity of the story heightens when the main character wishes to get married but his family forbids it.

Students can easily relate to this text because it talks about migration, a social issue that has been a reality in Ecuador for the last few decades. Additionally, the love interest of the protagonist usually talks about her own culture using Spanish words. Students will be able to identify with the immigrant girl and relate to her cultural background. Finally, the story presented here is a romantic novel, which is students' favorite literary genre.



Antonio (2005)

Antonio is the second book written by Bermudez (2005) as supporting material for English learners. This time, the story focuses on Antonio, a teenage boy living in the United States with his father. At school, people describe him as a 'latino' which causes Antonio to feel confused about his identity. Even though he looks like his father, his skin color is that of his mother, a Colombian woman who died when he was a toddler. He starts a journey to discover his true identity, and finds out that his mother is alive and looking for him. The story is easy to read and engaging for teenagers; additionally, the 'latino' background of the story makes the cultural contexts easier to understand, as Ecuadorian students will be able to reflect on their own experiences and compare it to Antonio's.



Wet Back (2007)

This book by Bermudez (2007) follows the story of Antonio after the events of the previous book but a few years in the future. It shows Antonio as a young adult living in Colombia with his mother. However, one day he goes missing. His mother finds out that he decided to travel to the United States illegally, following what many call “the immigrant’s route” and posing for one of them. He then comes face to face to all the hardships that immigrants go through when they go looking for the “American dream”. It is yet to be discovered why he embarked on such an extreme mission; the real reason will be revealed along his journey.

This story is the perfect follow-up for Antonio, especially if students liked the previous book and would like to keep reading about Antonio’s life. Half of the book happens in Colombia, while the other half happens during Antonio’s trip, a situation in which he meets different people, all ‘latino’ from different cultural backgrounds. The relaxed language and Spanish words used in this text make this novel easy to understand and easy to engage in. Given that many Ecuadorian families can identify with Antonio’s situation; this novel will result in a great way to have students read about true events while working on their English skills.



Listen to your heart (2015)

This novel, written by Montero (2015), deals with typical teenager concerns and insecurities as we see the main character –Joao- transition from high school into college with the help of his friends. He will meet new people during this time, and maybe that special someone, too. For those interested in getting to know Joao better, his adventures and misadventures continue in part two of Listen to Your Heart, which has not been published yet. Montero (2015) regularly works as a university teacher, and she thought about Joao's story based on her interactions with her teenage and young adult students. The book was written reflecting on what are common concerns among teenagers. For this reason, students will be able to identify to the main characters, who will have to face day-to-day struggles that all teenagers are familiar with. Once again, the familiar cultural contexts make it easier for students to read, engage, and follow the story.



On the road to dreams (2012)

This book is the first in a trilogy written by Vargas (2012), an Ecuadorian teacher who likes to write English novels in his free time. *On the Road to Dreams* (2012) was written as supporting material for his own students; however, he mentioned that it is suitable for any EFL class. Its center topics are teenage life, romance, and following one's dreams.

The story tells the story of Clara and Bruno, two teenagers who want to achieve their dreams: she wants to be a famous ballerina, and he wants to succeed in the music industry. They meet somewhere along the way, and together they realize that the road to dreams is not easy, and that they must commit to many sacrifices in order to carry on. Despite the difficulties that they encounter, they rely on their own passion for the things that they love and want to achieve in order to not give up. Students will identify with Clara and Bruno who are both Ecuadorian and constantly references their cultural background.



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