



COMPARATIVE EFFECT OF WATCHING CULTURAL CLIPS VERSUS READING CULTURAL TEXT ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (ICC)

^{1*}Fatemeh zavarzadeh,

²Bahram Mowlaie

¹M.A. in TEFL, Department of Foreign Language, SCT, Islamic Azad university, Tehran, Iran

²Ph.D in TEFL, Department of Foreign Language, SCT, Islamic Azad university, Tehran, Iran

Corresponding Author- Fatemeh zavarzadeh

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to compare the effects of watching cultural clips versus reading cultural texts on the development of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) among Iranian EFL learners. A quasi-experimental design was employed, involving two experimental groups and one control group, with 90 undergraduate EFL students from Islamic Azad University, Tehran. The experimental groups were exposed to either cultural clips (audiovisual materials) or cultural texts (written materials), while the control group followed the standard curriculum. Participants' ICC levels were measured through pre-tests and post-tests using a validated ICC questionnaire that assessed intercultural awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills. Data were analyzed using SPSS, and paired-sample t-tests were conducted to examine the differences between the pre- and post-test scores. The results showed that both exposure to cultural clips and reading cultural texts significantly improved ICC. Specifically, the experimental group exposed to cultural clips showed a statistically significant improvement in ICC, with a p-value of 0.001. The group exposed to cultural texts also showed considerable improvement, with a p-value of 0.003. In contrast, the control group exhibited minimal change in ICC, with a P-value of 0.05, indicating no significant improvement. These results underscore the importance of integrating cultural materials into EFL curricula to foster a more comprehensive development of ICC. The study suggests that combining cultural clips and texts in teaching practices can effectively support students in improving their intercultural communicative competence.

Keywords: Intercultural Communicative Competence, Intercultural Awareness, Intercultural Attitude, Intercultural Knowledge, Intercultural Skills, Audiovisual Materials, Cultural Texts.

INTRODUCTION

With the advancement of globalization, international interactions have become more frequent, creating a pressing need for the enhancement of intercultural engagement, particularly in cross-cultural communication. Intercultural Communicative Competence (hereafter ICC) is generally recognized as encompassing four key components: attitudes, knowledge, skills, and awareness, all of which support learners in navigating cultural challenges. These factors play a crucial role in alleviating the frustration associated with communication across diverse cultural backgrounds (Alptekin, 2002, p. 63). Various organizations such as the Modern Language Association (hereafter MLA), the Common European Framework of Reference (hereafter CEFR), and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (hereafter ACTFL) acknowledge the significance of cross-cultural elements in English language teaching (hereafter ELT) in different EFL (hereafter English as a Foreign Language) contexts (Ducate & Steckenbiller, 2017; Karami & Maleki, 2018).

Despite the increasing attention to cultural instruction in ELT contexts globally, Iranian language teaching institutions still largely employ traditional methods that emphasize grammar, reading comprehension, and vocabulary memorization (Rahimi & Riasati, 2011). In such contexts, culture is often treated as an ancillary component rather than an integral element of language education. This gap in practice calls for empirical studies that not only advocate the inclusion of intercultural content but also evaluate the effectiveness of different teaching modalities.

Moreover, although the benefits of integrating cultural clips into the classroom environment have been extensively highlighted, the challenges inherent in this approach cannot be overlooked. The careful selection of materials that authentically represent diverse cultures without stereotyping, the need for proper contextualization of audiovisual content, and the limited availability of culturally appropriate resources are among the issues that teachers must manage. Similarly, while reading cultural texts cultivates critical reflection, it may sometimes lack the immediacy and authenticity of audiovisual exposure, potentially reducing learners' motivation and engagement if not appropriately scaffolded (Byram & Wagner, 2018).

Given these considerations, there is an urgent need for systematic, comparative research assessing how audiovisual versus text-based cultural materials influence the development of ICC components such as attitudes, skills, knowledge, and awareness among Iranian EFL learners. Determining the relative effectiveness of each method can guide pedagogical decision-making, leading to more effective and contextually appropriate instructional designs that bridge the existing gap between linguistic competence and intercultural understanding.

Furthermore, considering the socio-political and educational structure in Iran, where access to authentic intercultural experiences may be limited, the classroom becomes a critical space for such engagements (Heidari Tabrizi & Chalak, 2020). Therefore, implementing effective and accessible strategies to promote ICC development is not only beneficial but also essential. Additionally, recognizing that Iranian learners may exhibit varying degrees of cultural openness and prior intercultural experiences suggests that any instructional intervention should be adaptable to diverse learner needs and sensitivities.

In conclusion, while the theoretical underpinnings of ICC and its significance in language education have been well established, there is a notable scarcity of research focusing on practical, comparative applications of audiovisual and reading-based cultural materials within the Iranian EFL context. Addressing this research gap is vital not only for enhancing academic understanding but also for informing pedagogical practices that can significantly improve Iranian EFL learners' readiness for global communication. Consequently, the present study seeks to contribute to the field by empirically investigating the relative impact of watching cultural clips versus reading cultural texts on the enhancement of ICC components among Iranian EFL learners, thereby offering valuable insights into effective intercultural education strategies for similar socio-educational settings.

1.1 Research Questions

RQ₁: Does watching cultural clips significantly improve the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) of Iranian EFL learners?

RQ₂: Does reading cultural text significantly improve the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) of Iranian EFL learners?

RQ₃: Is there any significant difference in the ICC caused by reading the cultural text vs. watching cultural clips?

RQ₄: Is there a significant difference in the overall ICC improvement between the two experimental groups (watching cultural clips and reading cultural texts) and the control group?

RQ₅: Is there a significant difference in the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills components of Intercultural Communicative Competence between Iranian EFL learners who watched cultural clips and those who read cultural texts?

1.2 Research Null Hypotheses

NH₁: Watching cultural clips does not significantly improve the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) of Iranian EFL learners,

NH₂: Reading cultural text does not significantly improve the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) of Iranian EFL learners,

NH₃: There is no significant difference in the ICC caused by reading the cultural text vs. watching cultural clips,

NH₄: There is no significant difference in the overall ICC improvement between the two experimental groups (watching cultural clips and reading cultural texts) and the control group.

NH₅: There is no significant difference in the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills components of Intercultural Communicative Competence between Iranian EFL learners who watched cultural clips and those who read cultural texts.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, quasi-experimental research design with a pre-test–post-test control group structure. This approach was suitable for investigating the causal relationships between various instructional methods and the development of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The quasi-experimental design was selected because it allowed for the allocation of participants to groups beyond the classroom level, ensuring ecological validity while maintaining methodological rigor.

The study consisted of three groups: two experimental groups and one control group. One experimental group received instruction through cultural clips (audiovisual materials), while the second group engaged with cultural texts (reading materials). The control group continued with standard EFL instruction without any explicit intercultural content. All participants completed an ICC pre-test and post-test, allowing for the evaluation of changes in their intercultural competence resulting from the intervention.

A purely experimental design was not feasible, as participants were drawn from intact university classes. However, the inclusion of control and treatment groups, along with the pre- and post-testing procedure, allowed for reliable between-group comparisons. This made the quasi-experimental design suitable for addressing the research questions while striking a balance between methodological rigor and classroom practicality.

Participants and Setting

Participants were undergraduate students majoring in English Language and Literature at the Islamic Azad University in Tehran. Convenience sampling was used to recruit the target population from several randomly selected faculties. From within selected classes, 90 students were screened using the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) to ensure a minimum B1 level proficiency. Participants were then randomly assigned to three groups (30 per group) using a stratified randomization process.

The sample size of 90 was determined using Cochran's formula, with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. The participants, aged between 19 and 30, represented diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and spoke Persian, Turkish, or Kurdish as their first language. To maintain the integrity of the study, students who missed more than two intervention sessions were excluded from the final analysis. The participants are distributed in three groups as follows:

- Experimental Group 1: Received instruction through audiovisual cultural clips
- Experimental Group 2: Received instruction through cultural texts
- Control Group: Received standard EFL instruction without intercultural content

All instructional sessions were held at the same language institute under uniform classroom conditions, with instruction delivered by the same teacher to control for instructor-related variation. Classes were conducted twice a week for five weeks, with each session lasting approximately 90 minutes.

The instructional setting was selected due to its representativeness of Iranian EFL environments, where traditional methods dominate and exposure to intercultural experiences is often limited. The controlled yet authentic academic context allowed for reliable intervention while maintaining relevance to real-world teaching conditions.

2.3 Instruments and Materials

Several instruments were employed to collect quantitative data and ensure the reliability and validity of the findings regarding the development of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) among Iranian EFL learners. These instruments included a standardized ICC questionnaire, cultural instructional materials (video clips and texts), and the Oxford Placement Test for participant selection. Each tool was carefully selected to align with the study's objectives and accurately measure the intended constructs.

2.3.1 Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

The Oxford Placement Test was used to determine the participants' English proficiency level and to select only intermediate learners for inclusion in the study. This standardized diagnostic tool assesses grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension through a multiple-choice format. It ensured that all participants started the survey from a comparable proficiency baseline, which was essential for internal validity in the comparative design.

2.3.2 Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) Questionnaire

The main instrument for assessing ICC was the validated questionnaire developed by Chen and Starosta (2000). This questionnaire consisted of 20 items, distributed evenly across four dimensions: intercultural awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging

from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). A pilot test was conducted with 15 students to confirm reliability within the local context. This tool had been previously validated in Iranian EFL settings.

2.3.3 Cultural Clips

Audiovisual materials included excerpts from short documentaries, interviews, vlogs, and scenes from international films. These clips were chosen for their authentic depiction of intercultural communication and rich nonverbal content, including facial expressions, gestures, tone, cultural artifacts, and social behaviors. Examples included:

- A documentary on daily life in Japan, highlighting non-verbal etiquette and cultural awareness.
- A film scene depicting an intercultural dinner conversation that highlights attitudes toward social norms.
- An interview with travelers discussing culture shock, illustrating the importance of interpretation and interaction skills.

Each clip (5–7 minutes) was subtitled in English and accompanied by pre-viewing, while-viewing, and post-viewing tasks, including guided discussions and culture-focused questions to promote reflection and comprehension.

2.3.4 Cultural Texts

Written materials consisted of short stories, essays, and articles addressing cultural traditions, communication styles, and societal values. The texts ranged from 500 to 800 words and were selected for their cultural depth and analytical potential. Examples included:

- A story portraying traditional family dynamics in an Indian village, promoting intercultural attitude and knowledge.
- An essay on individualism versus collectivism in Eastern and Western societies, fostering cultural awareness.
- An article about cross-cultural misunderstandings in business etiquette, targeting intercultural skills.

Post-reading activities involved comprehension questions, reflection prompts, and group discussions designed to enhance empathy, analytical thinking, and cultural comparison. Both sets of materials were selected for authenticity, cultural depth, and suitability for Iranian learners, based on their prior validation in ICC-related studies.

2.4 Data Collection Procedure

The procedure began with the administration of the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) to all prospective participants to ensure a comparable level of English proficiency. Following the OPT, eligible participants were randomly assigned to one of the three groups: two experimental and one control group. Before the start of the instructional intervention, all participants completed a pre-test using the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) questionnaire to establish a baseline measure of their intercultural competence.

The intervention phase lasted five weeks, during which each group participated in ten instructional sessions, conducted twice per week, each lasting approximately 90 minutes. The first experimental group received instruction through audiovisual cultural clips. Each session began with a brief introduction to the cultural context of the video clip, followed by the viewing of the clip itself. After

watching, students participated in guided discussions, vocabulary support activities, and critical analysis tasks focused on the cultural content.

The second experimental group received instruction through culturally themed reading materials. Each session involved reading a selected story, article, or essay, followed by reflective and analytical discussions, comprehension exercises, and small group activities that encouraged comparisons between the depicted cultural norms and the students' own experiences.

The control group continued with the institute's standard English curriculum, which emphasized grammar and vocabulary development and excluded explicit intercultural content. All sessions across the groups were held in the same institute, facilitated by the same instructor to minimize variability due to teaching style or delivery.

At the conclusion of the five-week intervention period, all participants completed the ICC post-test. Additionally, qualitative feedback was solicited from the two experimental groups to gather student perceptions of the instructional methods and cultural content. Throughout the study, class participation, attendance, and engagement levels were monitored to ensure consistency and to support the interpretation of quantitative outcomes.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the pre- and post-test ICC questionnaires were analyzed through a systematic sequence of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to determine the effectiveness of the instructional interventions. First, descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, minimum, and maximum values, were computed for each group to provide an overview of the participants' performance before and after the treatment. These values helped visualize general trends and assess central tendencies and variability across the three groups.

Before performing inferential analysis, the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were tested. The Shapiro–Wilk test was used to check the normality of data distribution for each variable. Levene's test was applied to ensure equality of variances across the groups, a prerequisite for conducting parametric tests.

Upon confirming that the data met these assumptions, an Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to compare the post-test ICC scores of the three groups while controlling for pre-test differences. This method allowed for isolating the effect of the instructional method on ICC improvement, enhancing the internal validity of the comparisons.

In cases where ANCOVA results revealed statistically significant differences, Bonferroni post hoc tests were used to perform pairwise comparisons between the groups to identify the nature and direction of those differences. These analyses provided detailed insights into whether one instructional approach (cultural clips or texts) led to more substantial ICC gains than the other or the control. All statistical analyses were performed using SPSS version 26, and the significance level for hypothesis testing was set at $p < 0.05$. This rigorous analytical framework ensured that conclusions drawn from the data were both statistically valid and pedagogically relevant.

Results

Preliminary Statistics

Reliability Statistics for the ICC Questionnaire

The Cronbach alpha for the ICC questionnaire was calculated as 0.82, indicating good internal consistency since the value exceeds the acceptable threshold of 0.70. Thus, the reliability of the ICC questionnaire with 20 items is confirmed as satisfactory for this study.

Results of the Normality Tests

The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed that all components had p -values greater than 0.05 (IAW = 0.076, IAT = 0.181, IK = 0.112, IS = 0.128), indicating that the data for each component followed a normal distribution. Similarly, the results of the Shapiro-Wilk test showed that all components had p -values above 0.05 (IAW = 0.036, IAT = 0.080, IK = 0.055, IS = 0.045), confirming that the data for each component were normally distributed. Although IAW had a slightly lower p -value in the Shapiro-Wilk test ($p = 0.036$), it still met the acceptable threshold for normality. These results confirmed that the data for all components of the ICC questionnaire were suitable for parametric statistical tests. Similarly, the Q-Q plots for each of the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) components—Intercultural Awareness (IAW), Intercultural Attitude (IAT), Intercultural Knowledge (IK), and Intercultural Skills (IS)—show that the data for all components closely follow the diagonal line. This indicates that the data for each component are approximately normally distributed. The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests further support these visual findings, as they provided p -values greater than 0.05 for all components, suggesting no significant deviations from normality. Therefore, these results confirm that the data for each component of the ICC questionnaire are normally distributed, making them suitable for parametric statistical analysis.

Analysis of the Results

After conducting the preliminary analysis to assess the reliability of the ICC questionnaire, along with the normality test for the distribution of the questionnaire items and components, the researcher aimed to investigate the results of the questions in the present study.

Answering the First Research Question

RQ₁. Does watching cultural clips significantly improve the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) of Iranian EFL learners?

NH₁. Watching cultural clips does not significantly improve the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) of Iranian EFL learners.

To address this question, a pre-test and post-test were conducted with Experimental Group 1, which received instruction through cultural clips. The ICC pre-test measured the learners' initial intercultural competence, while the post-test assessed changes in their intercultural competence after the intervention. Descriptive statistics were first analyzed for the pre-test and post-test scores. The mean ICC score for the Cultural Clips group increased from 3.35 (pre-test) to 4.10 (post-test), with a standard deviation of 0.62 (pre-test) and 0.75 (post-test). These results suggest that participants experienced an improvement in their ICC as a result of the intervention. To assess whether the difference between the pre-test and post-test ICC scores for the Cultural Clips group is statistically significant, a paired-samples t -test was conducted. The t -value of 8.56 with $df = 29$ and a p -value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) indicated a significant improvement in ICC following the intervention. Therefore, the first null hypothesis was rejected, and it can be concluded that watching cultural clips significantly improved the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) of Iranian EFL learners.

Answering the Second Research Question

RQ₂. Does reading cultural text significantly improve the Intercultural communicative Competence of Iranian EFL learners?

NH₂. Reading cultural text does not significantly improve the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) of Iranian EFL learners.

To investigate the second research question, the researcher first ran a paired-sample t-test to compare the pre-test and post-test scores of the second experimental group (students who received instruction through cultural texts). The paired-sample t-test was employed because it is appropriate for comparing the means of two related groups — in this case, the same participants' ICC scores before and after the intervention. This test allowed the researcher to determine whether the reading intervention had a statistically significant effect on the learners' intercultural competence. The descriptive statistics of the ICC scores for the pre-test and post-test of the second experimental group are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for ICC scores of the reading cultural texts group.

Reading Text Group	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
pre-test	30	45	85	65.27	10.12
post-test	30	55	90	72.13	8.97

Note. N = 30; ICC scores range from 20 to 100

As shown in Table 1, the mean ICC score of participants increased from 65.27 in the pre-test to 72.13 in the post-test, suggesting a positive effect of reading cultural texts on learners' intercultural competence. To test the statistical significance of this improvement, a paired-sample t-test was conducted. The paired-sample t-test results indicated a statistically significant increase in the ICC scores of the learners after receiving instruction through cultural texts ($t = 7.21, p < .001$). Consequently, the null hypothesis (H₀₂) was rejected, suggesting that reading cultural texts significantly improved the Intercultural Communicative Competence of Iranian EFL learners.

Answering the Third Research Question

RQ₃. Is there any significant difference in the ICC caused by reading the cultural text vs. watching cultural clips?

NH₃. There is no significant difference in ICC caused by reading a cultural text versus watching cultural clips.

To address this research question, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the post-test ICC scores of the two experimental groups (students who watched cultural clips and those who read cultural texts). The independent-samples t-test was employed because it is suitable for comparing the means of two independent groups. This analysis allowed the researcher to determine whether one instructional method was more effective than the other in improving learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). The mean ICC score of the Cultural Clips group ($M = 73.47, SD = 8.65$) was slightly higher than that of the Reading Cultural Texts group ($M = 72.13, SD = 8.97$). This minor difference suggested a similar improvement in ICC across the two instructional methods. To determine whether this difference was statistically significant, an independent-samples t-test was conducted. The t-value of 0.90 with $df = 58$ and a p-value of 0.371 ($p > .05$) indicated no significant difference between the post-test ICC scores of students who watched cultural clips and those who read cultural texts. Therefore, the third null hypothesis (H₀₃) was not rejected, suggesting that both instructional methods were equally effective in improving the Intercultural Communicative Competence of Iranian EFL learners.

Answering the Fourth Research Question

RQ4. Is there a significant difference in the overall ICC improvement between the two experimental groups (watching cultural clips and reading cultural texts) and the control group?

NH4. There is no significant difference in the overall ICC improvement between the two experimental groups (watching cultural clips and reading cultural texts) and the control group.

To answer this research question, the researcher calculated the overall ICC improvement for each participant by subtracting the pre-test score from the post-test score. Then, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean ICC improvements across the three groups: the Cultural Clips group, the Reading Cultural Texts group, and the Control group. The one-way ANOVA was employed because it is appropriate for comparing the means of more than two independent groups to determine whether at least one group's mean differs significantly from the others. The descriptive statistics of the overall ICC improvement scores for the three groups are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for ICC improvement scores of the three groups.

Groups	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Watching Cultural Clips	30	5	18	8.93	4.21
Reading Cultural Texts	30	4	16	6.87	4.12
Control Group	30	-2	5	1.73	2.08

Note. N = 30; ICC improvement scores range from -20 to 80.

As shown in Table 2, both experimental groups exhibited greater ICC improvement compared to the Control group, with mean improvements of 8.93 (Cultural Clips) and 6.87 (Reading Cultural Texts). In contrast, the Control group showed a minimal mean improvement of 1.73.

The post hoc test provided a detailed analysis of the pairwise differences in ICC improvement among the three groups. The comparison between the Cultural Clips group and the Reading Cultural Texts group revealed a mean difference of 2.06 in favor of the Clips group; however, this difference was not statistically significant ($p = 0.112$). This indicates that, although learners who watched cultural clips demonstrated a slightly higher mean improvement in ICC than those who read cultural texts, the difference was not statistically significant. Therefore, both instructional methods can be considered similarly effective in enhancing learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence.

In contrast, the comparisons between each experimental group and the Control group yielded statistically significant differences. The Cultural Clips group vs. The control group comparison showed a mean improvement difference of 7.20 points, which was highly significant ($p < 0.000$). Similarly, the Reading Cultural Texts group vs. The control group comparison revealed a mean improvement of 5.14 points in favor of the Texts group, which also reached statistical significance ($p = 0.001$). These results clearly demonstrate that both experimental interventions produced substantial gains in ICC compared to the learners who did not receive targeted intercultural instruction. The minimal improvement observed in the Control group underscores the critical role of these interventions in fostering intercultural competence.

The pattern of results suggests that both visual-auditory (cultural clips) and textual (cultural texts) modes of input can effectively enhance ICC among Iranian EFL learners. Despite the Clips group achieving slightly higher mean gains than the Texts group, the lack of statistical significance ($p = 0.112$) indicates that the type of delivery alone may not be a decisive factor, as long as learners are exposed to rich cultural content.

Overall, these findings indicate that integrating cultural materials in the EFL classroom leads to significant improvements in ICC, regardless of whether the content is presented visually or textually. Specifically, learners exposed to cultural clips or texts showed statistically considerable progress compared to the Control group ($p = 0.000$ and $p = 0.001$, respectively), supporting the pedagogical implication that either approach—or a combination of both—can effectively cultivate learners' ability to interact across cultures.

Answering the Fifth Research Question

RQ₅. Is there a significant difference in the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills components of Intercultural Communicative Competence between Iranian EFL learners who watched cultural clips and those who read cultural texts?

NH₅. There is no significant difference in the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills components of Intercultural Communicative Competence between Iranian EFL learners who watched cultural clips and those who read cultural texts.

To provide an answer for the last question of the current research, the researcher aimed to compare each ICC component separately between the two experimental groups. Since the comparison involved two independent groups (Cultural Clips group and Cultural Texts group) across four dependent variables (awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills), an independent-samples t-test was employed for each component. This analysis allowed the researcher to determine whether the type of cultural input had a statistically significant effect on the specific dimensions of ICC. The descriptive statistics for the four ICC components for both groups are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for ICC components of the two experimental groups.

ICC Component	Group	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Awareness	Cultural Clips	30	12	25	19.33	3.21
	Cultural Texts	30	11	24	17.87	3.45
Attitude	Cultural Clips	30	10	24	18.20	3.02
	Cultural Texts	30	9	23	16.90	3.27
Knowledge	Cultural Clips	30	11	25	19.07	3.18
	Cultural Texts	30	10	24	17.73	3.40
Skills	Cultural Clips	30	12	26	19.60	3.30
	Cultural Texts	30	11	25	18.10	3.50

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics for the four components of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)—Awareness, Attitude, Knowledge, and Skills—for the two experimental groups: learners who watched cultural clips and learners who read cultural texts. Descriptive statistics, including the mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation, provide a detailed overview of participants' performance across each component before any inferential tests were conducted.

First, considering the Awareness component, the mean score for the Cultural Clips group ($M = 19.33$, $SD = 3.21$) was higher than that of the Cultural Texts group ($M = 17.87$, $SD = 3.45$). This suggests that, on average, learners who watched cultural clips developed a greater level of intercultural awareness, potentially due to the visual and contextual nature of clips, which can make cultural norms, behaviors,

and social cues more tangible and memorable. The standard deviations indicate that scores were moderately dispersed within both groups, reflecting some individual variation in learners' baseline awareness and responsiveness to the intervention.

Regarding the Attitude component, the Cultural Clips group again outperformed the Cultural Texts group, with a mean of 18.20 versus 16.90. This indicates that the clips may have positively influenced learners' openness, empathy, and motivation toward intercultural interactions to a greater extent than textual materials. The relatively similar standard deviations (3.02 vs. 3.27) suggest a comparable level of variability among participants in both groups, pointing to consistent effects of the interventions on learners' attitudinal development.

For the Knowledge component, the mean ICC scores were 19.07 for the Cultural Clips group and 17.73 for the Cultural Texts group. Although the difference here is slightly smaller than for Awareness and Attitude, it still indicates that visual materials contributed marginally more to learners' understanding of cultural facts, norms, and frameworks. The higher standard deviation in the Cultural Texts group (SD = 3.40) compared to the Cultural Clips group (SD = 3.18) suggests that textual materials elicited more variability in learners' knowledge acquisition, possibly reflecting differences in individual reading comprehension or engagement levels.

Finally, the Skills component showed the most considerable mean difference between the groups, with the Cultural Clips group scoring 19.60 (SD = 3.30) and the Cultural Texts group 18.10 (SD = 3.50). This suggests that learners who engaged with cultural clips were more effective in applying their intercultural knowledge in practical or simulated communicative contexts, potentially because videos offer dynamic examples of interaction strategies, non-verbal cues, and situational behaviors.

Overall, Table 4 demonstrates a consistent trend: across all ICC components, participants exposed to cultural clips scored higher on average than those exposed to cultural texts. These preliminary descriptive results suggest that visual and contextual learning through clips may enhance learners' intercultural competence more effectively than text-based instruction. To examine whether these differences were statistically significant, independent-samples t-tests were conducted for each component. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Independent-samples t-test results for ICC components by experimental group.

ICC Component	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Awareness	2.12	58	0.038	1.46	0.69
Attitude	2.01	58	0.049	1.30	0.65
Knowledge	1.97	58	0.053	1.34	0.68
Skills	2.02	58	0.048	1.50	0.74

Table 4 presents the results of the independent-samples t-test conducted to compare the four components of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) between the two experimental groups: the Cultural Clips group and the Cultural Texts group. The goal was to assess whether there was a statistically significant difference between the groups on each ICC component. Each component—Awareness, Attitude, Knowledge, and Skills—was examined separately, and the t-values, degrees of freedom (df), significance levels (p-values), mean differences, and standard error differences were calculated for each.

For the Awareness component, the independent-samples t-test revealed a significant difference between the two experimental groups ($t = 2.12$, $p = 0.038$). The mean difference was found to be 1.46, with a standard error difference of 0.69. These results suggest that watching cultural clips significantly

improved learners' awareness of intercultural issues compared to reading cultural texts. The t -value of 2.12 with a p -value of 0.038 indicates that the difference in Awareness scores was statistically significant, allowing us to reject the null hypothesis. This shows that the Cultural Clips group performed better on this component of ICC, suggesting that audiovisual content may be more effective in raising intercultural awareness.

For the Attitude component, the t -test also found a statistically significant difference ($t = 2.01$, $p = 0.049$). The mean difference was 1.30, with a standard error difference of 0.65. This indicates that learners in the Cultural Clips group exhibited more positive intercultural attitudes than those in the Cultural Texts group. The t -value of 2.01 and the p -value of 0.049 suggest that watching cultural clips had a stronger impact on fostering openness, empathy, and willingness to engage with people from different cultures compared to reading texts. This result suggests that the Cultural Clips group had significantly more favorable attitudes toward intercultural communication, supporting the effectiveness of multimedia resources in shaping learners' attitudes.

For the Knowledge component, although the mean score for the Cultural Clips group ($M = 19.07$) was slightly higher than that of the Cultural Texts group ($M = 17.73$), the t -value of 1.97 and the p -value of 0.053 suggest that the difference was not statistically significant. The mean difference of 1.34 and the standard error difference of 0.68 imply that while there was a slight difference in knowledge scores, the difference was not significant enough to reject the null hypothesis. The p -value of 0.053, which is just above the 0.05 significance level, indicates that both the Cultural Clips and Cultural Texts interventions had a similar impact on enhancing learners' intercultural knowledge. This suggests that both types of materials could be equally effective for improving learners' factual understanding of cultural norms and values.

For the Skills component, the t -test revealed a statistically significant difference ($t = 2.02$, $p = 0.048$), with a mean difference of 1.50 and a standard error difference of 0.74. This indicates that learners in the Cultural Clips group showed greater intercultural communication skills than those in the Cultural Texts group. The t -value of 2.02 and the p -value of 0.048 suggest that watching cultural clips had a more substantial effect on enhancing learners' ability to adapt to intercultural interactions. This result implies that the visual and interactive nature of cultural clips better supported learners in acquiring practical skills for intercultural communication.

Consequently, the independent-samples t -test results indicated that the differences in awareness ($t = 2.12$, $p = 0.038$), Attitude ($t = 2.01$, $p = 0.049$), and Skills ($t = 2.02$, $p = 0.048$) were statistically significant at the 0.05 level. In contrast, the difference in knowledge ($t = 1.97$, $p = 0.053$) was not significant. These findings suggest that watching cultural clips had a significantly greater impact on the Awareness, Attitude, and Skills components of ICC compared to reading cultural texts. In contrast, both interventions had a similar effect on knowledge. Figure 1 illustrates the mean scores of each ICC component for the two experimental groups.

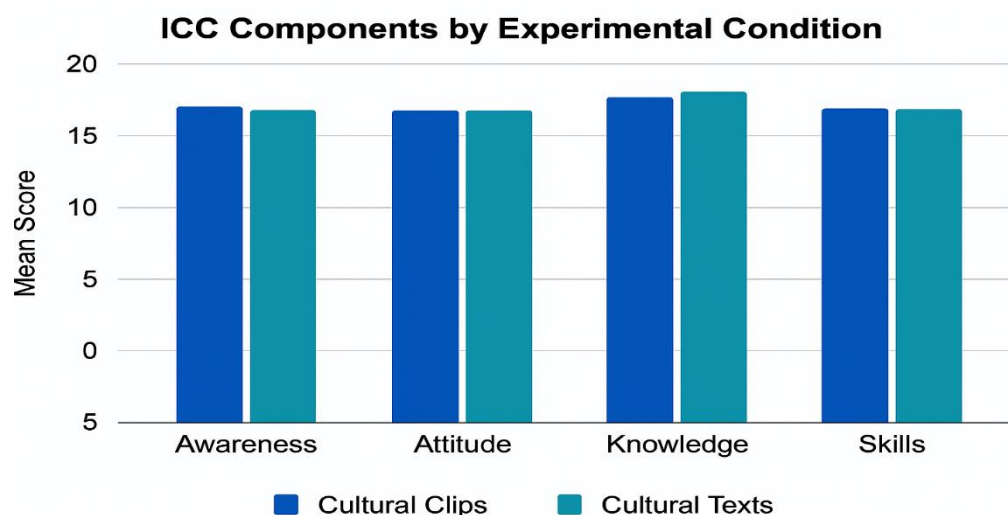


Figure 1. Mean ICC Component Scores for Cultural Clips vs. Cultural Texts Groups.

In conclusion, the null hypothesis (H_0) was partially rejected, indicating that the type of cultural input affects specific components of ICC differently, with Cultural Clips having a stronger influence on particular dimensions of intercultural competence among Iranian EFL learners.

DISCUSSION

The current study's findings revealed a significant improvement in ICC for the Cultural Clips group, particularly in Intercultural Awareness, Attitude, and Skills, which aligns with the findings of several prior studies. For example, Tomalin (2013) highlighted that cultural clips, such as films and television programs, helped learners develop pragmatic competence and intercultural sensitivity. Similarly, Zarei and Rezaee (2019) found that Iranian EFL students exposed to audiovisual materials showed significant improvements in cultural sensitivity and communication skills. These results support the conclusion of the present study that watching cultural clips significantly enhances EFL learners' ability to engage with diverse cultures.

The study by Çakir and Demir (2021) also confirmed the findings of this research, demonstrating that audiovisual materials such as TV shows and films helped learners develop both linguistic and cultural competence. In the present study, participants in the Cultural Clips group demonstrated a marked improvement in their ability to interpret non-verbal cues and social etiquette, consistent with the findings of Aslani and Elham (2020), who also noted significant gains in recognizing non-verbal communication after watching short films.

Furthermore, Liu and Zhang (2019) compared the use of cultural clips with traditional reading texts. They found that while both methods improved ICC, audiovisual clips were particularly effective for enhancing listening comprehension and pragmatic skills. This finding corroborates the results of the present study, which found that Cultural Clips significantly improved skills related to intercultural communication, including attitudes and pragmatic awareness.

In terms of reading cultural texts, the present study found a statistically significant improvement in ICC for the Cultural Texts group, especially in the Attitude and Awareness components, which aligns with the research of Shih (2014) and Mokhtari and Shaterian (2015). Shih (2014) argued that reading literature from diverse cultural contexts enhances intercultural awareness and understanding, a finding similar to those in this study, where learners exposed to cultural texts showed increased awareness of cultural norms, values, and social behaviors.

Moreover, Park (2017) emphasized that engaging with literary texts allows learners to explore cultural values and societal norms. This was reflected in the present study's findings, where participants in the Cultural Texts group developed greater insight into cultural issues, which improved their intercultural awareness and skills. The ability to analyze and reflect on the cultural content provided by texts enhanced their cultural knowledge.

However, the present study's results diverge from those of Liu and Zhang (2019), who found that reading cultural texts had a weaker impact on improving ICC compared to audiovisual materials. While the Cultural Texts in the current study showed positive results, the improvement was less pronounced compared to the Cultural Clips group, especially in the Skills component. This suggests that reading materials might be more effective in building knowledge and awareness, but audiovisual materials are more impactful in developing practical intercultural communication skills.

The third research question aimed to compare the effects of Cultural Clips and Cultural Texts on ICC improvement. According to Liu and Zhang (2019), combining both methods yields the highest improvements in ICC, as it allows learners to engage with both auditory and visual cues. The present study's results support this assertion, as participants in both groups showed significant improvements in their ICC. However, the Cultural Clips group demonstrated more substantial improvements in pragmatic skills and attitude, while the Cultural Texts group excelled in cultural knowledge and awareness.

Rashid and Iqbal (2020) also found that both methods contributed positively to ICC development, but each had a different emphasis. Cultural Clips enhanced interpretive skills, while Cultural Texts encouraged critical thinking and deeper cultural insights. This aligns with the findings of the present study, in which the Cultural Clips group showed significant improvement in attitude and pragmatic skills. In contrast, the Cultural Texts group demonstrated greater improvement in cultural awareness and knowledge.

The control group in this study, which received standard EFL instruction without explicit cultural content, showed minimal improvement in ICC. These findings highlight the importance of incorporating cultural content into language learning to improve students' ability to communicate effectively in intercultural contexts. To Summarize the findings of this study- Study is largely consistent with existing research, confirming the significant role of both Cultural Clips and Cultural Texts in enhancing Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) among Iranian EFL learners. While Cultural Clips were particularly effective in improving pragmatic skills and intercultural attitudes, Cultural Texts contributed more to learners' cultural awareness and knowledge. Combining both methods may yield the most significant improvements, supporting the conclusions of previous studies, such as those by Liu and Zhang (2019). The present study contributes to the body of research by providing empirical evidence from an Iranian context, suggesting that integrating cultural materials into EFL classrooms is essential for developing well-rounded intercultural competence.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the present study found that both watching cultural clips and reading cultural texts significantly improved ICC among Iranian EFL learners, with both methods being equally effective overall. However, cultural clips were found to have a stronger effect on specific ICC components, particularly Awareness, Attitude, and Skills, compared to cultural texts. These findings highlight the importance of incorporating diverse cultural materials into the language learning process to foster intercultural competence.

The findings of this study support the notion that cultural content—whether delivered through audiovisual clips or textual materials—has a significant positive impact on the development of intercultural communicative competence among Iranian EFL learners. The results also underscore the importance of integrating diverse cultural perspectives into language instruction to prepare learners for effective intercultural communication. This study contributes to the growing body of research on the use

of multimedia in language education, highlighting the need for EFL teachers to consider the potential of both cultural clips and texts in their pedagogical strategies to enhance students' intercultural awareness and communication skills.

REFERENCES

1. Alptekin, C. (2002). Towards intercultural communicative competence in ELT. *ELT Journal*, 56(1), 57-64. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/56.1.57>
2. Aslani, M., & Elham, F. (2020). Short films as a tool for teaching intercultural communication: The case of Iranian EFL students. *International Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, 4(3), 123-138.
3. Byram, M., & Wagner, M. (2018). Making a difference: Language teaching for intercultural and international dialogue. *Foreign Language Annals*, 51(1), 140–151. <https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12319>
4. Çakir, I., & Demir, F. (2021). The role of TV shows and movie scenes in intercultural competence development in EFL classrooms. *International Journal of English and Education*, 10(2), 87-103.
5. Chen, G-M., & Starosta, W. J. (2000). The development and validation of the intercultural sensitivity scale. *Human Communication*, 3(1), 3-14.
6. Ducate, L., & Steckenbiller, C. (2017). Toward a better understanding of culture: Wikis in the beginning German classroom. *The Language Learning Journal*, 45(2), 202-219. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2013.826715>
7. Heidari Tabrizi, H., & Chalak, A. (2020). Using short stories vs. video clips to improve upper intermediate EFL students' sociopragmatic knowledge: Speech acts in focus. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 7(1), 1778977.
8. Karami, M., & Maleki, M. (2018). Literary texts and their role in developing intercultural competence in Iranian EFL learners. *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 21(4), 45-60.
9. Liu, H., & Zhang, X. (2019). Comparing the effectiveness of cultural clips and reading texts in EFL contexts: A case study from China. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 19(4), 431-445. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2019.1632832>
10. Mokhtari, H., & Shaterian, Z. (2015). Developing pragmatic competence through authentic cultural texts: A case study of Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 78, 42-58. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2015.02.010>
11. Park, H. (2017). Using literary texts to enhance intercultural competence in an EFL context. *Asian EFL Journal*, 19(3), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.3389/jal.2017.0103>
12. Rahimi, F., & Riasati, M. J. (2011). Critical discourse analysis: Scrutinizing ideologically-driven discourses. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1(16), 107–112.
13. Rashid, M. M., & Iqbal, M. (2020). A comparative study of the impact of films versus literary texts on intercultural competence. *Language and Education*, 34(5), 511-528. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2020.1794642>
14. Shih, S. (2014). The impact of literary texts on intercultural communication and critical thinking in foreign language education. *Journal of Language Teaching and Learning*, 14(1), 23-40.
15. Tomalin, B. (2013). Cultural awareness in language teaching: The use of films and TV programs. *ELT Journal*, 67(3), 362-373. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/cct041>
16. Zarei, S., & Rezaee, M. (2019). The effects of short films on intercultural competence in Iranian EFL students. *Journal of Language and Intercultural Communication*, 16(2), 172-190. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2018.1515415>