

MASTEROPPGAVE

Promoting Intercultural Competence Through Literature and Film

- *The Outsiders* and its adaptation

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, the question of how the novel *The Outsiders* (Hinton, 1967) might be used in conjunction with its film adaptation *The Outsiders: The Complete Novel* (Coppola [Dir.], 2005) to promote intercultural competence in the English language classroom is discussed. To answer the research questions, a theoretical framework comprised by theories of intercultural competence, the advantages of using literature and film in the classroom, the concepts of prejudice and stereotypes, and official steering documents from Norway, are taken as points of departure. The research method that is utilized is action research and based on an analysis of the novel with the intercultural perspective in focus, and a comparison of the two media, a teaching sequence was carried out with a small group of learners in lower secondary school. The teaching sequence was carried out in the spring of 2018. The analysis done after the teaching sequence shows that tasks that include the elements of experience, comparison, analysis and reflection, both in co-operation with peers and through individual work, aid learners in developing their intercultural competence. Furthermore, the analysis shows that learners have a positive attitude towards working with the novel in conjunction with the film adaptation, and that they get a deeper understanding of the story and the concepts in focus. The assessment reveals that there has been a development in the learners' intercultural competence. The thesis concludes that working with the novel in conjunction with the adaptation does aid in promoting intercultural competence.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Globalization is shrinking the world, and this leads to people of different cultures coming closer together. Cultural boundaries are shifting, and because of this shift, cultural diversity and intercultural contact have become facts of modern life (UNESCO, 2013, p. 7). The increasing diversity of cultures implies that there is a need for learners to improve their intercultural competence. According to UNESCO (2013), there is a growing awareness that intercultural competence is a relevant resource which aids individuals in intercultural encounters and experiences. Furthermore, it is claimed that acquiring intercultural competence is a unique opportunity for mankind to “avoid all phenomena of confinement or ghettoization by offering new opportunities of multiple interpretations and unexpected discoveries” (p. 5).

The traditional foreign language courses mostly cover grammar, phonetics, literature and cultural studies (Dypedahl & Eschenbach, 2011a, p. 209). However, as our society becomes increasingly multicultural, so does the importance of promoting and utilizing the diversity that multiculturalism entails, as a resource in the classroom. According to Michael Byram, Bella Gribkova and Hugh Starkey (2002) “it has been widely recognized in the language teaching profession that learners need not just knowledge and skills in the grammar of a language but also the ability to use the language in socially and culturally appropriate ways” (p. 7). Thus, the challenge for language teachers is to incorporate the intercultural dimension into their teaching (ibid). To develop intercultural competence, a knowledge of cultures is needed, however, factual knowledge is not enough. The knowledge of various cultures and social groups needs to be put into context with an intercultural perspective. This includes the knowledge of values, stereotypes and prejudice, ethnocentrism, identity, and verbal – and non-verbal differences (Dypedahl & Eschenbach, 2011a, p. 216). The teacher’s role is to teach analytical skills that help equip learners with the ability to interact with people of other cultures (Byram et al., 2002, p. 11), and the aim of the language learning should be for the language classroom to be a starting point for the process of developing intercultural competence (Dypedahl, 2007, pp. 6-7).

According to Luis Valdes (1986), literature is the product of culture or “culture in action” (p. 117), and it is in literature all the cultural elements interact and affect each other. This entails that through literature, the readers can have the feeling of being part of a culture (Zacharias, 2005, p. 30). Furthermore, reading literature lets the readers participate in the

culture they are reading about through the experiences of the characters in the text (Collie & Slater, 1987, p. 3). The literary text offers a vivid context in which members of a social or cultural group can be depicted, and by experiencing this context through the eyes of the characters, a reader can discover the characters' feelings, thoughts, customs and language. Thus, the reader may get an insight into what the depicted society and its members are like (Zacharias, 2005, p. 30).

Today, literature is not only confined to the printed version, it has expanded to include stories told on the screen and many literary works have been represented through film (Bao, 2008, p. 58). It can be argued, that learners' familiarity with visual media in their everyday lives makes film an excellent pedagogical tool, and several studies have shown that the use of media in conjunction with text is an effective teaching approach (Ward, 2004, p. 22). However, adaptation of a text to film is often described as problematic because there is the question of what can be lost in the transference of a story from one medium to another (Ştirbetiu, n.d., p. 491). The process of film adaptation is the act of adapting a written text into film by using the written text as a basis, thus, it might be called an interpretation of the text (ibid, p. 492).

Works of fiction, such as literary texts and films, work at both a cognitive and an emotional level, and with their ambiguity and imaginary worlds, they open for the exploration of meaning (Hoff, 2013, p. 28). Literary works and their film adaptations are often compared by their readers and viewers, because they are said to tell the same story, and because the reader's initial experience with the story usually comes through the written text, this is considered to be the "correct" way of telling the story. However, the inherent differences between a text and a film, which will be discussed in chapter 2, will let the learner have two different experiences of a story (Bao, 2008, p. 58). Films are authentic cultural products and they provide the learners with genuine input (Roell, 2010, p. 2; Mishan, 2004, p. 216) and the same can be said about literary works. The input learners get through these cultural products aids them in seeing a connection between the activities they do in the classroom and real-world experiences. Furthermore, it helps show that the learning activities they participate in are transferable to situations outside the classroom.

1.2. Aim

As the introduction has shown, there is a need for the inclusion of intercultural competence in education today. I want to examine how literature and film can be used together as resources in the English language classroom to promote intercultural competence. I have chosen the novel *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton (1967) and the adaptation *The Outsiders: The Complete Novel* (Coppola [Dir.], 2005) as teaching tools. The original adaptation was released in 1983 and was considered to be unsuccessful at the box office. However, after receiving many letters with questions as to why the director chose to omit so much of the plot in the novel, a remake was done in 2005 where the adaptation is truer to the plot of the novel.

My research questions are:

- To what extent does the novel *The Outsiders* have the potential to promote intercultural competence in the English language classroom?
- To what extent does the film adaptation have the potential to promote intercultural competence in the English language classroom?
- What advantages are there in using both the novel and the film adaptation together to promote intercultural competence?

My intention is to investigate, through a teaching sequence and action research, whether the novel and the film adaptation as teaching tools will promote intercultural competence (henceforth IC). My hypotheses are that the novel in conjunction with the film adaptation will:

- Motivate the learners
- Engage and enthuse the learners
- Promote IC through a deeper understanding of the dangers of relying on prejudice and stereotypes

1.3. Overview of study

Following the introduction chapter, there will be an overview of the theoretical framework of the thesis, namely theories about IC and the components that comprise IC. Furthermore, the theoretical framework will examine the impact that stereotyping and prejudice have on intercultural communication. There will be a presentation of literature and film as teaching tools, a comparison of the two media, and the official steering documents from Norway will be examined. The chapter will end in an examination of how to incorporate the intercultural dimension in foreign language teaching.

The third chapter will present the method and material that comprise the basis for the teaching sequence and the research that took place in the classroom. The action research method will be presented, and an analysis of the novel with an examination of the differences and similarities found in the novel and its adaptation. Furthermore, the group of learners participating in the teaching sequence will be presented.

These initial chapters will be followed by a presentation of the teaching sequence and the learning activities. In addition, the recordings made during the teaching sequence will be presented and discussed. The thesis will end in a conclusion.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In what follows, I will clarify and explain some of the concepts that are key when working to improve IC and a definition of IC will be put forth. In addition, there will be an examination of the impact that stereotyping and prejudice have on intercultural communication. There will be a discussion on the benefits of using literature and films as teaching tools, before some relevant official steering documents will be presented. The chapter will end in an examination of approaches to teaching IC in the classroom.

2.1. Developing intercultural competence

2.1.1. Key concepts

To understand the concept of IC, it is helpful to clarify and explain some of the related concepts such as identity, culture, intercultural encounters and competence (Barrett, Byram, Lazar, Mompoin-Gailard & Philippou, 2014, p. 13).

Identity “is a multifaceted, dynamic, abstract concept that plays an integral role in daily communicative interaction and particularly in intercultural communication” (Samovar, Porter, McDaniel & Roy, 2015, p. 243). Identity is a person’s sense of who they are, and most people attribute themselves a variety of different identities according to different contexts. These multiple identities help people navigate and orient themselves through the world when they relate to other people (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 13). In society today, cultures mix through globalization, and cross-cultural interaction is part of everyday life. Identity plays a vital role in intercultural communication, and it is of importance to understand what it entails (Samovar et al., 2015, p. 243).

The concept of cultural identity is a term that is relevant when working with IC. Cultural identity refers to having a sense of belonging to a particular group based on various cultural categories such as nationality, race and gender. Cultural identity is constructed and maintained through, among others, tradition, heritage and language. Individuals typically affiliate with more than one cultural group which makes the notion of cultural identity so complex and multifaceted (Chen, 2014). “Identity is not a single entity”, it is a combination of multiple integrated identities that people use in combination based on the situation they are in and the context of an encounter (Samovar et al., 2015, p. 245). All the identities people attribute themselves are influenced to various degrees by culture (ibid, p. 248), and according to Magne Dypedahl and Henrik Bøhn (2017) it is possible to claim that all individuals are their own cultures (p. 62).

In English foreign language learning, elements of culture have previously been seen as static, representative and homogenous because learners and teachers tend to create and rely on stereotypes and generalizations. However, recent developments in the area have led to the acknowledgement of the fact that *culture* is dynamic and variable. This is because it is now recognized that members of a given community display different behavior, attitudes and values towards what is established within their community (Gomez Rodriguez, 2013, p. 97). *Culture* has been defined in many ways. Gert Hofstede's (2011) definition is: "Culture is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others" (p. 3). This definition fits well with the idea of cultural identity, because culture is always a collective phenomenon, however, there is always a variety of individuals within the cultural groups. These individuals move between the cultural groups and assume their different identities according to what group they are participating in.

Barrett et al. (2014) draw a distinction between material, social and subjective aspects of culture. Material culture consists of the material artefacts commonly used by a cultural group, social culture consists of social institutions¹ and subjective culture consists of the beliefs, practices, norms and values which the cultural group use as a point of reference to relate to the world. Culture itself is composed of all these three aspects, which means that culture is "a network of material, social and subjective resources" (p. 13). The idea behind this way of looking at culture is to show that groups of any size have their own distinctive culture (ibid, pp. 13-14).

Cultural boundaries are often blurred, and people are affiliated with several cultural groups. The boundaries between the groups are often near invisible and the complex identities that are part of them may have different views on what material, social and subjective resources the group is associated with (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 15). The fact that all cultures are dynamic and constantly changing due to interaction with other cultures, will always have an impact on how members perceive themselves and how they view and interact with other people (ibid). Culture is also said to have influence over the use and development of language, thus making both knowledge of culture and language important parts of the subject of English and for the development of IC. There is a significant interdependency between language and culture because language is the main medium for expression of culture, therefore, no language can be considered "culture-free", and rather all language users are carriers and agents of culture (Yalcin, 2013, p. 261).

¹ E.g. language, religion, laws, rules of social conduct, folklore, cultural icons.

Intercultural encounters are encounters between two persons from different cultural groups. These encounters may occur in real life or they might be an encounter online through communicative media. “An interpersonal encounter becomes an intercultural encounter when cultural differences are perceived and made salient either by the situation or by the individual’s own orientation and attitudes” (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 16). This means that in an intercultural encounter there is a risk that one may respond to the interlocutor based on the cultural group he or she belongs to, and not to the person’s individual characteristics. When faced with such encounters one will need IC to achieve harmonious interaction and engage in a successful conversation (ibid).

The term *competence* is understood not merely as a set of skills which is applied in a given context, “but as a combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills applied through action in any relevant situation” (ibid). Because situations that require IC are never similar, IC is subject to development and change, and further learning is always needed.

2.1.2. Intercultural competence

Barrett et al. (2014) state that IC enables one to understand and respect people of different cultural groups and to establish positive and constructive relationships with the members of such groups. This should be done by responding appropriately and respectfully in intercultural encounters. To be successful one needs to have insight into oneself and one’s cultural identity and appreciate and value the interlocutor’s perspective and individual character (pp. 16-17).

When two people interact in conversation, they do not only speak to each other to exchange information, but also to engage in social interaction. The interlocutors perceive each other as belonging to a specific social or cultural group, therefore, they act according to this perception. This is in relation to the social or cultural identity we perceive that the interlocutor has, and this influences how we act during the encounter. To such encounters we bring with us our communicative competence (Byram et al., 2002, p. 9). To have communicative competence means that we possess not only knowledge of the grammar of the language, but also the ability to use it in culturally and socially appropriate ways (ibid, p. 7).

In addition to communicative competence, learners need IC to ensure that they have the ability to “interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality” (ibid, p. 10). According to the definition of IC by Byram et al. (2002), the components of IC are attitudes, knowledge and skills. Moreover, they add a fourth aspect,

namely the values we bring with us from belonging to various social or cultural groups (p. 11).

Attitudes, as part of the foundation of IC, includes a desire to be curious and open-minded, furthermore, it includes the ability to be ready to suspend one's own disbelief about other cultures. One should also be willing to examine and evaluate one's own culture and the values, beliefs and behaviors that are integral to it. One should not assume that these are the only correct ones, and it is important to be able to see what they would look like from an outsider's point of view, simply put: to see the world from another's perspective. This is called the ability to decenter (Byram et al., 2002, p. 12). To have the correct attitude when it comes to IC means that one is willing to seek out opportunities to interact with individuals that have different cultural orientations, and who have a different perspective than oneself (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 19).

Knowledge does not primarily mean knowledge about a specific culture, but knowledge of how social groups and identities function (Byram et al., 2002, p. 12). It also involves knowledge and understanding of the processes of cultural, societal and individual interaction. It is of importance to have knowledge and awareness of the beliefs, values and practices that may be used by people from various cultural groups, and to be able to anticipate that the interlocutor has multiple identities (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 19). This entails that the communicator needs to have sensitivity towards cultural complexity and diversity, and learners should be able "to see both their own culture and foreign cultures from different points of view" (Lund, 2008, p. 4).

According to Byram et al. (2002), *skills* "are just as important as attitudes and knowledge" (p. 12), which means that the development of IC is dependent on all three components being present for successful intercultural communication to take place. The skills are needed to succeed in intercultural encounters, and they are divided into two components: *the skills of interpreting and relating*, and *the skills of discovery and action*. The skills of interpreting and relating involves the ability to interpret artefacts or events from another culture, and to explain and relate them to one's own culture (ibid, p. 13). This will aid learners in seeing how misunderstandings might arise, and how they might solve them (ibid, p. 12). The skills of discovery and interaction involve the ability to acquire new knowledge of another culture and the practices integral to it, and to make use of attitudes, knowledge and skills in actual communication and interaction. This entails gaining knowledge and putting it to use by integrating it into what one already knows (ibid, p. 13). Barrett et al. (2014) point to the importance of having plurilingual skills, which entails having skills to meet the

communicative demands when an encounter calls for the use of more than one language or language variety, or drawing upon a known language to understand another. In today's diverse society this is important because it helps avoid breakdowns in communication. Moreover, the ability to change and adapt according to the situation one is in is imperative to have a successful intercultural encounter (p. 20). The end goal of an intercultural encounter is for the participants, two equals, to learn something new about themselves and the interlocutor, master the situation they are in, and have a successful encounter. The individuals then both take the knowledge they have gained and bring it with them into their future encounters, thus developing their IC further with every encounter. This is referred to as the threshold level of IC (Bugge, 2011, p. 7), and the learners cross this threshold every time they use new knowledge in an encounter.

Critical cultural awareness (henceforth CCA) means that intercultural communicators are aware of their own beliefs and values, and the influences they have on how one views other people. It is the claim of Kristen Nugent and Theresa Catalano (2015) that communicators will strengthen their CCA if they are encouraged to look beyond their predetermined views, and thus make them critically evaluate their own beliefs. This deconstruction of their own beliefs will aid them in determining if the choices they make in communicative situations are sound with the help of critical thinking skills (p. 18). According to Ragnhild Lund (2008), CCA is a prerequisite for learners to be able to question their own modes of understanding, and this can be done through in-depth learning where independent thinking and critical reflection are the key elements (p. 4).

The intercultural dimension in language teaching aims to develop learners that are intercultural speakers and mediators that are able to look beyond stereotypes and prejudice, and thus are able to see that the interlocutor is an individual with complexity and multiple identities (Byram et al., 2002, p. 9). Intercultural speakers approach cultures with curiosity and openness and are ready to suspend disbelief about other cultures and beliefs about their own (Byram, 1997, p. 50). When these prerequisites are in place, the learners need the ability to put these to use in all situations that involve intercultural communication (Lund, 2008, p. 2).

2.1.3. Stereotypes and prejudice

Stereotypes and prejudice are both concepts related to the beliefs and attitudes we have towards certain people. "Stereotypes refer to generalizations about people based on the names of groups in which the people are real or imagined members" (Brislin, 2000, p. 195).

When we stereotype, we refer to preconceptions we have about a group of people without taking into consideration the differences among the individuals in the group (ibid, p. 198). The problem with relying on stereotypes is that we risk making decisions based on expectations that are not rooted in reality, and relying on both positive and negative stereotypes might be problematic (Dypedahl & Bøhn, 2017, p. 42). Research on stereotypes has shown that stereotyping reflects people's need to categorize and organize information, and later retrieve this information when needed (ibid). Richard Brislin (2000) claims that stereotypes are "shortcuts to thinking" (p. 199), which entails that we encounter so much information every day that we are unable to process and remember everything. That is why we need guidance or helpful hints to make decisions, and stereotyping is a tool that is useful for this purpose. Inevitably, stereotypes are found wherever people can attach a label to a certain group (ibid), and stereotypical perceptions are something we all carry with us.

Some stereotypes about a specific group might exist for generations within a society, thus they become part of the society's culture. These generalizations are passed down from generation to generation, and even though some are positive, most of them are of a negative nature (Brislin, 2000, p. 200). Stereotypes can be divided into two categories, namely normative stereotypes and personal stereotypes (Dypedahl & Bøhn, 2017, p. 40). Normative stereotypes are preconceptions one has about a certain group without having had direct contact with the group, while personal stereotypes refer to having preconceptions about a whole group based on personal experience, i.e. one defines a whole group based on an encounter with one individual (ibid, p. 41). According to Walter Fleming (2006), stereotyping is a poor substitute for getting to know people on a more intimate level and relying on stereotypes does not lead to a deeper understanding of a culture and the people that belong to it (p. 213), because stereotyping "can undermine our sense of who we are by suggesting that how we look or speak determine how we act" (Byram et al., 2002, p. 27). Working with and becoming familiar with the preconceptions others have about one's own cultural groups is fruitful in the sense that it makes the learners more aware of the dangers of relying on them when interacting with others (Dypedahl & Eschenbach, 2011b, p. 20).

There is a fine line between negative stereotyping to prejudice, and according to Byram et al. (2002), research suggests that overcoming prejudice is a top priority for language teachers (p. 27). "Prejudice involves not only a set of beliefs about others, which are captured in stereotypes, but it is also a deeply felt set of feelings about what is good and bad, right and wrong, moral and immoral, and so forth" (Brislin, 2000, p. 209). To be prejudiced against other groups involves a prejudgment of what traits and qualities they have according to the

group they belong to. Prejudice differ, but they are a universal aspect of human behavior, and have been present throughout recorded history. Despite efforts to eradicate prejudice over the years, prejudice is proving to be persistent and children become prejudiced through socialization (ibid). This leads to a division of people into distinct in-groups and out-groups. In-groups refer to people we consider similar to ourselves, and they are people we rely on and want to make proud. Their opinion and thoughts about our own behavior are of importance to us. Out-groups are the people that we keep at a distance, and for assorted reasons, we have negative feelings towards them. One might say that prejudice “refers to negative feelings about out-groups” (ibid, p. 210). Brislin (2000) claims that prejudiced attitudes are useful to us, and that is why they are so persistent. They give us advantages over others, such as rewards in society, they help us cover up our own deficiencies and they underline the fact that our way is the correct way (pp. 210-214).

To be able to discuss prejudice in a fruitful manner, it is useful to distinguish between different forms of prejudice: these can range from just being skeptical towards what one does not know, to pure racism. A light form of prejudice entails that one accepts one’s own group’s behavior but is skeptical towards people that think and act differently. Another, and more severe form of prejudice, involves acting neutrally and correctly towards members of out-groups, but not letting them come too close, or participate in one’s personal lives. The most severe form of prejudice is pure racism, and that means that one considers a group of people to be inferior to one’s own group, and because of this one might do all one can to make sure that this group does not get the same advantages in society (Dypedahl & Bøhn, 2017, p. 47). Prejudice is not usually based on factual knowledge, personal experience or logic, and to be successful intercultural communicators it is important to be able to look beyond these presumptions.

2.2. Literature to teach culture in the language classroom

In a context of foreign language education, literature has always been linked to culture (Hoff, 2017, p. 1) and according to Upadhyay (2013) “[l]iterature is the most enduring and extensive embodiment of a nation’s culture”, and through the reading experience we gain knowledge of the culture’s norms and values and gain firsthand experience about it through studying the literary works (pp. 40-42). Literary texts provide a subjective view of the portrayed culture, which leads to a more profound understanding of its inner workings. They offer insight into mentality, psychology and attitudes which are not accessible through any other media (ibid, p. 43). Literary works convey the language, manners, social attitudes and

the aura of the culture they portray (ibid, p. 46), which means that they are rich in cultural elements.

A literary work does not first and foremost portray a culture, but it is a representation of characters that are part of a culture, and this gives the reader an opportunity to identify and empathize with the characters (Fenner, 2011, p. 41). Literature is a useful tool when working within the intercultural dimension because learners gain insight into a culture that they most likely will not experience outside of the classroom, but through literature they will get an insight into what life is like for some members of a culture. Thus, literature is an inexhaustible source when it comes to giving insight into characters' lives and experiences in the portrayed culture (Dypedahl & Bøhn, 2017, p. 152). The text "stages encounters within the personality of the reader, expanding horizons, challenging prejudices as well as confirming beliefs (Wiland, 2000, p. 213), thus making the text a cultural meeting point between the reader and the text (Hoff, 2013, p. 32).

Teachers are required to choose literary texts for teaching purposes that represent a spectrum of racial and ethnic groups (Nodelmann & Reimer, 2003, p. 171), and the works that are chosen should be depictions of various cultural groups. The literary works should be used to open the readers' minds and cultivate their respect and appreciation for other cultures (Mitchell, 2003, p. 211).

Teaching IC with literary works has several benefits. According to Rudine Sims Bishop (1990) books may act as mirrors that offer a view of worlds that are either real or imagined. "These windows are also sliding doors, and readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created or recreated by the author" (p. ix). She goes on to claim that these windows may also act as mirrors where the literature "transforms human experience and reflects it back on us" (ibid). According to Mikhail Bakhtin (1986) "[i]t is only in the eyes of another culture that foreign culture reveals itself fully and profoundly. A meaning only reveals its depth once it has encountered and come into contact with another foreign meaning" (p. 6). This entails that the mirror needs to be held in front of the learners and thus make them reflect upon their own culture as well as the foreign culture.

Intercultural communicators need knowledge and awareness of themselves and others to have successful intercultural encounters, and to improve their CCA. Literary works as windows and mirrors are effective aids in promoting this. Furthermore, reading literary works helps expand the readers' world views. It shows them that there is never only one way of looking at things, engage in interaction, or to resolve a conflict (Mitchell, 2003 p. 202).

Literary works offer excellent examples of language as communication and as culture, and they act as model texts for learners' own writing. In addition, they are models for real life interaction (Fenner, 2011, p. 42).

2.3. Films as teaching tools

The last decades, there has been an increase in literary works being adapted to the screen. Bestsellers such as the novels about Harry Potter, *The Twilight Saga* and *The Hunger Games* are examples of books that have been made into films. It is my experience as a teacher, that these adaptations help facilitate a desire in the learners to read the book the films are based on. More often than not, the learners will watch the film before they read the book. This is a trend that might give films an advantage over literary texts.

According to Hild Hoff (2013) the viewer interacts with a film much in the same way as a reader interacts with a written text, but the process is enhanced by moving pictures and sound (p. 32). Films are a series of images put together in a specific sequence that intends to have an impact on the viewer, and these sequences create a unique experience for the viewer that give it unbeatable power as a teaching tool (Champoux, 1999, p. 207). The viewers are not merely passive observers of the images they watch, they interpret what they see. Every individual will have a different response to what they are watching (ibid, p. 208). This response is unique to every viewer, just as for every reader, because they bring with them their past experiences, values and norms, their schema, into the viewing experience. This will include their previous knowledge of the characters and plot of the film, but also their own life experiences. Moreover, the preconceptions and prejudice the viewers have, might be challenged during the viewing experience.

“[Films] are an excellent medium for giving meaning to theories and concepts” (Champoux, 1999, p. 211), and especially to demonstrate how intercultural encounters take place. According to Joseph Champoux (1999), the visual and auditory effects that only a film can convey makes it a better teaching tool than the written word (p. 211). One of the clearest advantages of films as teaching tools is the fact that films are part of the learners' daily lives, and it is a medium that they are familiar with. Films let the learners see the theories and concepts they are working with in action, and thus they become able to connect theory to real life (ibid, p. 213). It is easier to understand the need for IC when a clear example of the need is presented. Other advantages include the fact that films combine pleasure and learning, they simultaneously address different senses and cognitive channels, and the learners are exposed

to the way people actually speak and interact. Furthermore, films involve the viewers, appeal to their emotions and help them to empathize with the characters (Roell, 2010, p. 2).

Although, films are not a substitute for intercultural interaction, they can act as useful preparation for intercultural encounters by “fostering understanding and developing sensitivity”, and “if we experience intercultural contact with our eyes and ears, we begin to understand it” (Summerfield in Roell, 2010, p. 3). Films give viewers access to places, people, events and behavior that they otherwise would not experience (Yalcin, 2013, p. 266). Films are a uniquely rich medium for the purpose of studying culture because they “tell the story of people, their hopes, dreams, challenges, and fears, how they relate to others, and what behaviors are socially acceptable” or unacceptable (Mallinger & Rossy, 2003, p. 609). Much like literary works, films act as a window to cultures (Yalcin, 2013, p. 265) that learners might not get to visit in real life, and they give the opportunity for viewers to reflect upon their own preconceptions and “see” themselves in the characters. “Engaging films can carry viewers into new worlds on the basis of commonalities” (Wilkinson, 2007, p. 17), thus bringing them into contact with encounters that are deeper and more challenging for them to relate to. It is the claim of Louise Wilkinson (2007) that engaging films can excite curiosity and support learners’ courage to explore such encounters on a deeper level (p. 17).

2.4. The differences between novels and films

According to Martin Montgomery, Alan Durant, Sara Mills, Nigel Fabb and Tom Furniss (2007) there are two culturally dominant ways of expressing fiction in modern time, namely the prose forms of novel and the visual forms of film (p. 191). In *The differences between novels and films - Enhance literature teaching by using films* (2008), Bo Bao claims that the differences between novels and films by their very nature decide that the two forms of media will never create the same effect when telling stories (p. 58). This view is supported by Signe Wiland (2016) who claims that the two forms of media are incompatible (p. 202). A filmmaker that aims to make a film adaptation transforms the novel into another medium based on moving images, thus making the film an interpretation of the novel, not a copy (Wiland, 2016, p. 201).

Bao (2008) points to some major differences between the two media. The first is the formal difference, namely the difference between the visual versus the verbal. The images that one sees in a film, together with sound, have a more direct relationship to what the film describes, while the written word lacks the visual and auditory depiction of these images (p. 58). However, the images in the film do not describe what is abstract, what goes on behind the

scenes and what people are feeling and thinking. This means that films can only show what is happening on the surface and at that moment, and “the perception of the moving pictures is dependent on immediate reactions to something” that is happening right there and at that moment (Wiland, 2016, p. 208). A novel can portray the inner workings of the characters, and it may also describe events that preceded the reactions and conflicts that are in focus at that moment. This is possible in films, however, not to the same extent due to the limitations of time. This difference is sure to give the audience and reader a dissimilar experience of the story that is being told. Films give its audience an insight into all kinds of discourse that exhibits the use of language, and the film shows the context in which the discourse takes place: it shows both verbal and non-verbal communication (Yalcin, 2013, p. 265). This is not possible in a written text.

Another difference between the two media involves narration. In novels, there are narrators, someone who tells the story from their point of view. In films, the audience is often shown the story from the outside, and the perspective that one gets from the first-person narrative in novels is not the same in films: “[t]he films show people the story, while the novels tell people the story” (Bao, 2008, p. 59). The last difference that Bao points to is sound versus silence. Films can amplify an emotion or underline a mood with the use of music, noise and speech, but in a novel the reader must imagine these devices (ibid). Discourse between two characters might be understood differently when viewers hear intonation and the manner in which interlocutors verbally interact with each other, as opposed to when they only read about the encounter and have to imagine the tone of the encounter.

2.5. Official steering documents

The core curriculum in the Norwegian National curriculum (LK06) states that education should foster equality and confirm the view that everyone is unique. Primary and lower secondary education should give learners a broad general education, so that they may become useful and independent individuals in their private lives and in society. Education aims to promote intellectual freedom and tolerance (Norwegian Board of Education, 1997). There are two documents related to the subject of English that need to be considered when teaching the subject of English, namely The Quality Framework (Ministry of Education and Research, 2006) and the English subject curriculum (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013). The documents stipulate the need for intercultural learning as a part of the English subject and they incorporate the use of literature and other media as teaching tools.

2.5.1. The Quality Framework

The Quality Framework summarizes and elaborates on the laws and regulations of official steering documents related to the Norwegian public-school system and helps clarify educators' responsibilities towards students. The Quality Framework states that a clear value base and a broad cultural understanding are fundamental elements of a learning community where diversity is acknowledged and respected (Ministry of Education and Research, 2006). Norway, and the world, is shrinking in the manner that both cultural and national borders are being moved, and learners need to develop competences that enable them to participate in a multicultural society. This involves having the ability to acquire knowledge of different cultures, and at the same time be exposed to a wide range of cultural expressions such as authentic literary works and films. The education should foster self-insight and the development of the students' identities, and at the same time aid them in having respect and tolerance towards others (ibid). This is in accordance with the aspect of CCA. To be able to utilize CCA, Norwegian learners need to be aware of the fact that other cultures have a different set of values and beliefs than Norwegians do, so that ethnocentrism is avoided (Dypedahl, 2007, p. 9).

The Quality Framework also states what the role of the teacher should be in the classroom. Teachers must have multicultural competence, which entails having the awareness, knowledge and skills that are needed to work with people who are different from one self (Ministry of Education and Research, 2006). This is an important aspect when working within the intercultural dimension. Teachers need to have knowledge of different learning strategies that will facilitate learning that will not only aid learners in gaining knowledge, but also help them in the development of the other components that IC comprises. It is not possible for a teacher to have knowledge of all cultural aspects of the English-speaking world, so it is important that the teachers promote respect towards cultural diversity and provides the learners with the tools they need to become interculturally competent (Fenner, 2011, p. 16).

2.5.2. The English Subject curriculum

Because Norwegian society is becoming more culturally diverse there is a need for learners to develop attitudes, knowledge and skills that enable them to participate and interact across cultural borders (NOU, 2015, p. 19). In the statement of objectives for the teaching of English, there is reference to the need for learners to concern themselves with intercultural issues. However, the term intercultural competence is not mentioned in the English subject

curriculum before it appears in the curricula for the English program subject in programs for specialization in general studies (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013). Since the 1990s, there has been a growing awareness of the need for intercultural learning in the language classroom (Dypedahl & Eschenbach, 2011a, p. 211), and it is commonly accepted that intercultural aspects should be an integral part of the subject of English (Dypedahl & Eschenbach, 2011b, p. 17). The Norwegian National curriculum is currently under revision, and according to Sissil Lea Heggernes (2018), the concept of IC will play a more significant role in the revised curriculum in the subject of English.

In the purpose of the subject of English it is stated that “English is a universal language” and “[w]hen we meet people from other countries, at home or abroad, we need English for communication” (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013, p. 1). Furthermore, it is stated that because English is increasingly used in education and business it is of importance to be able to use the English language, and to have knowledge of how it is used in different contexts. It is also emphasized that when the language is being used for communication there is a need for taking cultural norms and conventions into consideration (ibid). This involves that the subject will contribute to providing insight into different cultures where English is the primary language, and an insight into how English is used as a means of international communication (ibid, p. 2). The purpose of the subject concludes that English as a school subject is a way of gaining knowledge and personal insight through exposure to cultural expressions, and that it will enable learners to communicate with people from other countries through the use of the English language. “Development of communicative language skills and cultural insight can promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between persons with different cultural backgrounds” (ibid), and this is where the components of IC are utilized.

The subject of English is structured into four main subject areas² and these are meant to complement each other. The main subject area of Oral communication involves being able to understand and use the English language by listening, speaking, conversing and applying suitable communication strategies, and this is to be accomplished with the use of different media (ibid, p. 3). The main subject area of Culture, society and literature also mentions the use of different media as teaching tools. Here the focus is on cultural understanding in a broad sense, and it is meant to cover “key topics connected to social issues, literature and other cultural expressions”. It is claimed that working with and discussing different forms of

² Language learning, Oral communication, Written communication and Culture, society and literature.

cultural expressions help learners develop understanding and respect towards the lives and cultures of other people (ibid, p. 4).

2.6. How to teach IC

Barrett et al. (2014) state that educators need to include the aspects of experience, comparison, analysis, reflection and action when planning to teach within the intercultural dimension (p. 29).

Experience in the learning process can be either imagined or real. Learners can gain experience through e.g. games, activities in the classroom or in social media, face-to-face interaction and correspondence. The best way to develop the attitudes that are needed to promote IC is by directly experiencing how people act, interact and communicate (ibid). However, literary works and films may also be used as tools to facilitate experience, as the learners gain experience through the characters in these media. These experiences provide opportunities for challenging preconceptions through comparison and analysis.

Comparison involves learners being exposed to difference. This entails that learners are able to compare their own values and culture to others and appreciate the differences instead of seeing them as deviant. They should be able to take on the perspective of others, compare differences and similarities in a non-judgmental way, and take on the perspective of the other in order to see themselves as others do. The idea is to gain a better understanding of oneself and the other and find common ground that will facilitate better understanding of the differences between individuals (ibid).

Analysis means that the learners are aided in seeing what lies behind the practices, values and beliefs of others. Barrett et al. (2014) suggest that this can be achieved through careful discussion and analysis of written or video sources. The discussion and analysis can then be used to make the learners reflect upon their own practices, values and beliefs (ibid, p. 30).

Experience, comparison and analysis need to be reflected upon, and the learners need to be given the proper amount of time to accomplish this. *Reflection* entails that learners develop CCA and keep track of what they have learnt, and these reflections should be the basis for taking *action* (ibid).

The teaching approaches that the teacher uses to promote IC should encourage learners to become actively involved in discovery, challenge, reflection and co-operation. Research indicates that this is best achieved if there is minimal lecturing from the teacher, and the learning is based on the principle of learning by doing or experiential learning (ibid, pp. 30-

31). The use of literary works and films will help facilitate all the aspects that need to be present to work within the intercultural dimension.

In the language classroom, the tradition has been to expose learners to written texts or other media, and then let learners answer questions or tasks related to the texts. Such tasks may help with language learning, but they will not facilitate development of IC (Fenner, 2011, p. 42). The learners need to be engaged in the learning material and be allowed to interpret their experience in accordance with their own schema. They must be allowed to analyze, compare and reflect upon what they have witnessed, and be allowed to discuss their experiences with other learners and the teacher. This will lead to a deeper understanding of the significance of the teaching tool, and the learners will be active participants in creating meaning and understanding. For this to be possible, the teacher needs to act as a facilitator who helps learners to go beyond just the content of the teaching tool, in order to give them tasks and ask questions that guide them in their own personal development (ibid).

For the language classroom to be a safe place to conduct discussions and share preconceptions and opinions freely, there is a need for procedural ground rules for discussion and debate in the classroom (Byram et al., 2002, p. 25). These ground rules should be clear to all participants before any discussion takes place, and they should be agreed upon by all parties involved. The rules should state that everybody has the right to be heard, the importance of taking turns and not interrupting each other, that the discussion is to be civil and respectful at all times, discriminatory remarks are not allowed, and all the participants have a responsibility to challenge preconceptions and prejudice they might have (ibid). If these rules are followed, the language classroom should be a safe place for students to interact with each other, share opinions, challenge preconceptions and prejudice, and thus develop their IC.

3. METHOD AND MATERIAL

In this chapter, I will present the action research method, and the group of students that took part in the teaching sequence. There will be an analysis of the novel *The Outsiders* (Hinton, 1967) with an examination of the similarities and differences found in the film adaptation *The Outsiders: The Complete Novel* (Coppola [Dir.], 2005).

3.1. Action research

For this thesis, I have chosen to use the action research method. Sandra Lee McKay (2006) argues that this method of research is a productive method for L2 classroom research because it includes the three essentials of “a researchable question, data gathering, and data analysis” (p. 16). According to Nunan (cited in McKay, 2006) action research typically has three major characteristics: It is carried out by practitioners, it is collaborative, and it is aimed at changing things (pp. 29-30). Burns (1999) expands on these characteristics and exemplifies the following features:

1. Action research is contextual, small-scale and localized – it identifies and investigates problems within a specific situation.
2. It is evaluative and reflective as it aims to bring about change and improvement in practice.
3. It is participatory as it provides for collaborative investigation by teams of colleagues, practitioners and researchers.
4. Changes in practice are based on the collection of information or data which provides the impetus of change (p. 30).

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (in McKay, 2006, pp. 31-32) there are eight stages of action research:

Stage 1	<i>Identify, evaluate and formulate a problem</i>
Stage 2	<i>Consult with other interested parties</i>
Stage 3	<i>Review research literature</i>
Stage 4	<i>Modify or redefine the initial statement of the problem</i>
Stage 5	<i>Specify the research design</i>
Stage 6	<i>Clarify how the project will be evaluated</i>
Stage 7	<i>Implement the project</i>
Stage 8	<i>Analyze the data, draw inferences, and evaluate the project</i>

During the eighth stage, there is the possibility of implementing another cycle of the stages, thus continuing the research process (ibid, p. 32). Simply put, action research involves four phases: planning, action, observation and reflection (Burns, 2010, p. 8).

Action research, as carried out by teachers, is much more than just reflection on their own teaching, it is more systematic, and it is motivated by a desire to improve one's own teaching practice (McKay, 2006, p. 31). If the research is "undertaken with rigor, it can supply local knowledge regarding problems in L2 teaching and learning and can suggest ways for addressing these problems" (ibid). Therefore, I have chosen this method for the purpose of investigating my research questions.

Hoff (2013) conducted a research study on the use of fiction to develop IC in the English classroom, and through this study she identified six stages of development in the learner's intercultural perspectives. She examined the processes the learners went through to develop IC. These six stages were developed through her reflective action research process, and I used these six stages as a starting point for the teaching sequence. The sequence was recorded and analyzed. The stages are initial incomprehension, focus, provocation, reflection, comprehension and lastly, a broadening of the learners' perspectives, i.e. the development of IC (pp. 37-45).

Stage 1: Incomprehension	Learners being unable to interact properly with the medium due to a lack of skills of interpreting and relating
Stage 2: Focus	Directing the learners' focus towards the task and the aim of the learning
Stage 3: Provocation	Ask questions to promote discussion – expose stereotypes and prejudices and challenge them. Work with the learners' attitudes and CCA. In addition, nurture learners' skills of discovery and interaction
Stage 4: Reflection	Give the learners time to absorb and process new knowledge through individual activity.
Stage 5: Comprehension	Understanding the object of the activities
Stage 6: Broadening of the learners' perspective	The learners are able to put knowledge into a wider context and see connections between the target culture and their own experiences.

Simplified version of the six stages (Hoff, 2013, pp. 37-45)

3.2. The group of students participating in the action research and the initial stage of the teaching sequence

After having asked permission from the administration at the school in question, the project was realized in the spring of 2018 in an English class consisting of 10 8th grade students, where all students are ethnic Norwegian. The school is located in a rural community,

and there are very few students of other ethnicities than Norwegian at the school. A group was put together after I asked for volunteers that would want to help me with a project. Thus, the group consists of students with a particular interest in the subject of English and most of them are girls. The administrator sent out a letter to the parents of the students that volunteered to seek their permission. The identity of the students is confidential, and all names have been omitted to protect their identities. The students were given the opportunity to withdraw from the project at any time without an explanation.

After having put the group together, we immediately had a session where we talked about the teaching sequence. The students were informed about what the sequence entailed, what they had to do, and they were asked some questions about what their interests were and how they felt about literature and films. In addition, they were given background information on the story, a worksheet (Appendix A) and a copy of the novel. We also discussed the concepts of intercultural communication, stereotypes, prejudice, and in- and out-groups. The learners were familiar with these concepts due to a project they were currently working with about identity and what it means to be different in society today³.

The group is quite diverse when it comes to interests. One of the boys is a gamer and very interested in film, while the two other boys are mainly interested in sports. The girls are of the quiet type, and when asked what they are interested in, they reply that they do not know. When they are asked further, they reluctantly answer that they like to watch drama series and hang out with friends. Only one of the girls expressed an interest in reading literature for enjoyment. All the students are proficient in oral English, and they are all in agreement that films are a good teaching tool. Only the girls express an interest in reading literature in class, and the boys state that they would rather watch a film than read a book.

3.3. *The Outsiders*

When *The Outsiders* was first published in 1967, it shocked readers with its depiction of teenage drinking, smoking and fighting. *The Outsiders* was a story written with an intended audience of young adults, and it was also written by a teenager. The novel has long been credited for changing the way young adult fiction is written, and it remains the best-selling young adult novel of all time (Dale, 2007).

³ The project they were working on was in the subject of Knowledge of Christianity, religion, philosophies of life and ethics (RLE1-02). The concepts of in- and out-groups, prejudice, stereotypes and intercultural communication were aspects they worked extensively with in the project.

3.3.1. The plot

The Outsiders is a coming-of-age story as told by the narrator, 14-year-old Ponyboy Curtis. The setting is Tulsa, Oklahoma and the year is 1965. The story told by Ponyboy takes the reader through a two-week period in his life that changes everything for him. Because his parents were killed in a car accident, Ponyboy lives with his two older brothers, and the eldest brother, Darry, has custody as long as they all stay out of trouble. The story is built around the class divide between the greasers and the Socials (Socs). The greasers are from the East Side and they are described as poorer than the Socs from the West Side. The narrator ushers the readers through his thoughts on how the divide between the greasers and the Socs impacts the lives of both groups, and how their prejudice steers the way they live their lives and interact with each other. The divide between the two groups, and the prejudice that colors how both groups perceive each other, are so rooted in the society they live in, that it is part of their culture. The prejudgment of greasers and Socs leads to a division into in-groups and out-groups, and Ponyboy's story shows readers how this divide leads to conflicts and poor communication between members of the two groups.

The story begins when Ponyboy is attacked by a gang of Socs. He gets away with the help of his friends, his gang - his in-group - from the neighborhood. The next day, Ponyboy and his friend, Johnny, meet two Socs girls at the movies. This sets in motion a series of events that leads to a fight between the two greasers and a gang of Socs, and Johnny kills a Soc in self-defense. With the help of another member of their gang, the two boys run away and go into hiding. They hide in an abandoned church for five days. Johnny has decided to turn himself into the police, when there is a fire at the church. Some children attending a school picnic are trapped inside, and when Johnny and Ponyboy try to rescue them, Johnny is badly injured. The boys are taken back home, but Johnny never leaves the hospital. This event also leads to the death of another member of the greaser gang. The murder of a Socs' member intensifies the rivalry between the greasers and the Socs, and they have it out in a rumble. All the events that Ponyboy lives through during the novel are revealed to be his English paper in the last chapter.

3.3.2. Analysis of the novel

“When I stepped out into the bright sunlight from the darkness of the movie house, I had only two things on my mind: Paul Newman and a ride home” (Hinton, 1967, p. 1). This is the opening line of S.E. Hinton's debut novel *The Outsiders*. The narrator, Ponyboy, lives on

the East Side with his two older brothers, Sodapop and Darry. The three brothers are greasers, a term “used to class all [the people] on the East Side” (ibid, p. 2). According to Ponyboy, “greasers are almost like hoods; [they] steal things and drive old souped-up cars and hold up gas stations and have a gang fight once in a while” (ibid, p. 3). This is the picture that outsiders and the Socs have of the greasers. Ponyboy says: “I don’t mean I do things like that, [...] I only mean that most greasers do things like that” (ibid), but he also states that when he is not able to stay out of trouble he is careful not to get caught. His in-group, consisting of his brothers and the gang, are the most important people in his life, and he considers his friends to be like family. It is evident that he wants to fit in with his in-group, and that he sometimes lives up to the stereotypical greaser to fit in, e. g. by the way he dresses, wears his hair, and smokes cigarettes.

On the West Side, you find the Socials, Socs⁴ for short. The two gangs are rivals, and it is evident already from the start that there is tension between the two gangs by the way Ponyboy describes the differences between them. However, Ponyboy does state that he does not think that either greasers or Socs are better, it is just the way it is (ibid, p. 3). Ponyboy is able to see that they are all just people, but the circumstances in which they are born into are different. He is torn between this idea and reality, because even though he thinks that the divide between the groups is no one’s fault, he dislikes the Socs and claims that they get away with doing things that the greasers are punished for, such as drinking and injurious behavior. Ponyboy stereotypes, and puts the same label on all the Socs, and it is evident that they are all in his out-group.

On the way home from the movie house, Ponyboy is attacked by a gang of Socs. They pull a knife on him and threaten to cut his hair. This is a grave threat, as Ponyboy is especially proud of his hair and takes excellent care of it. He describes it as part of his identity, a part of being a greaser. His attackers are most likely aware of this and use the threat of cutting it off as a way of belittling this feature that is typical of the greasers. Ponyboy is rescued by his gang, and they run the Socs off. The gang consists of his brothers and four other boys from their neighborhood: Steve, Two-Bit, Dally and Johnny. Johnny is 16, and alongside Ponyboy, the youngest of the gang. He is also characterized as the gang’s pet, and Ponyboy’s best friend. The boys have all grown up together and Ponyboy states that they consider each other as family (ibid, p. 3). Ponyboy describes the whole gang and their roles in the outfit, but he states that he does not like Dally all that much: “The shade of difference that separates a

⁴ The word Socs is pronounced /'soʊfɪz/

greaser from a hood wasn't present in Dally" (ibid, p. 11). Dally is described as cold, aggressive and always looking for trouble. Even so, Dally is part of Ponyboy's in-group and he respects him.

The following day, Ponyboy, Johnny and Dally go to the drive-in movies. Here they meet two girls, Cherry⁵ and Marcia. They are from the West Side, and Dally tries to pick them up, but he uses foul language, and the girls do not want his company. Even before Dally starts in on them, they are seemingly not interested in his company. Johnny intervenes when Dally goes too far, and Dally leaves. The two girls invite Ponyboy and Johnny to sit with them, and they start talking. This conversation shows that the two girls have preconceptions about what greasers are like, and Cherry says to Ponyboy that she knows all about Dally and that he is a hood that has been in prison. She says that she is not afraid of Ponyboy and Johnny because they are not dirty, and they are innocent-looking. She wonders why they hang around with a hood like Dally. Her idea of what a greaser is like is disproved by Ponyboy and Johnny when they are nothing like Dally in their behavior towards the girls. Her idea of what a greaser is, is about the same as the depiction Ponyboy gives in the first chapter: hoods that fight and like to steal things. The encounter with the greasers, affirms her prejudice towards greasers as a group, however, it also shows her that her preconceptions are not valid because they do not apply to the whole group. Her idea of a stereotypical greaser is that they are dirty, foul-mouthed hoods that are only looking to cause trouble, but her conversation with Ponyboy and Johnny gives her new insight into the greasers' culture, and her preconceptions and prejudice towards them is challenged. She realizes that her idea of what a greaser is, is not based on facts, only her prejudice towards them.

During this encounter we also hear the story of how Johnny was attacked by Socs a while back and that he is still affected by it. Cherry seems to be mortified, but later, we realize that Cherry's boyfriend was one of the boys that beat up Johnny. By the way this conversation is described, one cannot help but think that Cherry knows that it was her boyfriend that attacked Johnny, and later she admits that she knew. Cherry tells Ponyboy that the Socs do not have it that easy, but Ponyboy has difficulty understanding what she means because he believes that Socs get all the advantages in life. Two-Bit arrives and joins them, and when the movie is over they all leave together. This encounter between the two social groups might seem innocent, but the repercussions are severe because Marcia and Cherry's boyfriends

⁵ Cherry's real name is Sherri, but she is called Cherry because of her red hair. There are a lot of nicknames used in this story, e.g. Two-Bit's real name is Keith, Dally is Dallas, and Darry is short for Darrel. Ponyboy and Sodapop however, are the two brothers' real names.

arrive. The situation is tense and the boys from the two groups threaten each other, but the girls decide to leave with the Socs willingly. Cherry whispers to Ponyboy: "...if I see you in the hall at school or someplace and don't say hi, well, it's not personal or anything, but..." (ibid, p. 45). This shows how deeply rooted the class divide between the two groups really is because Ponyboy and the other greasers are in Cherry's out-group, and her friends and family would not condone her interacting on a personal level with the likes of him and his friends.

The same night, Ponyboy and Johnny are sitting on the vacant lot in their neighborhood having a conversation, when they both fall asleep. It is 2 o'clock in the morning before they wake up and Ponyboy realizes that he has broken his 12 o'clock curfew. He runs home to find an angry Darry. Darry knows that even the smallest transgression might send his two brothers into the system, but Ponyboy does not think that far ahead. They have an argument, and Darry strikes Ponyboy. He runs out to find Johnny still at the vacant lot. Johnny never went home, because his family abuses him, a fact that everyone in the neighborhood is aware of, but does nothing about. Ponyboy wants to run away and they start running aimlessly. Eventually, they decide to go back, and they go to the park to cool off before going home. While in the park, the girls' boyfriends show up with three friends. The Socs call Ponyboy and Johnny "dirt" before one of them asks: "You know what a greaser is? White trash with long hair" (ibid, p. 55). Again, there is reference to the greasers' social standings as inferior to the Socs, and negative comments about their appearance. Ponyboy's reply, along with the fact that he spits at them, leads to a fight: "You know what a Soc is? White trash with Mustangs and madras" (ibid). This conversation shows that they interact with each other based on their prejudice towards one another, and they do not care about who they are as individuals. The Socs have no desire to communicate with the greasers, they just want to show them that they are not allowed to interact with their girls. The Socs believe that the greasers are not worthy of being in their in-group because they are what they perceive as "white trash" (ibid). This situation is an example of an encounter where both parties are lacking IC, the components of attitude, knowledge and skills are missing, and the repercussions are severe for all the participants. The Socs' lose a friend, Johnny becomes a murderer, and Ponyboy must live with this deed for the rest of his life. The understanding and respect that is needed to establish positive and constructive relationships with members of different cultural groups (Barrett et al., 2014, pp.16-17) are not present in either groups

Ponyboy is held down face first in a drinking fountain. Johnny pulls his switchblade and stabs the Soc called Bob to death. The other Socs run and Ponyboy and Johnny are left with Bob's dead body. Johnny admits that these were the same boys that had attacked him

and cut his face earlier, and that he had been scared they would do it again. This situation is an example of how events which are seemingly in the past, can come back and have profound consequences, and lead to new conflicts between the two groups.

The two boys decide to run away, and they seek out Dally for help because they believe that he is the only one that will know what to do. Dally has been to New York and has experience with criminal acts, and they believe that he is used to such situations. Dally gives them money and instructions, and they leave town to hide out in an abandoned church. On the way to the church, the two boys need to ask for directions. Ponyboy is anxious because of his dirty appearance and his mannerisms and believes that the locals will think that they are hoods and call the police. The hair he is so proud of, that is such a big part of his identity, is suddenly a feature of himself that makes him insecure. This shows that Ponyboy now feels like a hood, he has fulfilled the stereotypical greaser role that he claimed he did not take part in. After this, Johnny decides that they must change their appearance so they both cut their hair, and Ponyboy also bleaches his. Ponyboy cries when he does this, because he thinks that the rest of the gang will not think that he is tough anymore. This contrasts with his insecurities towards the people he asked for directions, because with them he was afraid that they would think badly of him because of his appearance; but now, he is afraid of not fitting in with his in-group.

They spend close to a week hiding in the church, reading *Gone with the Wind*⁶ and playing poker to pass the time. While reading, Ponyboy realizes that Johnny, who he thought was unable to understand the plot of the novel, can get more out of the story than him. He then realizes that because Johnny needs more time than him to comprehend what they learn in school, he has been labeled as stupid, both by him and everyone around him. Ponyboy is in advanced classes in school, while Johnny does poorly in school. The latter is the norm for greasers, and Ponyboy is the only one of the gang who likes school and excels there.

One morning, Ponyboy is sitting outside the church watching the sunrise because Ponyboy loves to watch sunrises. Johnny joins him and Ponyboy recites the poem “Nothing gold can stay” by Robert Frost (Hinton, 1967, p. 77), and the boys talk about their family and friends. The poem has significance to Ponyboy because for him it is about how everything changes. He loves to watch the sunrise and the colors it brings. Nothing is only black and white, everything has nuances, and it is the same with greasers and Socs: they come in all colors, i.e. they are all different individuals. Ponyboy tells Johnny that he is the only one,

⁶ Mitchell, M. (1936). *Gone with the Wind*. United States: Macmillan Publishers.

besides Sodapop and maybe Cherry, that he can share such thoughts with about how he is different from the other boys in the gang. The realization that he would be able to talk to Cherry about these things underlines the fact that everything is not black and white, and that he can see himself including a Soc in his in-group.

Five days after they fled, Dally appears at the church and takes the boys out to get some food. Dally tells them that after what happened to Bob, there is an all-out war between Socs and greasers, and that he has started to carry a gun. The series of events set in motion by the encounter at the movie house have culminated in a heightened conflict. He also mentions that Cherry now acts as a spy for the greasers, and that she wants to help Johnny and Ponyboy by testifying that Bob was drunk and looking for trouble. This is incentive for Johnny to do the right thing and he exclaims that he wants to turn himself in. Dally asks him if he is sure because “greasers get it worse than anyone else” (ibid, p. 87). Dally believes that the police will not believe Johnny when he says that he acted in self-defense. The notion of greasers as hoods puts Johnny at a disadvantage with the police, because the police are more likely to believe that the greasers were the ones’ causing trouble. The preconception that greasers are hoods is also shared by the authorities. This points back to Ponyboy’s description of Socs in the beginning, where he says that when they do terrible things, they ultimately end up getting something positive out of it.

When they return to the church they find that it is on fire, and that children who were attending a school picnic in the area, are trapped inside. Ponyboy and Johnny race in to help the children, and they get them all out before the roof of the church collapses. Ponyboy gets out, but Johnny ends up under a piece of timber that breaks his back. He is also severely burned. Dally also gets burned trying to save Ponyboy and Johnny. This act of bravery from the three greasers is evidence of their characters, they are not merely hoods or greasers, but brave and considerate enough to without thought for their own safety go into a burning building to save innocent children. They are all taken to the hospital, and the doctor tells Ponyboy that Johnny is in critical condition, and that they are not sure if he will make it. The next day, Ponyboy and Johnny are proclaimed heroes, however, Johnny is being charged with manslaughter and Ponyboy must appear in juvenile court for running away. Ponyboy is terrified that he will be separated from his brothers.

Ponyboy and Two-Bit go to visit Johnny and Dally in the hospital, and on the way there they are approached by a blue Mustang. Randy, one of the Socs who were in the park, steps out and wants to speak to Ponyboy. Ponyboy blames Randy for everything that has gone wrong the last week, and is reluctant to speak with him, but he joins him in the car. By

agreeing to have the conversation, he exhibits the openness needed to have a successful encounter with Randy. Randy also exhibits this openness because he is willing to seek out and interact with someone considered to be in his out-group (Barrett et al, 2014, p. 19). Randy says that he read about how they pulled those kids out of the burning church, and he cannot believe that greasers would do something like that. He still believes that greasers are only hoods, and his prejudice towards them shines through. Ponyboy answers that being a greaser has nothing to do with it, it comes down to what kind of person you are. Ponyboy has realized that Randy has problems as well, and he starts to understand that they all have their own problems to deal with, greasers and Socs alike. There is a rumble set for that night between the two groups, and Randy tells Ponyboy that he is not going. He also tells Ponyboy that “You can’t win, even if you whip us. You’ll still be where you were before – at the bottom” (ibid, p. 117). Randy’s view of the world at this point is quite dismal, and Ponyboy is reminded of something Cherry had told him: “Things are rough all over” (ibid) and finally he understands what she meant. The problems of the Socs were just as real as the problems the greasers faced, and he gains new attitude towards Randy and the Socs. The two boys also gain knowledge about how their respective social groups function (Byram et al. 2002, p. 12)

When Two-Bit and Ponyboy reach the hospital, Ponyboy realizes that Johnny is dying because of the way the doctor speaks to them. On their way home, they meet up with Cherry. Cherry was coming to tell the greasers that the Socs would play by the rules in the rumble that night. She told them that they would not bring weapons, and that Randy had told her that the Socs would play fair. Two-Bit leaves after thanking her, and Cherry asks Ponyboy how Johnny is doing. Ponyboy asks if she is going to go to the hospital to see him, and Cherry replies that she cannot. Johnny killed Bob, her boyfriend, and she explains to Ponyboy that even though Bob could be a bad person at times, he had good sides as well. Ponyboy only sees the Soc part of Bob, while Cherry knew him as a part of her in-group. Ponyboy gets mad at Cherry and exclaims that he does not need her charity. Cherry tries to explain that she only wants to help, and that she appreciated the way they had talked that night at the movies. Ponyboy replies: “Can you see the sunset real good from the West Side?” (Hinton, 1967, p. 129) Cherry replies that they can see it “real good” (ibid, p. 130), and Ponyboy tells her that they can see it from the East Side too. They smile at each other, Cherry thanks him and they go their separate ways.

The fact that Cherry is concerned about Johnny, but does not want to go see him, is evidence of the divide between the two social groups. Two social groups that are categorized as in- and out-groups, and the fact that Johnny is not part of her in-group, means that Cherry

is caught in the middle. She feels an obligation to her own social group, but at the same time she genuinely cares for Johnny and she is concerned for his well-being. Ponyboy's reaction to this is evidence of his preconceptions of the Socs, he initially believes that she is only helping the greasers out of pity, that she thinks that somehow, she is better than they. After Cherry has explained the situation, Ponyboy realizes that they are the same. When he tells her that they can see the sunset from his side of town as well, he acknowledges that he understands her position. This encounter points back to the scene between Johnny and Ponyboy at the church, where Ponyboy recites the Robert Frost poem, and they watch the sunset together. During their conversation Ponyboy says that he thinks that he could talk to Cherry about such matters and let her into his in-group. He sets aside his prejudice towards the Socs as a group and is able to see Cherry as an individual.

Later that night, the two groups are set to rumble. Darry meets his old friend Paul at the rumble. In high school, Darry had been a football player and before his parents died and he had to take care of his brothers, he had a future that involved going to college to play football. Paul and he had been good friends. Now, they only say hello to each other, and the rumble starts with them. Paul had been part of Darry's in-group, but now that Darry must work two jobs and take care of his brothers, he is considered just another greaser by his former friend. The greasers "win" the rumble because the Socs are the first to run from the fight. However, there is no real victory in this, because nothing changes between the two groups, the social divide is still an issue that affects their lives. As soon as the rumble is over, Dally takes Ponyboy to the hospital to see Johnny. Johnny tells Ponyboy to "Stay gold" (ibid, p. 148) and then he takes his last breath. Dally leaves the hospital in terrible grief, and Ponyboy is convinced that he is going to do something stupid, which he does. Dally makes it to the vacant lot, before the police catch up with him. He pulls his gun on the police, and they shoot him dead. The police perceived Dally as a threat because of his reputation and prior run-ins with the law, and they wrongly assumed that his gun must be loaded, which it was not. He loses his life because the police perceive him as a threat because of his reputation and his affiliation to the greasers.

A week later, Ponyboy has his hearing before the judge and he is acquitted, thus closing the custody case. Ponyboy is not quite himself after everything that has happened, and he is no longer excelling in school. This shows how the experiences he has had has affected his life. His English teacher gives him one last chance to get a passing grade by writing a story. The story begins with: "When I stepped out into the bright sunlight from the darkness

of the movie house...” (ibid, p. 180), and we realize that the story we have just read was Ponyboy’s English essay.

3.3.3. The differences between the novel and the adaptation

The opening line of the movie adaptation is the same as the opening line of the novel, however, in the film we see that Ponyboy is telling the story through his writing. In the novel we do not realize that he is writing the story until the last chapter. He walks out of the movie house and starts walking home. Immediately after, we see the Socs noticing him and they start to follow him. He walks for what seems to be quite a long way, and there are several scenes where we can see that this is building up to a confrontation. At first, Ponyboy seems calm, but he becomes increasingly anxious and tries to outrun them. This shows that underneath his tough exterior, he is still just a 14-year-old boy who fears an altercation with the Socs. This visual aid shows the viewer what Ponyboy is feeling at that moment. They attack him and just as the novel says: they threaten to give him a haircut with a switch blade. The gang arrive and run the Socs off. Darry gives Ponyboy a hard time about not thinking before acting, and Sodapop explains to Ponyboy that he acts that way because he has a lot on his mind now, that he did not before. In the novel, this is explained through Ponyboy’s thoughts about Darry and the fact that he is hard, and seems much older than his years. Darry had to give up going to college to take care of his brothers, and this limited his opportunities to fulfil his dreams. At one point, Ponyboy states that he believes that Darry could have been a Soc if their parents had not died leaving him with the responsibility of taking care of him and Sodapop. This task, that Darry had to undertake, forced him to give up his dreams for his future, and it moved him from his former friends’ in-group, to their out-group.

The novel gives a detailed description of all the members of the gang through Ponyboy’s perception of them, but in the film, they are portrayed through their conversation after the attack on Ponyboy. We see how the boys interact with each other, and through their conversation we get insight into their personalities. Sodapop and Steve talk about going out that night and Ponyboy asks to come with them. He is denied. This scene shows that Dally is not only a stereotypical greaser, a hood, but a friend that cares about Ponyboy and Johnny because Dally invites Johnny and Ponyboy to come with him to the movies instead. Ponyboy is reluctant to go, because he is afraid of getting into trouble with the police. The fact that Ponyboy thinks that a trip to the movies might lead to trouble with the police is evidence of his preconceptions about his friend, Dally. Ponyboy’s feelings towards Dally do not seem as

negative in the film as in the novel, but it is still evident that Dally is a person that Ponyboy is unsure about.

Dally, Ponyboy and Johnny meet up in town, and we follow them on their way to the movie. In an alley, they see four young kids playing cards, and Dally takes their cards and scares them away. This scene shows Dally closer to how he is portrayed in the novel, as cold and aggressive. The three boys sneak into the movies by going under the fence. In the novel we know that they are sneaking in, even if they have the money because Dally hates doing things the legal way (ibid, p. 20), but in the film, we just see them sneak in. At the movies, the three boys meet Cherry and Marcia. Dally starts in on Cherry just as he does in the novel. The encounter is very similar in the two media, and this encounter between the two social groups sets in motion the events that led up to the stabbing of Bob. In the novel, the two girls recognize Dally because of him being a jockey, but in the film, they only focus on him being the greaser that just got out of jail. They also talk about the rodeo in the novel and how Dally says that he has seen the girls there, and that is something they have in common. The rodeo, which is mentioned throughout the novel, is not mentioned anywhere in the film. Being in the rodeo is something several of the greasers do, and it is part of their identity in the novel. Cherry also participates in the rodeo. This is a link between the two groups, and when they are in the rodeo they are equals. It is stated that when Dally is in the rodeo he plays by the rules, something that is out of character for him. However, the girls are still prejudiced towards Dally, even though they know each other from a familiar setting where they are all part of the same group. This shows how deeply rooted their prejudice towards greasers are. The film gives the viewers a chance to experience the body language that both groups exhibit in this situation, it shows them how Cherry is giving the boys the cold shoulder from the start, and how Dally invades her personal space as well as using offensive language.

The conversation that takes place between Ponyboy and Cherry is the same. In the novel, one gets a hint that Cherry understands that it was Bob who attacked Johnny, but in the film, we see by the expression on Cherry's face that she knows that it was Bob. Even so, she does not say anything, she chooses to protect her boyfriend, a member of her in-group. In the film, we hear that Tim Sheppard is looking to fight Dally. We do not get to know that Tim and Dally are good friends, like we do in the novel. This is an important detail because the girls need this information to understand that this is how the greasers resolve problems, even between friends. Ponyboy also states in the novel that greasers sometimes like to have a fistfight to sort out their differences. This piece of information is quite significant in an intercultural perspective, because it has to do with the dynamics within the social group, and

how the greasers handle conflicts with members of their own group. In the novel, Two-Bit explains this to the girls, an explanation that gives the girls knowledge about how the greasers interact with each other.

The scene where the girls' boyfriends arrive is also similar in the two media, but the conversation that Cherry and Ponyboy have before the Socs arrive is not the same. The conversation in the novel goes much deeper than in the film. Ponyboy and Cherry talk about Ponyboy's family, and they realize that they are not that different from each other. Cherry tells Ponyboy how she feels about the advantages she gets just because she was born into a rich family, and how she feels trapped in her world. Ponyboy gets agitated during their conversation because he thinks that it is not fair that his life is what he perceives to be hopeless because of his background. In the novel, these thoughts of hopelessness are portrayed much more in detail. This scene, both in the novel and in the film, gives Cherry and Ponyboy new insight into how it is to be part of the two social groups, in addition, they get to know each other as individuals, not just as a greaser and a Soc.

When the greasers get back to their neighborhood, Johnny and Ponyboy go to the lot. At the lot, Ponyboy is overcome with feelings of how unfair life is. This is described in the novel, but in the film, we only see Johnny being frustrated and in tears saying that if something does not change he will kill himself. Johnny utters the same line in both media: "It seems like there's gotta be some place without greasers and Socs, with just people. Plain ordinary people" (ibid, p. 48). This is evidence of the feeling of inferiority that the boys feel, and the hopelessness of the situation they are in: Johnny struggling at home and with the repercussions of being beaten, and Ponyboy's feelings of the unfairness of the social divide between the groups. Johnny and Ponyboy fall asleep, and when Ponyboy gets home he argues with Darry. Darry hits Ponyboy, and he storms out. Both media portray how Ponyboy is upset and wants to run away, but decide to go back.

The encounter that takes place in the park is mostly similar, the dialogue is the same. However, the mood of the encounter is enhanced in the film because of the accompanying music that underlines the severity of the situation. This encounter is made more emotional in the film because we get to see the boys react, not just read about their feelings. The discussion they have in the novel about what to do is omitted from the film, and the boys go straight to find Dally. He takes care of them, gives them what they need, and guides them towards the abandoned church. In the film he acts genuinely concerned for the boys, and just as in the novel, it is made clear that he cares. The dynamics in their cultural group state that the gang take care of each other. Just as Ponyboy states in the first chapter of the novel, they were like

family. The concern that Dally shows his younger friends, contrasts with the depiction of him as nothing but a hood, and it breaks the pattern of the stereotypical greaser.

The three main differences between novels and film as stated by Bao (2008) are present in these media. The difference between the verbal and the visual is evident because in the film we get to watch the story unfold. We see the encounters between the characters and the two cultural groups, and we use all our senses to interpret the story that is being told. With the adaptation, we have an immediate reaction to the scenes we are watching. What we are missing, is what goes on inside the character's minds as the story unfolds, and some of the events that might have an impact on the character's personalities and reactions to certain events. What the adaptation can give us that the novel cannot, is the non-verbal aspects of discourse, it also gives the viewer a visual experience of real communication in a set context. This experience of real communication, with both verbal- and non-verbal aspects of discourse, will give viewers a chance to see how an intercultural encounter where the components of IC are missing can go wrong, and how a lack of respect and understanding towards others might lead to conflicts.

In the novel Ponyboy is the narrator. We experience the story through his narration, and we only see things from his perspective. Even though we learn at the beginning of the film that Ponyboy is telling the story, we here see the story from the outside. We do not get to see what he is feeling and thinking, and we must rely on our own interpretations of the plot, and the character's dialogue and interaction to figure out what happens on the inside, what Bao (2008) refers to as "the abstract" (p. 58).

The use of sound in the film makes a significant difference, because the music that is used amplifies the mood of the scenes. The opening credit of the film is *Stay Gold* by Stevie Wonder. This song is a reference to the Robert Frost poem, and Johnny's last words to Ponyboy, however, the song also sets the mood for the whole film. The song is about being young and free, seizing the moment that is right in front of you. Moreover, both the song and poem, say something about new beginnings, which is the message that Johnny wants to send to Ponyboy with the letter he writes to him on his deathbed. He wants Ponyboy to look beyond greasers and Socs and live his life without being influenced by the conflict between the two social groups. The first scene starts with the song *Wild One (Real Wild Child)* by Jerry Lee Lewis and the lyrics of this song underline the depiction of greasers as hoods, moreover, they emphasize Ponyboy's desire to fit in with his in-group. The song, along with the voice-over with the opening line, and Ponyboy posing in front of the mirror, show that Ponyboy wants to look and be tough. Other examples of how sound amplifies the mood, is the

instrumental music that is in the background during the rumble accompanied with people shouting and the sounds of punches striking. The music changes into a triumphant fanfare and the shouting is interchanged with cheering when the rumble is over. Instrumental romantic, and a bit sad, music is used in the background when Ponyboy and Cherry have their conversation about why she must distance herself from the greasers after all that has happened. This music underlines that the conversation deals with something negative for Ponyboy and Cherry, but they end on a positive note when they come to an understanding.

4. TEACHING SEQUENCE

In this chapter, the teaching sequence will be presented. There will also be a presentation of the approaches utilized and literary reception theory.

4.1. Presentation of the teaching sequence

This teaching sequence aims to use the novel in conjunction with the film adaptation to promote IC. The teaching sequence is inspired by the six stages of development in learner's intercultural perspectives as described by Hoff (2013), and literary reception theory where there is focus on the dialectic relationship between text, reader, and their interaction (ibid. pp. 32- 45). Here, the word text is used as a collective term to describe both the written text and the adaptation. The explicit learning goals of the teaching sequence is to enable the learners to use the English language in culturally and socially appropriate ways and improve their ability to interact with people as human beings with multiple identities. Furthermore, they should be able to look beyond stereotypes and prejudice and develop as intercultural speakers and mediators.

The teaching sequence will allow the learners, through guidance from the teacher, to approach the two texts from deliberately planned angles which will include the aspects of experience, comparison, analysis, reflection and action (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 29). The central approaches to working with the texts are individual reflections followed by peer group discussions. The teaching sequence was carried out during a period of 3 weeks, however, after all the participants had read the book, the tasks and viewing of the film were carried out in the course of one day. The assessment was carried out the week after the teaching sequence was finished. The learners' group discussions and the plenary discussions were recorded on mobile devices, and the final assessment was done with an individual recording on OneNote.

All the discussions were carried out in English and all quotes utilized in the analysis of the teaching sequence have not been altered in any way.

4.1.1. Literary reception theory

The central principle of literary reception theory is focus on the dialectic relationship between text, reader and viewer, and their interaction. The texts are cultural meeting points, and a dialogue between the reader and the viewer, and the texts is established through this interaction (Hoff, 2013, pp. 31-32). This means that the reading and viewing of the texts are communicative experiences, because through the encounter with the texts, the learners may achieve a fuller understanding of the foreign culture, and at the same time get the opportunity to get to know themselves better during the process. This is in accordance with Bishop's claim that texts may act as a window to the cultures depicted, as well as a mirror that gives the opportunity for learners to reflect upon their own thoughts and ideas, and identify themselves with the characters, thus developing their own sense of self (1990, p. xi).

Learners will, in the initial encounter with the texts, utilize what Brislin (2000) refers to as "shortcuts to thinking" (p. 199). This means that they bring their schema, former knowledge of the world, into the reading and viewing experience. Their schema will include the preconceptions they may have about the foreign culture, and the prejudice they might have towards members of the culture. These preconceptions are based on emotions, and not reason and logic (Byram et al., 2002, p. 27). Members of the same social or cultural group will often bring the same experience into the reading or viewing experience because they share cultural background and that often entails that they share life experiences and values (Lundahl, 2012, p. 254). However, their schema will differ somewhat because of the influence from their in-groups, their socio-cultural environment and individual differences (Aebersold & Field, 1998, p. 6). All learners enter the classroom with different viewpoints and it is highly unlikely that they develop IC at the same rate (Moeller & Nugent, 2014, p. 5). Therefore, working to improve IC is a process; an endless journey where learners continue to learn, change and evolve (ibid) on their way to becoming competent intercultural speakers and mediators. The investigation of how learners go through the six stages, from initial incomprehension to a broadening of their perspectives, i.e. developing their IC, will show how they as individuals utilize their schema in the process, and how they are able to learn something new about both themselves and others, and bring this new knowledge into future intercultural encounters (Bugge, 2011, p. 7).

4.1.2. Learning activities

The learning aims:

- To be able to discuss and elaborate on the importance of communication, both within the in-group and with people that one considers to be in the out-group.
- To be able to identify offensive language and discuss why certain discourse might be offensive in intercultural encounters.
- To be able to reflect upon the consequences of relying on stereotypes and prejudice in intercultural encounters.
- To be able to reflect upon the importance of knowledge about cultural aspects when participating in intercultural encounters.

The teaching sequence started with the initial discussion that the learners had when they agreed to take part in the project. They were given a worksheet with information about the project and the story of *The Outsiders*. The worksheet also included questions that they should consider during the reading, and what aspects they should focus on (Appendix A). The idea behind the questions the learners were asked to consider while reading, was that they would experience the story through a focus on the characters and their interaction with each other. The questions would give them the opportunity to challenge their preconceptions through comparison and analysis after they had read the novel. At this stage they were working their way from the first stage of initial incomprehension to the second stage where they were guided towards the focus of the task.

After the learners had finished the novel, they had a plenary discussion where the procedural ground rules for discussion and debate in the classroom were agreed upon. Everyone agreed that this was necessary, because then they would have the confidence to speak freely and state their opinions without the fear of being ridiculed. They also stated that this reminder of how to act towards each other was important to get. They were put into groups of three and four and asked to compare the notes they had made while reading. They were given a worksheet to help them take notes during their discussion (Appendix B). This was the third stage, where the questions were meant to promote discussion, and challenge the learners to examine their own preconceptions, thus working with their attitudes and their ability to decenter. At the end of the lesson, the groups presented what they had discussed to the other groups.

The following lesson consisted of viewing the film adaptation. They watched the whole film in one viewing and they were asked to focus on the same questions that they used while reading the novel (Appendix A) and take notes. At this stage, the learners were given the opportunity to absorb and process new knowledge through the individual activity of viewing the film, and comparison and analysis of the story. The plan was for them to go through the questions from the worksheet again, with the film as a starting point. However, their undivided attention towards the film, and not the questions, forced a change in the plan. They examined the differences and similarities between the two media, before comparing and analyzing the scene from the drive-in movie from the novel and the film (Appendix C). This activity was done in pairs. The reason for choosing just one scene to analyze was for them not to focus on details that were similar or different, but on the communication between the characters. This was not an easy task, because the learners were in fact very concerned with exactly this feature. The lesson ended with a plenary discussion where everyone shared their analyses. At this point, the learners were in the stage of comprehension. They gained an understanding of the activities they were doing.

The final lessons were used to sum up and evaluate the teaching sequence, and final assessment. The students were asked a series of questions about how they felt about working with literature in conjunction with the film adaptation (Appendix D). To assess if they were able to put the knowledge of cultural aspects into a wider context and see connections between the story and their own experiences, they were asked to make a short recording where they explained the importance of having an open-mind and respect towards other people when you communicate. In addition, they were asked to explain why relying on stereotypes and prejudice when you communicate with people outside of your in-group, might lead to conflicts and break-downs in communication. According to Byram et al. (2002) the role of assessment is to encourage learners' awareness of their own abilities, and for them to be aware that these abilities are useful in many different encounters, both inside and outside the classroom (p. 32). It is at this stage of the teaching sequence that the broadening of the learners' intercultural perspective takes place.

5. ANALYSIS OF THE TEACHING SEQUENCE

This chapter will present an analysis of the recorded peer group discussions and the individual recordings that the learners did for the final assessment.

5.1. The novel

Before the learners and I embarked on the journey into the world of greasers and Socs we discussed the learners' expectations towards the task of reading the novel, and all of them had a positive attitude. However, the novel is 180 pages long, and a few of them were anxious about the length of the story, and the fact that it was published in the 1960s. They believed that they would not be able to follow the plot, understand the language, or even be able to relate to the story because it was written so long ago. As a countermeasure to their uncertainties towards their own abilities they read the first chapter (Hinton, 1967, pp. 1-18) of the novel together. They identified the main characters, what Socs and greasers were, who was in Ponyboy's in-group and out-group, and they went online to find out who Paul Newman was. They discovered that Paul Newman was an actor that starred in action movies. They agreed that Paul Newman is someone that Ponyboy looks up to and wants to emulate. However, this is the only mentioning of him in the novel.

Learners are often dependent on the support of an expert (Hoff, 2013, p. 34), the teacher, to reach beyond their personal limits, i.e. to scaffold their prior knowledge and thus bridge learning gaps. The other learners may also contribute to this scaffolding. For this situation, support was given by the teacher in guiding the learners towards the learning aims through directing their attention towards the questions on the worksheet (Appendix A) and examples were given that illustrate the concepts that are in focus, namely prejudice, stereotypes, in- and out-groups and intercultural communication.

One of the girls started the discussion by commenting on that Ponyboy labeled himself a hood, but then he changed his mind (Hinton, 1967, p 3). She was wondering whether he was confused about being a greaser. Another girl answered that of course he was not confused, he just wanted to fit in with his friends. These remarks touch upon the fact that the concept of identity is multifaceted and dynamic (Samovar et al., 2015, p. 243) and the learners gain insight into how most people take on themselves a variety of different identities in different contexts to navigate and orient themselves when they relate and interact with other people (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 13).

These two comments fueled a heated discussion between the learners about the importance of not following the crowd, be who you are, and not do things just because your friends tell you to, or because they do something. This discussion helped them to improve their skills of interpreting and relating. However; directing their attention towards the novel, they were asked to consider if the other members of Ponyboy's gang fit into Ponyboy's description of a greaser?

A common feature in their responses was that the members of the gang were all described as different individuals, but that Dally was the only one that fit Ponyboy's description of a greaser. One boy said that he had a friend like Dally, he grew up with him, and now he does not like him anymore, but he still feels obligated to spend time with him. Some of the girls also stated that they had people in their circle of friends that they not necessarily liked, but still spent time with. One girl said that she thought that the way Ponyboy looked up to Dally, but at the same time did not really like him, was the same as in the film *Mean girls*⁷ where the main character became friends with the popular girls just to fit in. Eventually, she became just like them. Their skills of interpreting and relating had been improved through the discussion when they were able to see connections to their own lives and other cultural expressions that are part of their schema. They had also improved their skills of discovery and interaction because they had acquired new knowledge of cultural practices. Through the interaction they had experienced through the characters, they had gained knowledge about other individuals and members of a culture, thus, integrating this knowledge with what they already knew and utilized it in the discussion (Byram et al., 2002, p. 13).

The learners were now in consensus that they were all ready to read the rest of the novel on their own. To end the session, and direct their focus towards the learning aims, they read through the questions on the worksheet (Appendix A). They were given two weeks to read the novel, however, all but one, had finished it within a week from the initial discussion about the first chapter.

The next time the group met, they had all finished the novel, and they had taken notes according to the worksheet (ibid). They were divided into their respective groups and started to discuss the focus questions. The discussions were lively, and it was evident that the novel had had an emotional effect on them. There were various aspects of the story that intrigued them. One group agreed that what was most interesting about the story was the friendship

⁷ Michaels, L. (Producer), and Waters, M. (Director). (2004). *Mean girls*. Hollywood, California: Paramount Pictures.

between Johnny and Ponyboy, and they found it intriguing that Ponyboy and Johnny were so different from the older members of their gang. They determined that they thought that the two boys were “outsiders” within the greaser gang. This group felt that the time Ponyboy and Johnny spent at the church were the scenes that made the most impact on them. They thought that the fact that Ponyboy realizes that Johnny is a lot smarter than he appears, is important for Ponyboy to realize so that he does not feel so alone and different. They even went so far as to consider if Ponyboy were prejudiced towards Johnny, and that he had labeled him, what they coined as, “slow” because he was a greaser. At this stage the learners were provoking each other by asking questions that challenged their preconceptions. One girl asked another group member:” If you don’t have good grades, does that mean that you’re stupid?” The discussion went on and eventually they agreed upon the fact that just because you are different, it does not mean that you are less worthy of respect. This shows a development in the learners’ attitudes and knowledge of cultural aspects, and it also showed that they were able to question their own modes of understanding with independent thinking and critical reflection (Lund, 2008, p. 4). In addition, this was evidence of the importance of allowing learners to interpret the reading experience in accordance with their own schema, and that they are given the opportunity to analyze, compare and reflect upon their experiences in cooperation with others (Fenner, 2011, p. 42).

Another group discussed the language that the two groups used. They had noticed that the greasers referred to themselves as greasers in a positive way, however, the Socs used the word greaser as a negative nickname. The fact that Ponyboy and the other greasers use the term greasers about themselves shows how they identify themselves as part of a particular group; it is their cultural identity. The learners had also noticed that Cherry asked Ponyboy and Johnny why they hung around with greasers like Dally, and the learners perceived that she was insulting Dally by calling him a greaser. One of the boys said: “I am wondering why it is okay for Native Americans to refer to themselves as Indians, but we have to call them Native Americans or else we are being offensive?⁸ Why is it okay for the greasers to use the word?” He also mentioned a rap song where the word Niggah was used a lot. He was able to connect his experience with the novel to his prior knowledge of what is considered to be offensive language, and at the same time he challenged the other members of his group to analyze what lies behind the practices, values and beliefs of others (Barrett et al., 2004, p. 30).

⁸ Earlier this semester, his class read *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie. In this novel the main character refers to himself as an Indian. However, this word might be considered as offensive if used by people who are not Native American.

In the end, they agreed that some words can be used in both a positive and negative manner, it depends on who you are talking to and the situation you are in. This has to do with displaying sensitivity and understanding towards individuals and groups of people. The learners felt that the word greaser was such a word because the Socs used it to belittle someone they thought less of, and the greasers themselves used it to proclaim that they were part of a group. They all agreed that what is offensive or not in conversation with certain people was difficult to comprehend, but that they in the future would choose their words more considerately. One of the boys also related this to the fact that even though he was not gay, he hated when his friends called him 'fag', a term they throw around daily in his circle of friends. He knew that they did not mean that he was gay, however, he perceived it to be a negatively loaded nickname. He understood that had he been gay, this would be a hurtful and disrespectful way of addressing someone. He was able to put new knowledge into a wider context, thus seeing the connection to his own experiences within his in-group.

The third group had taken notice of the start of the novel where Ponyboy is attacked by the Socs. They liked how his gang came to his rescue when he was in trouble. For them, it was inconceivable to just attack someone in that manner. These learners are not used to being in fights, and they do not solve their conflicts with physical violence, neither do the people in their in-groups. One of the girls stated that because Ponyboy was such a sweet and innocent boy, she could not understand why they would attack him. She felt that it was unfair that he be beaten up just because he was a greaser. Another girl replied that the Socs had no way of knowing that Ponyboy was not like the other greasers, and that was why he was attacked. The third girl in the group was quiet for a long time before she said: "I think this has something to do with stereotypes and prejudice". She was remembering the plenary discussion after reading the first chapter and pointed to the fact that greasers and Socs were rivals, therefore, Ponyboy was someone that they disliked by association. It did not matter to them what he was like as a person because he was a greaser, and their opinion was that greasers were dirt. This observation shows just how deep prejudice can go, in this society they are taught to be prejudiced by socialization, it is rooted in their culture (Brislin, 2000, p. 200). Their discussion then drifted towards the contemporary US and civil rights. They connected this to segregation in the 1960s and how there is still racial tension today. They utilized their previous knowledge of the US and concluded that the feelings that Ponyboy and Johnny have about life being unfair because of the social divide, is somewhat similar to the feelings of inferiority that African Americans must have had at that point in time. One girl said that the only difference is that Ponyboy could escape his greaser life if he did good in school, but the

African Americans are still fighting for their civil rights. This conclusion shows that it is important to have knowledge about cultures, but also have knowledge about how social groups and identities function (Byram et al., 2002, p. 12). In addition, it shows the need for sensitivity towards cultural diversity and the importance of seeing foreign cultures from different points of view (Lund, 2008, p. 4).

The final question on the worksheet was if the learners thought the story had a happy ending. A common feature in their responses was that this was a sad story because Johnny and Dally die. When asked why they did not mention Bob's death as a sad feature of the story, the answer was that they were not saddened about his death because they did not like him. He got what he deserved for attacking Ponyboy and Johnny. They were then asked to consider the conversation that Ponyboy had with Cherry before the rumble, where she talks about her feelings towards Bob and how she perceived him as a member of her in-group (Hinton, 1967, p. 128). Should Bob be judged only by his actions towards the greasers? He was Cherry's boyfriend, Randy's best friend, and he was his parent's son. He had multiple identities and he acted according to the values, norms and beliefs that were integral to his social and cultural groups. The response to these questions was a collective quiet, and it was evident that the learners were considering this aspect of the story. One of the girls replied that she had not thought of it like that. The others agreed that the loss of Bob must have been painful for his friends and family. To improve their IC, it is important that the learners have knowledge of the processes of cultural, societal and individual interaction, and that entails the ability to decenter.

5.2. The adaptation

Immediately after the learners had discussed the novel, they watched the film. The reason for this was that they would have their thoughts from the discussion about the novel fresh in their minds when viewing the film. They were asked to take notes according to the same questions that they did during the reading (Appendix A). They started to take notes, however, during the viewing they all stopped. When asked about this afterwards, they all answered that they forgot about note-taking as they were so focused on the plot. They also initiated a plenary discussion about how the two media were so alike, but that they had noticed some differences. One girl asked about Sodapop: "Why was his role in the film so

small? What about Mickey Mouse⁹?” Another girl had noticed that Ponyboy did not have the same hair color in the two media. The mentioning of Sodapop having a smaller role shows that this detail was important to the learner and that it had impact on her experience of the story. The detail with Ponyboy’s hair color shows how this learner had a picture of the character in her mind that gave her a different perception of him by viewing the film.

The focus was then directed towards the learners’ thoughts and feelings about the two media. One girl said that she thought that the two media told the same story, and that all the elements that made the novel great were present in the film. One of the boys replied that he liked the film better than the novel because it was easier for him to follow the plot when he could just relax and watch. This was the same boy who in the initial session had proclaimed his love of films. He stated that he had learnt so much more from the film, and that he now understood the difference between Socs and greasers: “They looked nothing alike”. His focus was on their appearance, and it was evident that he had needed the visual aid that the film provided to comprehend fully what had been discussed earlier. He needed to experience the difference between the Socs and greasers in that way to comprehend the social divide. He also said that the music that was used in the film made the story more real to him, especially the music that played during the rumble between the Socs and greasers. This made the experience more real to him, because he could use both his hearing and sight, together with his cognitive skills, to comprehend the plot.

The next task was to analyze the conversations that take place at the movie house when Ponyboy and Johnny first meet Cherry. The focus here was on the discourse between the greasers and the Socs, and the learners were given a set of questions to direct their focus (Appendix C). They read the pages in the book and watched the scene from the movie. The learners worked in pairs and discussed their experience. They all wanted to continue the discussion they had in the prior session where they had discussed the novel. The notion of the word greaser as an offensive word was a recurring topic. There was a consensus that they now understood that the word could be used as both as a positively and negatively loaded word because of the way that Cherry used it to express her prejudiced thoughts towards the greasers as a group. One of the girls, the same girl who earlier had the revelation about the inclusion of stereotypes, proclaimed that she had been right. This was uttered in a triumphant tone, and she said that Cherry had stereotyped Ponyboy and Johnny because of the way she asked about their affiliation to a greaser like Dally. In this case, Cherry relied on personal stereotypes

⁹ Mickey Mouse was a horse that Sodapop loved but lost. Ponyboy tells this story to Cherry the night they met.

because she judged all greasers based on an encounter with one individual member of the group (Dypedahl & Bøhn, 2017, p. 41).

The learners were asked to consider the tone of the conversation and if they felt that the tone changed during the encounter. Was there a point in the conversation that was a turning point in the communication between the Socs and the greasers? One of the girls answered that she had noticed that Cherry had a different attitude towards the boys after Dally had left. Before Dally left, she had her arms crossed, and she did not even turn around before Dally was gone. She had also noticed that Cherry's tone of voice shifted, and that she seemed friendlier when Dally left. This is evidence of what the film offers in terms of visual and auditory aspects, aspects that the novel does not offer. After being asked what they thought this meant, several of them responded that this showed that Cherry was not interested in having anything to do with Dally. This was strange, because she did not know him. However, the girls agreed that they would have acted the same way because of the way Dally spoke to Cherry. He was disrespectful towards Cherry. One of the girls related this to the #metoo campaign and said that Dally was sexually harassing Cherry, and that it was not okay to speak to girls in that way. This was yet another situation where the learners developed their skills of interpretation and relating. It is evident that they have a lot of knowledge that they may not be aware of, and that they must be given the opportunity to work with teaching tools such as literary works and films that help them to utilize their schema and be given the opportunity to discuss and elaborate on their knowledge. With the aid of such teaching tools, the learners are able to develop open attitudes towards other people and improve their cultural sensitivity and ability to decenter.

In order to examine how the learners felt about the two media being used in conjunction, they were asked to individually answer a set of questions about the two media and this way of working in class (Appendix D). All, but one, answered that they preferred the film over the novel. Incidentally, the one who preferred the novel, was the girl that had stated that she liked reading for enjoyment in the initial session. They all agreed that they had gained a deeper understanding of the story by reading the novel first and then watching the film. However, two of the boys, and one of the girls, stated that they thought that it was not necessary to read the novel because the film was so similar. The answers to the question of whether the two media portrayed the characters in a different way differed. The girls said that they thought that Dally was portrayed much worse in the novel than he was in the film. In the novel, they thought he was just a mean person, but in the film, he seemed much nicer. Moreover, one of the girls said that he was a good friend to Ponyboy and Johnny because he

let them go to the movies with him, and he helped them to escape after Bob died. All the three boys answered this question with a simple no. They did not get a different impression of any of the characters. All the learners agreed that they had enjoyed the work. Reasons given were that they had enjoyed being part of a research project, they had liked that they had been given the opportunity to have discussions, they had enjoyed the film, they liked working in small groups and they appreciated that we had established ground rules for discussion and debate which had made them feel comfortable with speaking English. In addition, they were excited because they had been allowed to spend so much time on one project, because that is often difficult to accomplish during ordinary English classes.

5.3. Assessment

Because the development of IC is a process, assessing how it improves was done throughout the teaching sequence through observation, what Darla Deardorff (2011) refers to as “direct evidence” of performance (p. 75). However, the final assessment was carried out by having the learners do a recording where they reflected upon what they had discussed and experienced through the teaching sequence. Deardorff has labeled this as “direct evidence” of critical reflection (ibid). Reflection is key when working to develop learners’ IC and through reflection it is possible to push them to go beyond just description, and let them explore deeper, contextualized meaning linked to the learning aims (ibid). The questions the learners were asked to consider and reflect upon in their recording was:

- Why is it important to have an open mind when you speak to people outside your in-group?
- Why is respect important when you communicate?
- What can happen when you rely on prejudice and stereotypes when you communicate with people you do not know?
- As a result of what you have learnt during this process, will you behave differently towards your friends and new people that you meet?
- What is offensive language?

The reason for doing the final assessment as an individual task, and not as a peer group discussion, was to give the learners the opportunity for individual reflection. Because the development of IC is an ongoing process that has to do with how individuals improve their attitude, knowledge, skills and CCA, it is important to give learners the opportunity to

reflect upon their own IC and how it has improved (ibid, p. 68). In what follows, there will be an in-depth analysis of three of the learners' individual recordings:

The first recording started with "Prejudice and discrimination are bad, they make us act stupid". The learner went on to explain how he believed that by not being open-minded when getting to know new people, one is missing out on getting new friends and expanding one's in-group. If you do not enter an encounter with an open mind and respect towards the fact that people are different, you will not be able to have a conversation where you get to know each other better. If one relies on prejudice one might get the wrong impression of people, and judging people on the grounds of what cultural group they belong to is wrong. He ended his recording by saying that he will behave differently towards his friends in the future and be more sensitive towards their differences, this includes not using words that are offensive such as "fag, retard and loser". His reflections are evidence of a deeper understanding of the components that comprise IC, and his wish to implement his new knowledge of them in his future encounters, both with members within his in-group and new people that he will meet in the future, is evidence of him crossing the threshold of IC (Bugge, 2011, p. 7). He has taken the knowledge of cultural aspects that he has gained and shows a desire to bring this knowledge with him into future encounters. In addition, his reflections are evidence of personal growth because he is able to challenge himself in making decisions in communicative encounters that will aid him in developing as an intercultural mediator and communicator.

The second recording had a different focus than the first, namely the plot and the relationship between some of the characters. The learner stated: "Cherry is stupid! She should visit Johnny in the hospital". This girl focused on how the characters were so prejudiced towards each other that they never really got to know each other. She also thought that everyone should just be friends. She stated that the fact that Cherry was so afraid of what her friends and family would think, made her miss out on what Ponyboy and the other greasers had to offer her as friends. She pointed to what Cherry said to Ponyboy before she left with her boyfriend the night they met: That she could have fallen in love with Dally if she ever saw him again. She felt that Cherry should have looked passed her preconceptions about greasers and gotten to know Dally. "She could have gotten new and better friends if she had just dared to go against her friends and family". The fact that Cherry was a spy for the greasers, showed that she was open to having a relationship with them, but that she was afraid of what people would think of her if she did it in public. She said that she remembered that sometimes, prejudice is so deeply rooted in society that people are raised to have them, and that Cherry

did not have the courage to go against her in-group. She went on to say that what she considered to be offensive language was any words and expressions used to make someone feel bad about themselves, and that if possible, one should never say something just to make someone sad. She ended the recording by stating that she had learnt that being prejudiced towards people may be dangerous and that it could lead to conflicts that have severe repercussions. The learner did not want to make anyone feel bad about themselves, so she would try to avoid that in the future. Her reflections show that she has improved her skills of interpreting and relating and her skills of interaction and action. Furthermore, she has gained knowledge of how social and cultural groups might function, and she shows how the “right” kind of attitude, and the ability to decenter helps her to see the world from another’s perspective (Byram et al., 2002, p. 12).

The third recording focused on Johnny. “Johnny is so sweet and innocent, he is everyone’s pet. I do not understand what they mean by pet exactly, but I think it means that they all loved him and wanted to take care of him”. The learner was very emotional towards the hardships that Johnny faced in the story. She stated that she felt very sorry for Johnny because he was being abused at home and because he had been attacked by the Socs. The learner could understand how Johnny considered himself as an outsider because his family did not want him, and pointed to the scene at the hospital where Johnny refused to let his mother see him, and said that this was evidence of how important it is to have good friends. This was related to the behavior of Bob and his friends. If they had not been so prejudiced, Johnny would not have had to stab Bob. Bob was influenced by his parents and their prejudice towards the greasers, and that made him do “bad things and judge them just because they was greasers”. She believed that if Bob had known that Johnny had such a challenging time at home, he would not have attacked him. She answered the question of what can happen when you rely on stereotyping and prejudice when you communicate with an example: If they get a new student in their class that is from another country and they just rely on what they think he or she is like without getting to know the person, they would never be able to become friends. They would never understand each other, because they will not make the effort to understand why they behave the way they do. The learner ended the recording with stating that she had learnt a lot from the teaching sequence and that she would try to be more open towards new people when she meets them. She did not mention the use of offensive language. This learner’s reflections show the importance of working with teaching tools such as literary works and films that engage and enthuse learners. Even though the learner focused on Johnny and his problems, she was able to connect the story to her own experiences and show that she

was able to see that there are differences between individuals in a cultural or social group (Byram et al., 2002, p. 10). In addition, she exhibited the ability to see how one's own values can influence how one views other people (ibid, p. 13), thus, developing her CCA. The example she put forth also showed that she has the willingness, curiosity and openness to engage in intercultural encounters with the knowledge, attitude and skills that are needed to be successful in intercultural encounters.

The remaining recordings showed that even though the learners focused on distinctive features of the novel and the film, they had all broadened their intercultural perspectives and developed their IC. The development of IC is a socialization process and the learners went through the six stages of intercultural development during the teaching sequence. However, the stages were not reached at the same time by the individual learners and their learning outcomes were individual. The aim of the assessment was to encourage learners' awareness of their own abilities and allow them to see that the abilities are useful outside of the classroom (Byram et al., 2002, p. 32), and both the peer group discussions and individual recordings showed that this was obtained.

6. CONCLUSION

According to UNESCO (2013) there is a growing awareness that IC is a relevant resource which aids individuals in intercultural interaction in today's globalized society (p. 5). Because it has been acknowledged that learners need not only knowledge of the grammar of the target language, but also insight into how the language is used in socially and appropriate ways, it is the teachers' task to incorporate the intercultural dimension in their teaching (Byram et al., 2002, p. 7). This is done through putting the knowledge of various cultures in context with an intercultural perspective. The teacher's role is to teach analytical skills that equip learners with the abilities they need to interact with people of other cultures (ibid. p. 11). The official steering documents of Norway include intercultural learning as part of the subject of English, in addition, cultural expressions such as literature and films are mentioned as teaching tools that should be incorporated into the teaching. In the purpose of the subject of English it is stated that because English is increasingly used in education and business it is not only of importance to be able to use the language to communicate, but also be able to take cultural norms and conventions into consideration in communicative situations (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013).

IC enables learners to understand and respect people of different cultural groups, and to establish positive relationships with members of such groups. To be able to do this entails that they have insight into their own identities and at the same time value the interlocutor's perspective (Barrett et al., 2014, pp. 16-17). The construct of IC comprises the elements of attitude, knowledge, skills and CCA. Attitude as part of the foundation of IC involves a desire to be curious and open-minded and be willing to seek out opportunities to interact with members of different cultural groups. The ability to decenter is also key because it enables learners to see the world from another's perspective. Knowledge, as a component of IC, does not merely entail that one has knowledge of a specific culture, but a knowledge of how social groups and identities function (Byram, 2002, p. 12). Skills are needed in intercultural encounters; however, all three components need to be present for the encounter to be a successful encounter between two equals that is mastered by both parties. In addition, CCA is needed so that the learners are able to look beyond their predetermined views and critically evaluate their own beliefs and values. This also includes the beliefs and attitudes that learners may have towards a certain group of people which include the concepts of stereotypes and prejudice.

Literature provides a subjective view of the culture that is portrayed, and literary works convey the language, manners and social attitudes of specific cultures. Literary works give the readers a chance to participate in the culture they are reading about through the experiences of the characters depicted (Collie & Slater, 1987, p. 3), and it is in literature all the cultural elements interact and affect each other (Valdes, 1986, p. 117). Literature is no longer only confined to the printed page because many literary works have been adapted to film (Bao, 2008, p. 58). Both these media are authentic cultural products and according to Christine Roell (2010) they provide learners with genuine input (p. 2). This input aids learners in making connections from the works of fiction to the real world outside of the classroom. Hoff (2013) claims that the viewer interacts with a film much in the same way as the reader interacts with a text but that the viewing experience is enhanced by moving pictures and sound (p. 32).

To examine the research questions, the action research method has been utilized. This method of research has been labeled a productive method for L2 classroom research because it includes the aspects of researchable questions, data gathering and data analysis (McKay, 2006, p. 16), moreover, it is considered as much more than just a reflection on the teacher's own practices. The goal of the research was to systematically examine how the novel and the adaptation could be used in conjunction to improve IC. The analysis and assessment of the

teaching sequence have been done by using direct evidence of performance through peer group discussions during the teaching sequence and direct evidence of critical reflection with recorded individual reflection logs.

The research questions were examined through the discussions the learners had during the teaching sequence and their reflection logs. The analysis of the discussions shows that *The Outsiders*, both the novel and its adaptation, do have the potential to promote all the four components that comprise IC, and that the learners all went through the six stages of development in their intercultural perspectives while working with the two media. The development was individual, and the learners worked within different developmental stages throughout the teaching sequence, aiding each other through co-operation, and scaffolding their knowledge continuously. Through the learners' discussions and individual reflections, it is evident that the learners gained a deeper understanding of the story by experiencing both the novel and film. The thoughts and ideas they had after reading the novel developed while watching the film, and it was clear that they gained a deeper understanding of the concepts in focus. In addition, the learners' own evaluations support this claim.

The two media as teaching tools in conjunction with each other have several advantages. Both the novel and the film portray the culture in focus in a subjective way that lets the reader and the viewer get a more profound understanding of its inner workings. In addition, they both act as windows that offer a view of the portrayed culture, and these windows may also work as mirrors that let the learners examine their own values, norms, beliefs and behavior. The dialectic relationship between text, reader and viewer, and their interaction makes both media cultural meeting points where the learners have a communicative experience through the experiences of the characters. The learners' schema, their preconceptions, and what they bring with them of previous knowledge of the portrayed culture, determines how they interact with the teaching tools, therefore, they do not necessarily develop IC at the same rate. Moreover, they will not always take with them the same experiences from encounters, be it real-life communication or communication that is experienced through characters in the novel or the film. The analysis of the peer-group discussions and the individual reflection logs are evidence of the fact that the development of IC is a process that is individual, and that learners improved their IC at a different pace throughout the teaching sequence.

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APPENDIX A

The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton

This project consists of 5 elements:

- Reading the novel with focus on intercultural communication, stereotyping and prejudice, and in-groups and out-groups
- Discussing the novel
- Watching the film adaptation of the novel with focus on intercultural communication, stereotyping and prejudice, and in-groups and out-groups
- Discussing the novel and film
- Evaluation/Assessment

Before you start reading:

The story you are about to read is narrated by a 14-year-old boy from Tulsa, Oklahoma, US. The year is 1965. The story follows two rival gangs, the greasers and the Socs. A series of events leads to a tragedy which changes the lives of many of the characters involved in the plot. Consider this: Who is in your in-group? Who is in your out-group? How do you communicate with the people you consider to be in your in – and out group?

While you are reading:

- Write down what you find interesting about the story.
- Which scenes made the biggest impression on you? Why?
- Write down the names of the main characters and think about what they are like.
- The characters often use language that is offensive when they speak to each other. Are there any words or expressions that you find to be offensive? If so, why? Why do you think the characters speak this way to each other?
- Why do you think that the gangs are rivals?
- Does this story have a happy ending?

Intercultural communication: To have the skills needed to successfully interact with people from other cultural groups.

Stereotypes: Stereotypes are characteristics imposed upon groups of people because of their race or nationality, or just because they belong to a particular group in society.

Prejudice: Unreasonable feelings, opinions, or attitudes regarding an ethnic, racial, social, or religious group.

In-groups: Your family and friends are in your in-group. The members of your in-group are people that you trust, and you want them to accept you and be proud of you.

Out-groups: People that you do not know, that are unfamiliar to you, are part of your out-group. You do not know them, and you keep them at a distance. You might also have negative feelings towards them for some reason.

APPENDIX B

Most interesting	
Scenes that made an impression	
The main characters	
Offensive language	
Why do they speak that way to each other?	
Why are they rivals	
Happy ending?	

APPENDIX C

1. What elements from the novel have been added, changed or eliminated in the film?
2. Focus on the story: What is different and why? (Avoid making value judgements about the two media)

At the movies

Concentrate on the conversations that take place between the greasers and the Socs.

- How do they speak to each other?
- Do you think that they treat each other with respect?
- What is Dally like?
- What is Cherry like?
- How are Ponyboy and Johnny different from Dally?
- Do you think that the scene in the novel and the scene in the film portray the conversation in the same way? Why? What is different and what is similar?

APPENDIX D

What did you prefer? The novel or the film? Why?

Do you feel that working with both the novel and the film adaptation gave you a deeper understanding of the story? Why?

Did you get a different impression of the characters from the novel after you had watched the film adaptation? Why?

Did you enjoy the work? Why?