ABSTRACT
The aim of this research paper is to explore the use of literary-based cultural materials to reinforce the speaking and writing skills by using folktales (world culture materials) and short stories (home culture) in oral expression and writing courses. To achieve this purpose, researchers will show the results of mixed-method research involving the analysis of a diagnostic questionnaire administered to professors and students of the English Teaching Major at UNA, Brunca Branch. Results evidenced that folktales and short stories are rarely used in those courses to strengthen the productive skills. Based on this, researchers devised a proposal to blend world and home culture with language competence to develop written and oral activities in the classroom.

Palabras clave: literatura, cultura, cuentos, leyendas, competencia lingüística.

RESUMEN
El objetivo de esta investigación es explorar el uso de información cultural basada en literatura como forma de reforzar las destrezas orales y escritas utilizando leyendas (materiales de cultura universal) y cuentos (cultura nativa) en los cursos de expresión oral y escrita. Para lograr este objetivo, los investigadores mostrarán los resultados de una investigación de método mixto que incluye un cuestionario diagnóstico administrado a los profesores y estudiantes de la carrera Enseñanza del Inglés de la UNA, Sede Brunca. Los resultados evidenciaron que las leyendas y los cuentos son difícilmente utilizados en esos cursos para fortalecer las habilidades productivas. Basado en esto, los investigadores diseñaron una propuesta para unificar la cultura nativa y la universal con la competencia lingüística para desarrollar actividades escritas y orales en el salón de clase.

Keywords: literature, culture, short stories, folktales, linguistic competence.

Introduction

Literature is considered a tool to describe the world and its peoples. In EFL or ESL contexts it is scarcely used to enhance cultural content and linguistic skills. In this regard, folktales and short stories could be used in composition and oral expression...
courses as they are considered texts that exploit cultural themes and may raise students’ awareness of different worldviews along with behaviors and social practices. There are three types of cultural materials that teachers can incorporate in an EFL classroom: target culture materials, learners' own culture materials and international target culture materials. The integration of these materials contributes to enriching cultural knowledge and strengthening the four linguistic skills if they are properly chosen and adapted to the course syllabus.

Under this categorization, world and native cultures can be portrayed by using folktales and short stories to improve and teach language. This paper revolves around offering EFL teachers practical ideas on how to use cultural information through folktales and short stories as a way to help students reinforce the speaking and writing skills. To accomplish this objective, researchers will first refer to the importance of integrating world culture and native culture materials to teach those two linguistic skills by presenting the results of the data collection instruments administered to professors and students of the English Teaching Major. Based on the data collected, a sample unit including a couple of folktales and short stories was designed for teachers to use in oral expression and composition courses.

The guiding research questions of this study are:
- How useful is it to integrate literary-based cultural materials in an oral expression and composition course to improve language competence and boost cultural awareness?
- What literary-based cultural materials can be incorporated to an oral expression and composition course to improve language competence and boost cultural awareness?
- How can literary-based cultural materials be used in an oral expression and composition course to improve language competence and boost cultural awareness?

**Literature Review**

*Literature in the Foreign Language Class*

Literature is an important manifestation of people’s perceptions of the world and a recreation of their reality. It also involves a reconstruction of symbols and meanings to represent the unknown. Traditionally, the role of literature in language classes has been regarded to cultivate those who have intellectual capacities to enrich their knowledge of the world. In the teaching of languages, literature was used to know about foreign cultures, language structures, and fine arts in general. However, through the years, studies in second language acquisition have shown that a literary text can be a useful tool to be exploited with students. Thus, the four language skills can be developed through the use of pieces of literature at the same time that literary competence can be achieved. In addition to this, texts can be approached to enhance human competence in order to develop critical thinking.

Literature is considered one of the main ways to raise cultural awareness since the language used along with the social manifestations mirror cultural patterns that reflect the systems of different societies. When learning a second language, the target culture is a fundamental component that is linked to it. In simple terms, literature is not different from any other linguistic task students need to do in class. That is, students have produced linguistic structures to achieve communication. Littlewood (1975) describes
five perspectives on literature and language teaching that could be used as starting points to consider when teaching language by using literary texts:

- Literature provides instances of language structures in use, which can form the basis for instruction and practice in the language skills, especially reading comprehension, grammatical analysis and explanation. If language is taught as a whole, it can be just convenient to use the text as a tool to go over reading strategies to get main ideas, details and points of view of the author. Likewise, the structures used in the text may serve as the basis for grammatical instruction in case there are new points to review or just to reinforce the structures already learned.

- Literature may help students become capable of sensitivity to stylistic variation. In this regard, language varieties are explored in the sense that standard forms and nonstandard ones are addressed to offer stylistic diversity. Genres are also studied such as narrative, poetic and dramatic. Each one is characterized by its own features that make it a particular literary text with very specific format and language style. What is quite challenging and interesting at this point is the fact that writers may even use their local dialects, which is a kind of gap between students’ language and the variety used in the text.

- A more precise contribution of literature revolves around the subject matter. Here the episodes, situations and characters are highlighted for the purpose of engaging the reader into the gist of the text. Then, a more content-based approach is developed at this stage as the elements of the text are explored mainly for class discussion or written tasks as well. As it is clearly evident, not only language skills but also content is linked so that students become critical language learners. The connection between language and culture becomes more evident at this stage since the situations portrayed in the text are real-life situations faced by the characters of the literary text.

- Appreciation is now the next stage to reach after strengthening language skills and learning literary approaches. What is expected here is to interpret the author’s point or underlying theme. Once again, class discussions and written work are expected as ways for the students to use the target language in a more parallel and integrated fashion.

- The final stage is reached when students can step outside and place the work in its historical context. Thus, facts are emphasized so that social roles along with linguistic and intellectual development of the foreign culture serve as referents of the points studied in the class.  

The five perspectives described above may also be used to select appropriate texts for different classes. It is worth mentioning that each class has very specific objectives that can be fulfilled depending on the suitability of the materials used. Literature contributes to this matter by offering a wide array of genres and themes for the students to choose the ones that suit their learning needs.

The Role of Authentic Materials to Teach Language and Culture

Another outstanding point to consider when teaching language and culture is authentic material. Authentic materials increase students’ motivation to learn and expose them to real-life language used in naturally occurring situations. Hajrulla (2012) remarked that “today, with the help of technological developments, we have access to many sources easily and quickly. Almost all the printed materials are on the Internet in electronic forms and we can easily search anything anytime. As a result, we do not lack cultural content to use in our classrooms” (p. 105). Some authentic materials such as brochures, newspapers, songs, films among many others raise students’ interest to discover and explore cultural manifestations in real contexts. McKay (as cited in Hajrulla, 2012) suggested three types of cultural materials: target culture materials, learners’ own culture materials and international target culture materials. She remarks the best one is international target language materials as long as they cover diverse cultural knowledge from around the world using the target language. These three types of materials are quite useful since students get involved with their own culture, the target culture and other foreign cultures, which contributes to having a broader perspective of their own culture and other cultures. Having said this, there is no excuse to leave aside texts with full cultural content. In a language classroom, students are frequently asked what topics they would like to discuss if the syllabus allows it. For this reason, when dealing with the target culture it is commendable to make sure that the language used does not represent a burden which prevents comprehension. Students usually feel that they are not able to go beyond a plain analysis of the content of a text because their proficiency level is low; however, if the text is carefully selected that may be solved.

Furthermore, it is useful to consider that literary texts develop plots that may seem totally unreal for the context where students are. In this light, the teacher might get the students to be sensitive to cultural and linguistic conflicts that arise when dealing with the target culture. The teacher must be ready to face students with situations that may eventually take place when interacting with foreigners or when visiting the target culture. A concept that may be addressed to be included in this language-culture relation is negotiation of meaning. Students need to know that as they move on that there comes a time when more advanced communicative skills must be handled to fulfill the needs of the interlocutors. That means that cultural codes must be interpreted as to allow fluent communication. Cultural information provided by teachers in most cases helps understand misinterpretations or prejudices that are around, and students assume are true. Therefore, it is evident that learning a language is not necessarily the mastery of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation but a bunch of linguistic and non-verbal clues that are culture bound. To use authentic materials in the English class requires three fundamental steps to be taken:

1. Criteria of Authentic Materials

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5 Hajrulla, 2-14.
The purpose of the English class is to teach language for communication, but not all materials are suitable for that purpose. The teacher should take the time to choose the materials. Berardo (as cited in Safitri, 2017)\(^6\) suggested these criteria for selecting authentic texts:

- A) suitability of content: students’ interests, needs and abilities
- B) exploitability: students’ competence and teaching purposes
- C) readability: language of the text

Based on the previous points, the teacher can decide which materials fulfill the students’ needs.

2. Integrated home and target culture

Authentic materials provide cultural content of the target language. They show the learners how the language is used by native speakers and what the components of culture are. Because of the great influence of foreign culture, there should be cross-cultural comparisons that include the students' own culture along with the target culture. That implies that the home and target culture should be part of the contents developed.

3. Effective activities

Effective classroom activities are required to engage the students in the class. If the teacher uses authentic materials, the activities must make use of such materials. As a result, the students are motivated to participate when teachers design interesting activities to learn the language.

In the case of short stories, they seem to be very suitable to use. Since they are short, they are not overloaded with many details and characters. In that way, it is easy for the students to understand them. There are four advantages of using short stories. First, short stories are practical as they can be covered in a single class. Second, they are not complicated for students to work individually. Third, short stories have a wide range of themes for different types of students. Finally, short stories can be used with beginners as well as with advanced students including all ages. The use of short stories should encourage the students to use their prior knowledge so that the learning is student-centered. Nevertheless, teachers play a significant role as they must choose the text to use in class, and help the students understand the story by assigning diverse activities that strengthen the four linguistic skills. When picking out the story, teachers have to be wise enough to make the right choice. When reading the story, students may be able to see that they can read, understand and finish it so that it will give them a feeling of achievement and self-confidence. Apart from the length of the text, there are some criteria to choose the text: the students’ needs and language proficiency; the linguistic level of the text; and the amount of prior knowledge required to understand the material. The importance of these criteria is that the vocabulary and sentence structure of the text must be in accordance with the students’ level. Some short stories with very archaic words and plenty of slang should be avoided as students may find them dull and hard to follow.

Short stories allow teachers to teach the four language skills to different student populations. These texts can provide meaningful content which hopefully enhances the teaching of language and culture. Additionally, short stories could be very beneficial materials to develop linguistic skills since they can be used in a wide array of activities such as discussion, writing and acting out dialogues, changing the characters, making up another ending, listening to the story online, finding key words and replacing them with synonyms to name a few (Pardede, 2011)\(^7\).

**Language and Culture**

In this globalized world, it is vital to interact with people who speak other languages. That is what language education concerns: making languages a means of communication to have access to others. In this sense, culture and language are strictly related. Language is part of culture; it is a transmitter of culture and is also the main tool for the internationalization of culture. However, the term ‘culture’ is thought to be very broad. It is a fact that culture can be defined from a variety of perspectives depending on its oral or written aspects, whether we look at popular culture, and whether we consider special events, or daily practices. Kramsch (as cited in Arabski & Wojtaszek, 2011)\(^8\) stated there are two different ways of understanding culture. The first one revolves around the study of the humanities. According to this view, culture is the way a social group mirrors itself and others through material productions such as art, literature, mechanisms of preservation and reproduction through history. The second way of understanding culture conceives the phenomenon as derived from the contributions of social sciences that includes attitudes, beliefs, ways of thinking, behaving and remembering shared by members of a community.

Language programs that teach culture have often been criticized for the engagement with cultural differences. In consequence, using culture as context for learning has been proposed to offer broader curricular approaches to language and culture. Also, another aspect of criticism concerns the superficial conceptualization of culture in language teaching programs and materials. Teaching materials tend to be simple and plain: they present facts rather than interpretations of cultural phenomena. Added to this, they avoid explaining nuances and developing intercultural skills. Even in a superficial way, every day routines might prove misleading as they are symptoms of some underlying norms, attitudes or beliefs. In the case of language learners who are not provided with explanations of the underlying meanings, they are likely to face communication problems. Another common mistake is that culture cannot be framed only to refer to social practices such as cuisine, festivals and traditional dress. Such emphasis on differences leads to stereotyping the target group and to placing stress on exotic differences between societies (Arabski & Wojtaszek, 2011)\(^9\).

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The target language cannot be separated with its culture. Culture is defined as the customs, values, laws, technology, artifacts and art of a particular people. Culture in English language teaching materials should emphasize how native speakers of English use the language in their daily lives. Understanding the culture of the native speaker is a good way to use the language linguistic and pragmatically appropriate. In this light, learning about the target culture as well as about one's own culture requires language learners to know how to negotiate meaning and understand the communicative processes and cultural texts containing specific linguistic codes. In other words, it is very useful for learners to learn the culture of English in order to comprehend the language. Cultural content exposes students to the language that they lack as non-native speakers. For instance, culture is an instrument that allows learners to regard the importance of speaking the target language.

**Teaching Culture**

For teachers to help students understand the target culture, it advisable to start with their own frame of reference and then move on to the next stage. There are some general considerations to take into account in order to teach culture:

1. Cultural lessons and activities must be planned carefully and thus integrated in the lesson.
2. Present cultural topics related to thematic units. Use cultural contexts for activities even if they focus on grammar.
3. Use varied techniques that develop the four language skills.
4. Use textbooks with illustrations and photos. Ask questions to elicit and analyze their cultural content.
5. Use cultural information to teach vocabulary. Teach the connotation of words.
6. Use discussions, brainstorming and group techniques to develop cultural content.
7. Avoid using only facts by including experiential and process learning.
8. Always use the target language.
9. Test cultural content just as language is tested (Omaggio, 2000, p. 358).  

These tips to teach culture are worth incorporating in the class as long as they help teachers to deal with the teaching of language and culture by developing the four language skills. Once again, we can notice how meaningful it is to relate any cultural theme to the language point being taught. By doing this, not only is language proficiency strengthened but also cultural content enhanced. This approach may provide more positive results in the classroom if it is developed on a regular basis. Another variable that must be considered is the teacher’s expertise to teach culture. Over the years, language teachers have provided useful tips and activities to be incorporated and adapted in the classroom. Some of the most successful are role-play, hands-on projects, surveys, chats, inviting native speakers to the classroom, culture capsules, culture clusters, cross-cultural comparisons and posters.

Needless to say, plenty of these activities require proper preparation together with authentic materials to make the teaching-learning experience engaging and catchy.

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Authentic materials enable students to interact with real language and cultural practices besides language. Learners feel that they are learning a target language as it is used in the real world. Therefore, it is pertinent to say that in any teaching context authentic materials must be used to fill the gap between language knowledge and social behavior, a natural barrier for speakers of foreign languages. In this regard, technology nowadays has an impact on how culture is taught in the language class. Through technology teachers have access to information elicited from the context and from native speakers interacting. Thus, it becomes reliable because the teacher is just the facilitator and not the primary source of the information. This contributes to creating a more critical view from the students as they are the ones to use the information provided and analyze it to give their opinions or develop activities in which the language skills are reinforced by means of the content given. In this way, it can be said that technology helps students have a clearer picture of the target culture and thus become more critical.

**Challenges When Teaching Culture**

Another tenet when teaching language and culture deals with how to build cultural competence as teachers are faced with several issues that may interfere with the development of the classroom because students come with many prejudices and misconceptions about the target culture. For this purpose, it may be useful to assess how appropriate the activity is for the concept studied. Not all activities may fulfill the objectives already set. If so, the teacher must carefully decide whether the students will respond positively to the activity, or if they may feel reluctant to participate. Variables such as size of the group, age, gender and personality could affect the outcome expected. At this point is when lesson planning plays a central role to reflect on the dynamics of the class. Then, the challenge of the content is to be balanced. Students need to be challenged all the time, for they like novelty and variety of activities. When dealing with cultural content, challenge is always expected since there are lots of questions to answer and situations that are possibly new to explore.

Students’ curiosity should awake their senses to open up to the new world in front of them, in this case, the target culture. Following, the activity carried out must trigger movement along the class cycle by building on the learner’s experience. This step involves relying on students’ concrete background knowledge as a tool to be used when comparing or analyzing cultural themes. This is usually utilized to make cross-cultural comparisons that are later discussed in pairs or small groups. The role of the teacher here is to guide the students to clarify if their assumptions about the new culture are true or not and help them build up knowledge. After this is accomplished, it is time to offer reflection and connection. Students connect everything they have learned to their existing knowledge so that their cultural baggage is broadened. This serves as a reflective time for them to internalize new knowledge and test it regarding its usefulness. This part of the lesson is crucial since students are able to comprehend what has been learned and probably get rid of what they consider to be stereotypes derived from their lack of cultural competence. The other stage of the classroom is devoted to examining a concept or framework. More abstract concepts are reviewed for the purpose of placing the cultural aspect in its sociocultural context. Social practices behind the theme may be the basis of its actual occurrence, which determine the extent to which it is regarded as a conventional situation or not.
On the other hand, the pragmatic component needs to be stressed as a means to actively engage in situations which are appropriate in a given context. Active participation is demanded from the students to show understanding and competence. By being actively engaged in the learning process, students demonstrate how accurate they may be in situations that require their linguistic and cultural knowledge. The content learned must be pragmatically fit to act as native speakers do in real life situations. That is why it is paramount to be not only linguistic but also pragmatically competent. Added to this, teachers must consider the pace at which students learn in order to determine the sequence of their learning process. Too much content may overwhelm the students who are beginning to know about a new culture. Therefore, the information must be presented in a way that there is understanding and room for proper interpretation. This is usually done by means of activities that require time for the students to prepare, develop, discuss and reflect. In other words, it is a step-by-step procedure. Not all learners process the information at the same time and rate, so approaching as many learning styles as possible can be a very successful strategy to make sure everyone is involved in the process. Some dominant styles such as the introverted personality may take over in activities where discussion is essential leaving behind introverted learners. Teachers must be able to identify major learning styles to keep a balance in the classroom and permit the participation of all the students to assure effective learning.

Although it may seem complex, teaching language and culture does not have to be a hard task for teachers. It is expected that diverse situations may arise to cause certain discrepancies among learners. This is so as there are students with different backgrounds and thus different beliefs. There could be instances in which some may think that their feelings are challenged by the target culture as what may be permissible in one culture may not be in another. Some students might take risks to even test their own tolerance while others may feel reluctant and express denial or discomfort. This is natural and does not have to be a burden for teachers who go the extra mile when adapting materials and designing activities that enhance the cultural component of language. Finally, it is also pertinent to foresee if the various groups present in the classroom (cultural backgrounds) will enjoy the activities suggested by the teacher or if they will resist it. To deal with this, teachers must know very well their students and be sensitive enough to avoid themes that may cause embarrassment or negative feelings. If an issue comes up, it is necessary to discuss it and explain the reason why it was brought into the classroom. Feelings may sometimes be hurt when dealing with cultural themes, but teachers must be wise to know what to do under such circumstances (Berardo & Deardorff, 2012)\(^\text{11}\).

**Methodology**

**Design**

The methodology used to carry out this study was a mixed-method approach including qualitative and quantitative data to determine the usefulness of literary-based cultural material in an oral expression course and a composition course in order to

maximize language competence. In this regard, the research questions that will lead this study are:

- How useful is it to integrate literary-based cultural materials in an oral expression and composition course to improve language competence and boost cultural awareness?
- What literary-based cultural materials can be incorporated to an oral expression and composition course to improve language competence and boost cultural awareness?
- How can literary-based cultural materials be used in an oral expression and composition course to improve language competence and boost cultural awareness?

After the data analysis, the researchers will propose a design to integrate short stories and folktales in those courses of the major based on the participants’ responses. The scope of this research is descriptive. Fox and Bayat (2007) acknowledged descriptive research as, “the one aimed at casting light on current issues or problems through a process of data collection that enables them to describe the situation more completely than was possible without employing this method (p.24)\textsuperscript{12}.

**Participant Selection**

This study took place in a campus of a state university located in the southern region of Costa Rica. The participant selection process followed a non-probability sampling design. The group of student participants was deliberately selected. The sample population of students is representative and included 18 students from the Oral Expression Course and 25 students from the Composition course of the English Teaching Major at UNA, Brunca Branch. Also, eight teachers of the faculty were surveyed. Seven teachers have five years of teaching experience and three more than 10. All of them are teaching or have taught the courses mentioned before.

**Data Collection Instruments**

For the collection of the data, two instruments were designed and administered. The first instrument aimed to gather information from the students’ perspectives on the use of literary-based cultural material in the Oral Expression and Composition Courses. It included 6 different sections. The first section was intended to collect personal information from the students such as gender, age, major, place of residence, level and course. For the second section, a summative five-point Likert scale was constructed to determine the use of literary-based cultural material in the appointed courses. The established values for this scale were: Very much, Much, Average, Little and No use. The third section involved a similar five-point Likert scale to establish the benefits perceived by the students of the use of literary-based cultural materials. The benefits included in this scale were taken from the contributions stated in Kilickaya (2004)’s research\textsuperscript{13}.

The fourth section is an attempt at defining the frequency in which some literature-based cultural activities are used in the courses selected for this study. For this data collection, a five-point Likert scale was designed with the indicators: very much,

\textsuperscript{12} William Fox & Mohamed Saheed Bayat. *A guide to managing research* (Cape Town: Juta & Co Ltd, 2007) 8.

much, average, little and no use. Section five helped researches to prove the extent to which each of the literature-based cultural activities listed before is used to improve language competence. Similarly, a point-five Likert scale was used with the indicators: Very much, Much, Average, Little and No use. Finally, the sixth section was composed of two close-ended and three open-ended items. Basically, the section was aimed to elicit responses about the national and international literary texts they have read. Furthermore, the researchers posted two questions related to a national masterpiece literary text recently translated to English. It is a book composed of 30 short stories entitled Short Stories of Anguish and Landscapes\textsuperscript{14} by Carlos Luis Salazar Herrera, a national writer. Since it was recently translated to English by María Luz Méndez, a Costa Rican professor and translator from Universidad Nacional, Costa Rica, the researchers wanted to make the most out of this contribution to enrich the activities developed in the EFL classrooms. The groups of students were asked whether they have read this book, whether they would like to use it in the respective course either Oral Expression or Composition and the ways they would like to use the short stories in the development of their speaking and writing courses.

The second instrument was designed to garner information from the professors who are teaching or have taught the courses Oral Expression and Composition or any other related course. The goal of this instrument was to determine the use of literary-based cultural materials in the appointed courses of the English Teaching major. The instrument was composed of six different sections. Likewise, the teacher questionnaire and student questionnaire have some slight differences. The first section aimed to collect information about teachers’ personal data such as gender, years of experience, course and major. The second section was an attempt at determining the extent to which the different categories and types of literary-based cultural material in the Oral Expression and Composition Courses were used through a five-point level Likert scale. The values established for this scale were: Very much, Much, Average, Little and No use. The third section’s objective was to identify the benefits received from using literary-based cultural materials in the EFL classroom based on the theoretical contributions of Kilickaya (2004)\textsuperscript{15}. It involved the use of a five-point Likert scale with similar values to the ones for the second section. The fourth and fifth section was intended to determine the frequency of use of different literary-based teaching activities in the courses mentioned before and the extent to which those activities helped to improve language competence respectively. Both sections involved the use of a five-point level summative Likert scale with similar established values to the ones used in the previous sections. The sixth section included three open-ended questions and two close-ended questions. The open-ended questions aimed to elicit the national or international short stories or folktales teachers would like to read and use in their courses and what activities to develop in order to use those literary texts to improve language competence at the same time.


\textsuperscript{15} Ferit Kilickaya, “Authentic material and cultural content in EFL classrooms”, \textit{The Internet TSL Journal}, 10, 7, (2004): 1-5.
Analysis of Data and Interpretation of Results

The relevant data will be collected through the administration of a student and a teacher questionnaire previously described. The quantitative data of sections II, III, IV and V of both questionnaires will be analyzed by calculating the mean scores of each criterium of the Likert scale. The information will be displayed through tables. The qualitative data of section VI of both questionnaires will be evaluated by grouping some categories and displaying them in tables. The findings drawn from these analyses will allow the researchers to answer the main questions of this study. The analysis will be presented as the researchers attempt to answer the research questions in the section below through the tables displayed.

Results

The analysis of the first inquiry of this study will reveal the categories of literary-based cultural material that students from the courses Oral Expression and Composition and the teachers of the faculty use or have used to learn and teach the language respectively. Literary-based cultural materials will hereafter be acknowledged as, “contemporary and traditional literary texts that use language in aesthetic, imaginative and engaging ways – to entertain, to move, to express and reinforce cultural identity and to reflect” (Queensland Studies Authority G)\(^\text{16}\). According to the responses gathered through section #2, students taking the oral expression courses are more familiar with literary-based cultural material in the activities they develop (See Table 1). On the other hand, students from the writing courses are less exposed to the use of these materials. In the case of the oral expression courses, the type of literary-based cultural material least used was own culture material. Concerning the composition course, the type of material least used was international culture materials. It is worth noting that all these types of materials obtained a relatively low mean from the students’ responses. On this same note, teachers of the faculty seem to be aware of the use of these types of materials in the appointed courses to some extent. The least used material teachers have employed in their classes is own culture material and the most used is international culture material.

Table 1
Categories of literary-based cultural materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literary-Based Cultural Materials</th>
<th>Mean Oral Expression Course</th>
<th>Composition Course</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target culture materials</td>
<td>4,30</td>
<td>1,64</td>
<td>3,60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International culture materials</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,52</td>
<td>3,75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own culture materials</td>
<td>3,30</td>
<td>1,56</td>
<td>2,60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part of the second section of the questionnaires was also an attempt at determining the types of literary texts used in the oral expression and composition courses by students and teachers of the major. The students from the writing course revealed that these types of literary texts are not common among the materials they use in their courses (See Table 2); namely, in all the different types of literary-based cultural materials, the means given were low. Furthermore, the least common type of literary text was fables and the most common was short stories. Regarding the oral expression course, the least common literary text was poems and the most common was short stories. For both courses, short stories were the most used according to students. Concerning teachers, all the literary texts scored relatively low. The highest mean reported was short stories and the lowest was poems.

**Table 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Literary Texts Used</th>
<th>Oral Expression Course</th>
<th>Composition Course</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Folktales</td>
<td>3,10</td>
<td>1,32</td>
<td>1,60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Stories</td>
<td>3,80</td>
<td>3,20</td>
<td>2,60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairy tales</td>
<td>2,60</td>
<td>1,36</td>
<td>2,10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poems</td>
<td>1,36</td>
<td>1,24</td>
<td>1,50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fables</td>
<td>1,44</td>
<td>1,20</td>
<td>1,60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Student and teacher questionnaire, section #2.

Equally important, the analysis of section #3 of the student and teacher questionnaire allowed the researchers to determine the benefits of using literary-based cultural materials in the EFL classroom. In this regard, the students’ responses of the oral expression course revealed that this population highly believes that the incorporation of these materials boost a more creative approach to teaching (See Table 3). All the benefits listed obtained high scores; however, these students identified that the incorporation of literary-based cultural texts does not relate more closely to their needs. For the students enrolled in the composition course, these materials provide exposure to real language, mostly. It is worth noting that all the benefits listed obtained a high score; nevertheless, the interpretation of these students’ responses allowed researchers to detect that these students believe that literary-based cultural materials partly raise their motivation. In the case of teachers, their responses revealed that, similarly to students, they believe that these types of materials provide exposure to real language and authentic cultural information. Even though all the benefits used in the item scored high, the lowest score was given to the one that states that literary-based cultural material relates more closely to the students’ needs.

**Table 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits of using Literature-based Cultural Materials in the EFL Classroom</th>
<th>Oral</th>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefits of using Literature-based Cultural</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Expression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regarding the fourth section of both questionnaires, the researchers analyzed the percentages obtained from the Likert scale regarding the ways students and teachers have used literary-based cultural materials in the classroom. The responses of the students of the oral expression course evinced that inviting guest speakers to tell a folktale or short story was the lowest score whereas using videos of animated folktales or short stories and listening activities were the highest score (See Table 4). Likewise, the responses of the students of the composition course showed that making comparisons of cultures in the texts was the least used way. On the contrary, the most used way to use literary-based cultural material was reading activities. Teachers’ responses were also key to determine the most and least relevant ways to use these types of material. According to teachers, the least used way was inviting guest speakers to tell a folktale or short story and the most used was reading activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials in the EFL Classroom</th>
<th>Expression Course</th>
<th>Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raise your motivation</td>
<td>4,16</td>
<td>3,48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generate cultural awareness</td>
<td>4,27</td>
<td>3,68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide authentic cultural information</td>
<td>4,44</td>
<td>4,08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide exposure to real language</td>
<td>4,50</td>
<td>4,32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relate more closely to your needs</td>
<td>3,22</td>
<td>3,76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support a more creative approach to teaching</td>
<td>4,61</td>
<td>4,16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expands your perspectives of the world</td>
<td>4,38</td>
<td>4,24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist you in negotiating meaning</td>
<td>3,27</td>
<td>3,64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand the understanding of communicative and cultural texts</td>
<td>4,44</td>
<td>3,92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinforce your language competence</td>
<td>4,44</td>
<td>4,28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Student and teacher questionnaire, section #3.

Table 4
Ways to Use Literary-Based Cultural Materials in the EFL Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ways to Use Literary-based Cultural Materials in the EFL Classroom</th>
<th>Oral Expression Course</th>
<th>Composition Course</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making comparisons of cultures found in the texts</td>
<td>3,8</td>
<td>2,8</td>
<td>3,12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inviting guest speakers to the classroom and tell a folktale</td>
<td>2,4</td>
<td>3,36</td>
<td>1,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking about topics and finding similarities and differences of the cultures included in the text</td>
<td>3,4</td>
<td>3,28</td>
<td>3,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving cultural issues found in the text</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing sources of literary-based cultural information: newspaper articles</td>
<td>3,4</td>
<td>3,24</td>
<td>3,37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using videos of animated folk tales, short stories, etc.</td>
<td>3,9</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As part of this same item in section #4, students and teachers were asked to report on any different way to use literary-based cultural material in the courses mentioned other than the ones given by the researchers. Their responses were recorded to show some differences and similarities in their ideas (See Table 5). Students from both courses coincided with the idea of having oral presentations as part of the activities carried out along with the short stories or folktales in the classroom and using authentic materials like videos, articles or technological devices. In the case of teachers, they stated two options to help students develop their creativity and broaden their knowledge of the language using this type of material: modify the end of stories and familiarize students with written discourse.

Table 5
Additional Ways to Use Literary-Based Cultural Material

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students of the Oral Expression course</th>
<th>Students of the Composition course</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Translating texts</td>
<td>• Writing paragraphs</td>
<td>• Students could modify the end of the short stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Presenting about cultural materials</td>
<td>• Guests from different cultures so that we can see it better and talk about the differences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Using pictures that show different cultures</td>
<td>• Writing essays</td>
<td>• Familiarize students with written discourse and literary elements that otherwise they wouldn’t be exposed to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To discuss some cultural topics</td>
<td>• Writing response papers and critical analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Short videos and articles</td>
<td>• Making oral presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Group discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sharing opinions about other cultures with classmates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Watching short videos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technological devices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Doing research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Student and teacher questionnaire, section #4.

Following the same line of thought, section #5 of the student and teacher questionnaire allowed the researchers to draw the ways to use literary-based cultural
materials to improve language competence. On this account, students of the oral expression course selected bringing sources of literary-based cultural information like newspapers as an activity less used to improve language competence (See Table 6). They agreed that using videos of animated folktales or short stories can be one effective activity to improve their language level. Regarding the responses from the students of the composition course, problem-solving cultural issues found in the text is the one with the lowest score whereas games is the activity with the highest mean.

### Table 6
Ways to Use Literary--based Cultural Materials in the EFL Classroom to improve language competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ways to Use Literary--based Cultural Materials in the EFL Classroom to improve language competence</th>
<th>Oral Expression Course</th>
<th>Composition Course</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making comparisons of cultures found in the texts</td>
<td>3,4</td>
<td>3,68</td>
<td>3,75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inviting guest speakers to the classroom and talk about folk tales</td>
<td>2,8</td>
<td>3,92</td>
<td>2,87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking about topics and finding similarities and differences of the cultures included in the text</td>
<td>2,8</td>
<td>3,72</td>
<td>4,12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving cultural issues found in the text</td>
<td>2,4</td>
<td>3,52</td>
<td>3,37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing sources of literary-based cultural information: newspaper articles</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>3,76</td>
<td>3,75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using videos of animated folk tales, short stories, etc.</td>
<td>3,8</td>
<td>4,08</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatizing/role-playing situations of a scene or passage of the literary text</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3,84</td>
<td>3,75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talks/discussions about themes in the literary texts</td>
<td>2,4</td>
<td>4,08</td>
<td>4,62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>2,48</td>
<td>4,16</td>
<td>3,87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading activities</td>
<td>3,6</td>
<td>4,04</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening activities</td>
<td>3,5</td>
<td>3,88</td>
<td>4,12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proverbs and phrases taken from short stories, fables, fairy tales, folk tales, etc.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3,68</td>
<td>4,12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Student and teacher questionnaire, part A of section # 5.

In this same vein, students and teachers were asked to add more ways to use literary-based cultural materials to improve language competence. Students of both courses agreed on using authentic materials like videos, movies, songs and books to improve language (See Table 7) along with the folktales and short stories to exploit their benefits. On the other hand, teachers stated that analyzing the role of the characters in the story and then simulating it is an effective way to use literary texts and improve language as they also boost their confidence when developing output-based activities.

### Table 7
Additional Ways to Use Literary-Based Cultural Materials to Improve Language Competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral Expression</th>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• One way is reading a short</td>
<td>• Songs, movies</td>
<td>• Students could analyze</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As part of section #6 students and the teachers in the first and second item were asked to provide the name of some national and international literary texts that they would like to read to learn and teach language and culture respectively (See Table 8). For the international literary texts, students from both courses coincided with having Asian literary texts. Contrary to this, teachers did not agree on any literary text in particular but assured that they would choose one specific cultural group and analyze its short stories or tales. For the national literary texts, students of both courses agreed on having Costa Rican legends (*El Cadejos, La Llorona, La Tulevieja, La Carreta sin bueyes*) in the activities developed in the classroom. Teachers approved to have legends and any story depicting the life of the Ticos in the countryside and their struggles.

**Table 8**  
**International and National Literary Texts Chosen**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral Expression</th>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>International Literature</strong></td>
<td><strong>About projects and situations like Chernobyl</strong></td>
<td><strong>Any based on modern trends and, if possible, based on wants</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>About people in the past</strong></td>
<td><strong>Read about politics and science</strong></td>
<td><strong>I’ve used gothic, Victorian, multi-cultural stories. I find fairy tales to be very stereotypical against women</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>More related to real life. Their customs or things they respect the most</strong></td>
<td><strong>History</strong></td>
<td><strong>Not any in particular. I would try to find a specific cultural group first. Then, I would select which short stories or tales might be interesting</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>About culture, traditions, places to visit, history</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dracula</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fables and fairy tales about Asian countries</strong></td>
<td><strong>Frankenstein</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Love stories</strong></td>
<td><strong>Grimm brothers’ tales (Cinderella, Hanzel and Gretel)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>About ghosts like La Llorona</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cultural stories and folktales even historic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Robinson Crusoe</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greek stories, Egyptian</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Student and teacher questionnaire, part B of section #5.
stories and the tale about Arthur and the Sword

• About European folktales
• Japanese, Korean folktales
• Christian Anderson fairy tales
• Gringo story
• I’d like to read about magic

National Literature

• Costa Rican legends
• Horror tales
• Differences between cities or places
• Carme Lyra’s folktales. The vocabulary is rare
• Stories about old traditions
• Poems and short stories
• Funny stories
• About national customs
• La Llorona, la tulevieja, el cadejo, el padre sin cabeza and more
• Cuentos de mi tía Panchita

• La segua
• Carmen Lyra tales
• Read about national writers
• La tulevieja
• El cadejo, la llorona, la carretera sin bueyes
• Santa Rosa war, history of important hospitals in CR
• Anything Jorge Debravo or Carmen Lyra
• About historic acts of our country
• Horror stories, love

• Any, understanding of cultures begins by understanding one’s own
• One that they don’t know
• Perhaps stories portraying country people and their struggles; current urban stories to show modern life and slang
• Los cuentos de Magón, La Cegua, La Llorona, etc. the most popular, mi Tía Panchita.

Source: Student and teacher questionnaire, section #6.

Additionally, students and teachers were asked in this same section whether they have read *Short Stories of Anguish and Landscapes*\(^{17}\). Most students from both courses, 72.2% of the Oral Expression course and 88% of the Composition course, reported that they have not read those short stories. In the case of teachers, just 14.3% informed that they have not read *Short Stories of Anguish and Landscapes*. Fortunately, 100% of teachers assured that they want to read them and use them in class, and a very small percentage, 15.6% in the case of the oral expression course and 14% of the composition course, are not interested in reading them.

In this same vein, students and teachers were surveyed to propose different ways to use *Short Stories of Anguish and Landscapes* to learn and teach language and culture at the same time (See Table 9). The three groups of participants represented in this study came up with different ideas that enclose all the linguistic areas, learning styles, ways of grouping and multiple intelligences. For the linguistic areas, there is a representation of each. For speaking, students and teachers put forward role plays, oral reports, talking about cultural similarities and differences found in a story and games. For listening, they suggested comprehension exercises and short videos. For writing, participants recommended short research projects. For reading, analyzing the texts to improve grammar.

**Table 9**

| Proposal of Different Ways to Use *Short Stories of Anguish and Landscapes* |

Teachers • Role plays  
• Short research-based projects  
• Analysis and comparison of cultural aspects  
• depicting regional dialects and the life of the campesino/country people.  
• raise awareness about the importance of preserving our customs and traditions and to promote appreciation for our native culture through role-plays, oral reports, games

Oral expression • discussing the short stories in small groups  
• short videos  
• Understanding them and giving examples how they are presented in life  
• present what we learned in front of the class  
• In listening comprehension  
• Doing some research about the stories to understand the context  
• Reading improves grammar  
• Talking about similarities and differences between CR and USA literary texts  
• By analyzing the lifestyle, vocabulary and other aspects that all the stories contain

Composition • By representing those short stories with role plays  
• Maybe listening to those short stories  
• Role play

Source: Student and teacher questionnaire, section #6.

Conclusions

The analyses of the data collected led researchers to draw the following conclusions. First, writing courses integrate fewer literary texts like short stories and folktales in the development of the course activities. Teachers that have taught these types of courses demonstrated that it is possible to include literary-based cultural materials in their plans in multiple ways. Although it seems easier to integrate these materials into an oral expression course, writing course teachers are aware of the need to incorporate them and make a change in their lessons. Second, target culture materials are the most used types of literary-based materials employed in both courses. Consequently, students of these courses are less exposed to national and international material that involves the use of short stories and folktales. Third, short stories are the most common literary-based cultural materials used in these courses. Poems and fables are resources not frequently used that can be exploited to maximize language learning. Fourth, there is a myriad of benefits produced by the inclusion of literary-based cultural materials in the oral expression and composition courses. Students highlighted the importance of these materials to generate a more creative approach to teaching and exposure to real language. However, they believe that these materials do not relate to their immediate needs as teachers pointed out too. In this regard, it is significant to cultivate students’ and teachers’ mindset. Cultural material is as important as any other type of material to potentiate not only bilingual learners’ capacities to master the language but also bicultural learners’ mindset to broaden their world view at the same time.

Fifth, the activities that students mostly do in their respective courses are using videos of animated folktales or short stories, listening activities and reading activities. Nevertheless, students do not often invite guest speakers to narrate a short story nor use the literary texts to make comparisons of cultures in the text. Teachers’ responses coincided with the most and least used way to incorporate literary-based cultural
materials. Oral presentations and changing the end of a story were the two more significant activities suggested by both groups of participants. Sixth, the activities students and teachers selected that facilitate the improvement of learners’ language competence were related to the use of authentic materials like videos, newspapers and games. Seventh, learners revealed that their interest in the integration of Asian and European folktales and short stories is high. Furthermore, national legends and stories portraying the life of the campesino were also selected as national culture materials that students and teachers would like to incorporate. Eighth, the book Short Stories of Anguish and Landscapes that encompasses short tales depicting the life, way of living, struggles and feelings of the countryside Costa Rican people has not been read by most students. All the students and teachers are interested in using these short stories from the book mentioned to learn and teach the language respectively.

Ninth, based on the students’ and teachers’ responses about the ways they would like to incorporate the short stories, researchers came up with a proposal to maximize language learning and teaching and broaden cultural awareness as well (See Table 10). Thus, a booklet of activities was designed to facilitate the teaching of the language and cultural awareness in the oral expression and composition courses based on literary-based cultural materials. Since students are less familiarized with international and national culture materials in English according to this study, the researchers selected two different books in the proposal.

**Table 10**

Proposal to Maximize Both Language Competence and Culture in Oral Expression and Composition Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folktale/Short Story Chosen</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Oral expression</th>
<th>Composition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Culture</td>
<td>Love, marriage, separation</td>
<td>Listening Skill</td>
<td>Writing process to write a letter to get advice from the author of a newspaper column</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folktales: The Tiger’s Whisker</td>
<td></td>
<td>Listening to the Story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Doing some exercises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking Skill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Acting out a dialogue from the short story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Culture</td>
<td>Teen pregnancy</td>
<td>Listening Skill</td>
<td>Writing process to compare and contrast any of the issues from the short story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Story: The Braid</td>
<td></td>
<td>Listening to the Story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Doing some exercises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking Skill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Impersonating a character and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

participating in a
talk show

Source: Researchers’ own creation given the results of the study.

The first book World Folktales: An Anthology of Multicultural Folk Literature by Anita Stern is a collection of folktales from around the world. Each folktale explores a theme related to birth, childhood, marriage, divorce, love, challenges and adventure, death, inheritance, bad habits, true friendship, superstitions, depression, beauty, luck, adoption and jealousy (See Table 11). This book entails 18 folktales representative of 18 different international cultures. The book also includes some exercises before and after each tale to reinforce the four linguistic skills. For this proposal, the folktale The Tiger’s Whisker was chosen for this first stage of the proposal. Some of the sequences of exercises were adapted from the original source to respond to the main findings of this study.

Table 11
Folktales and Cultures Represented in the Folktales of the Book World Folktales: An Anthology of Multicultural Folk Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folktales</th>
<th>Culture represented</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Folktales</th>
<th>Culture represented</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why the Baby Says “Goo”</td>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>Birth and childhood</td>
<td>The Tiger’s Whisker</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>Love and Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Little Daughter of the Snow</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>Birth and childhood</td>
<td>The Giant’s Bride</td>
<td>Scandinavian</td>
<td>Love and Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged marriages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boy of the Red Sky</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>Birth and childhood</td>
<td>The Love Crystal</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>Love and Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spoiled Child</td>
<td>Slavic</td>
<td>Birth and childhood</td>
<td>How Juan Married a Princess</td>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>Love and Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Children upbringing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bad habits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fisherman and the Genie</td>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>Challenge and adventure</td>
<td>The Blue Rose</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Love and Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Luck</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Woodsman’s Daughter and the</td>
<td>Puerto Rican</td>
<td>Challenge and adventure</td>
<td>A True Hero</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>Death and Inheritance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lion</td>
<td></td>
<td>Keeping promises</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Family jealousy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preparing a will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lucky Charm</td>
<td>Guatemalan</td>
<td>Challenge and adventure</td>
<td>A Chief Names His Heirs</td>
<td>West African</td>
<td>Death and Inheritance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jealousy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazar the Brave</td>
<td>Armenian</td>
<td>Challenge and adventure</td>
<td>The Skeleton’s Dance</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Death and Inheritance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bravery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bad habits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Superstitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>True friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shah Weaves a Rug</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>Challenge and adventure</td>
<td>The Voyage Below the Water</td>
<td>Haitian</td>
<td>Death and Inheritance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership, crime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sadness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mourning period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Book World Folktales: An Anthology of Multicultural Folk Literature by Anita Stern.

The second book *Short Stories of Anguish and Landscapes*\(^\text{20}\), a very well-known icon of Costa Rican literature, written by the Costa Rican writer Carlos Salazar Herrera encompasses 30 different short stories about significant themes such as love, disloyalty, unrequited love, revenge, and the struggles against nature (See Table 12). This book was first translated to English in 2016 by the UNA professor María Luz Méndez. Based on Professor Méndez’ contribution and the main findings of this study, the researchers opted for including this literature masterpiece in the proposal. The activities follow the same pattern as in the section of the booklet for international culture material. From the findings of this study, the proposal encompasses the use of listening, speaking, writing as well as reading activities before, during and after reading the short story or the folktale. It also involves role playing as in a talk show, acting out parts of the story, writing a letter from one character to a newspaper columnist and comparing or contrasting patterns or issues found in the text.

### Table 12
List of Short Stories of the Book *Short Stories of Anguish and Landscapes* and Their Main Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Story</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Boca rca</td>
<td>Fear, danger, desperation, frustration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bridge</td>
<td>Courtship, dating, work, unrequited love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Limestone Quarry</td>
<td>Jealousy, cheating,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Young Bull</td>
<td>Hatred, revenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gourd</td>
<td>Separation, disease, hope, suffering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bongo</td>
<td>A lost love, teen escape from home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambushed</td>
<td>Crime, revenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Witch</td>
<td>Witchcraft, love, gossip, lost love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cricket</td>
<td>Loneliness, depression, sadness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kiss</td>
<td>Suicide, desperation, jealousy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shout</td>
<td>Grief, distress, frustration, desperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Window</td>
<td>Gratitude, faithfulness, patience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dulzina</td>
<td>Illusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mestizo</td>
<td>Unfaithfulness, marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Colors</td>
<td>Alcoholism, loyalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boatman</td>
<td>Revenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Drought</td>
<td>Family communication, separation, divorce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rainstorm</td>
<td>Insanity, death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Marsh</td>
<td>Disappointment, frustration, love, friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Folk Healer</td>
<td>Unfaithfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Braid</td>
<td>Teen pregnancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Halfbreed</td>
<td>Family violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Still</td>
<td>Repentance for being disloyal to oneself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mountain</td>
<td>Jealousy, crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hours</td>
<td>Passion, humiliation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Road</td>
<td>Sacrifice, suffering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chilamate Tree</td>
<td>Death, love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Night</td>
<td>Fear, anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Gasp of Air</td>
<td>Jealousy, crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dugout</td>
<td>Life, bravery, cooperation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Book *Short Stories of Anguish and Landscapes*

In a nutshell, the proposal and the design of the booklet drawn from this research study are an attempt at bridging the gap between the teaching of the language and the teaching of cultural awareness in isolation or separately in courses in which it seems not an easy endeavor. Ultimately, it is possible to blend world and home culture with language competence to maximize students’ development of written and oral skills. It just takes a good will to foster the use of rich and valuable cultural material as short stories and folktales in oral and composition courses.

References


