

Teaching Intercultural Film Literacy

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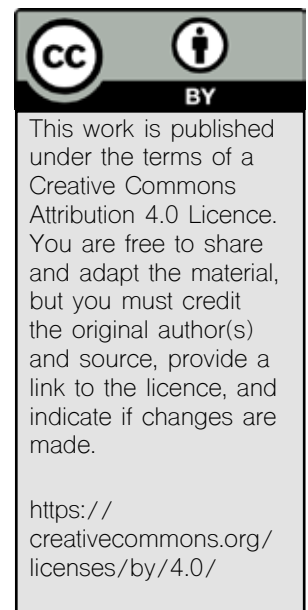
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Abstract

Film literacy encompasses the abilities to consciously select, analyse and produce films. Previous research has established the required knowledge, experience, and strategies for teaching film literacy. However, the research to date has mostly focused on classes with students of similar cultural backgrounds. Ongoing immigration in Europe and internationalization of education prompt the development of film literacy teaching practices that are suitable for international environments. This study aims to present a connection between film literacy and intercultural education, and thus develop pedagogical solutions to teaching film literacy from an intercultural perspective.

This paper is based on a case study conducted at Tampere University in the form of an international film literacy class of 23 students. The research data includes students' assignments and four follow up interviews completed a year after the course. Thematic content analysis of data justified the teaching methods and indicated that students had developed intercultural understanding and improved their film literacy skills.

Keywords: film literacy; intercultural education; neo-formalism; case study



Introduction

The first commercial screening of films took place in Paris on December 28th, 1895. Since then, in a relatively short time film cemented its place within our lives. As Vítor Reia-Baptista (2012) states, film has enormous power in the construction of people's collective and cultural memories. We quote films, form our behaviour based on them, and judge unfamiliar

environments and situations through films. They transmit knowledge, cultures, and values, and may be used as an expressive-creative vehicle for developing communicative competences (Ambrós & Breu, 2008). Films are made up of moving images that communicate information, which create experiences, often driven by stories and characters that evoke certain emotions and feelings from the viewers (Bordwell et al., 2017). By this definition both big-budget Hollywood movies and someone's wedding videos are films: they comprise moving images, communicating information, and evoking emotions. However, if we were to judge Hollywood movies and someone's wedding video, we would use different standards, because films exist within contexts (artistic, historical, industrial etc.) The knowledge of those contexts enables deeper analysis and understanding of film, which in turn helps us to grasp the power of film.

Film literacy is about developing a set of skills that allows one to understand the different aspects of film (film history, film industry, film language), to critically analyse film and its contexts, and to participate in creative film production. Film literacy enables us to put a film in various contexts, to derive meanings from a film, and to see how various formal and stylistic decisions determine those meanings. Being film literate may influence the development of not only the personal taste, skills for describing and analysing films, but also the film industry in general (McCann, 1971). But how does one teach film literacy?

The concept of film literacy was developed in the late 1960s (Schillaci & Culkin, 1970), since which time research has established the required knowledge, experience, and strategies for teaching film literacy. Researchers have discussed the qualifications of film educators (McCann, 1971; Marcus & Stoddard, 2007) and suggested various teaching practices (Mamber, 1997; Tomasulo, 1997; British Film Institute, 2015). Renee Hobbs (1998) recognises the challenges of teaching film literacy, as it puts teachers in a position of stimulating the changes in students' watching habits and patterns, nevertheless, she strongly advocates for teaching film literacy, since being film literate is an essential skill for the digital age. Although extensive research has been carried out on teaching film literacy, there is a lack of studies that pay attention to teaching it in an international environment and from an intercultural perspective. The exceptions include Audrey Rorrer and Susan Furr (2009), who examine how to use film to increase the awareness of other cultures, as well as Marjo Kovanen and Sirkku Kotilainen (2018), who focus on teaching children's horror films in mixed culture environments and showcase how cultural background influences one's attitudes and perception. Additionally, a recent British Film Institute study (2019)

used intercultural perspectives in film classes for European children. Nevertheless, there are specific requirements for broadening the intercultural perspective and developing concomitant teaching practices, which have not been the primary focus in the previous studies.

It is important to acknowledge the likelihood of international classes with students of various cultural backgrounds, especially when ongoing migration and increase in global contacts make our societies more diverse (Alasuutari & Jokikokko, 2010; Ranieri, 2016); the number of students seeking higher education abroad has increased considerably in recent years, resulting in a melting pot of different cultures in same classrooms (Manikutty et al., 2007). Additionally, film itself is an international phenomenon that exists in cultures around the world – it crosses national borders (British Film Institute, 2019), which makes it natural to study it in an international environment.

This article explores how to teach film literacy within an international environment. The objective is to understand the connections between film literacy and intercultural education for conceptual and practical development in the field. Thus, the originality of the study is in its focus on international environments and the use of an intercultural perspective in teaching film literacy. The article is based on a case study of a master's-level course on film education at Tampere University, Finland, conducted in Autumn 2018 and involving the researchers as the teachers. The first author acted as the main teacher in the course, while the second author had a supervisory role as the responsible teacher. The course was offered as an option for all students in English. There were 23 international participants (17 female and 6 male) from: China (3), Finland (4); the USA (2); Germany (2); Slovenia (2); and one student from each of Bulgaria, Turkey, Malaysia, Japan, Bangladesh, Spain, Mexico, Czech Republic, France, Poland. 12 participants were exchange students, while 11 participants were studying for a master's degree. The course featured a variety of teaching practices to teach film literacy from an intercultural perspective. These practices were retrospectively reviewed by the course's participants in the form of a final essay. The essays are the primary research material for the study. Additional data includes short interviews with four students completed online in September 2019.

Finally, the article discusses the concept of film literacy based on students' essays, as well as the practices of film education from an intercultural perspective. The conclusion presents a suggestion for film literacy educational practices from an intercultural perspective.

Conceptualizing the Study: Intercultural Education and Film Theory

When dealing with a class from various cultural backgrounds, the

main challenges are to recognise and appreciate the diversity and complexity of the identities, to be aware of one's own prejudices and to be able to interact with and learn from the others (Martins, 2008). These challenges make an intercultural education approach the most suitable. As distinct from multicultural education (the paradigm that pre-dates intercultural education and emphasises cultural diversity, aiming to develop an awareness of cultural differences) intercultural education is based on a dynamic engagement between cultures, contributing to the development of cooperation and solidarity (Bleszynska, 2008; Portera, 2008). In this it is suitable for teaching film literacy since films are usually a result of international work and collaboration across cultures. At the same time, intercultural education encourages group work, discussions and, especially, open dialogue, all of which are important in international classrooms.

Intercultural education aims at analysing one's own values and beliefs as well as those of others through dialogue (Alasuutari & Jokikokko, 2010). This dialogue widens one's horizons and opens new perspectives on oneself and others. A commitment to such a dialogue is an essential part of interculturalism (Järvelä 2005). Hence, intercultural education encompasses openness to cultural diversity, awareness of other cultures, ability to interact across cultural contexts and sense of identity and belonging to humanity (Ouellet, 1991; Bennett, 2009). It goes beyond the mere recognition of other cultures towards development of a sustainable way of living together through the understanding of, respect for and dialogue between various cultural groups (UNESCO, 2006). The role of the teacher in intercultural education is to serve as a "cultural mediator" (Lehr & Thompson, 2000), to provide necessary background and information to students (Sanders et al., 2009) and to influence students' awareness and inspire them to strive for a more equal and sustainable world (Alasuutari & Jokikokko, 2010). Finally, teachers should always reflect on whose cultures and values they transmit, as well as be aware of their own cultural beliefs and presumptions.

Nevertheless, there is a certain level of vagueness regarding practical implementations of intercultural education (Ogay & Edelmann, 2016; Roiha & Sommier, 2021). Teachers may have conflicting perceptions of intercultural education, which influence the range of roles they play in its promotion (Hajisoteriou, 2013). The current research aims to address this issue by developing and evaluating practical strategies for teaching film literacy from an intercultural perspective. Intercultural education would enable film literacy students to exchange their knowledge, introduce new ideas, and present film as an international multifaceted phenomenon.

Although there is a huge variety of theories that provide frameworks for analysing film language and interpreting the meanings of films (e.g., semiotics film theory, feminist film theory), this study focuses

specifically on neo-formalist film theory, which has its roots in the Russian Formalism movement and concerns film narrative with formal and stylistic aspects of film. However, it represents a significant departure from aesthetic formalism, by, firstly, understanding film form within a historical context, and, secondly, claiming that meanings can be constructed by films' audience, rather than being determined by its formal features (Gaut, 1995). Thus, neo-formalism views the audience as active participants in the construction of meanings, it encourages spectators to engage with film and form their own understanding, instead of enforcing meanings and interpretations. Kristin Thompson (1988) suggests that the meaning of any film derives from its use of devices, which she takes to be different elements of film: camera movement, story, motifs, costumes, music, lighting etc. Interactions between the devices highlight any single element that plays a role in a film, while stimulating audiences' engagement with an artwork. The devices represent some elements of two important aspects of neo-formalism: film form (story, narrative) and film style (all the audio-visual aspects). The relation between form and style creates an overall film experience and assists in construction of meanings.

Films are perceived in different ways in different times (Blewitt, 1997), which increases the importance of historical and cultural contexts. Although neo-formalism has often been criticized for focusing too heavily on film form (Salvaggio, 1981), it still recognizes the relevance of historical and cultural context, noting that in certain periods of time and in certain places specific formal and stylistic conventions are dominant. As Henry Jenkins (2018) explains, neo-formalism requires us to move beyond the individual film to look at the system of norms, institutional practices, technological infrastructures, and cultural influences that shaped films' production during a specific moment in time.

Overall, neo-formalism provides knowledge of various film devices, emphasises their interrelations and looks at them within historical and cultural contexts. As such, neo-formalist analysis can be conducted with any film without losing an appreciation for its uniqueness. Additionally, neo-formalism does not force any meanings or interpretations and treats the audience as active participants, who draw on their film exposure, cultural backgrounds, and life experience in order to construct the meanings. These reasons make neo-formalism useful for the current study and provide the foundations for developing the course. In short, then, this research uses neo-formalist film theory to complement teaching intercultural film literacy. Neo-formalism accentuates the importance of knowing and understanding the historic and cultural contexts of a film. At the same time, if a film portrays a certain culture, one can analyse its formal and stylistic depiction, relying on various film devices, to critically examine this representation. Neo-formalist film analysis can broaden knowledge and understanding of other cultures, and thus benefit intercultural education.

An example of how this was carried out for the current research is the discussion of the German Expressionist movement of the 1920s. When introducing the movement, we examined how the socio-political climate of the Weimar Republic, hyperinflation, and conditions of the Treaty of Versailles, influenced the way German people saw and interpreted the world around them. We also referenced the proposition of German film critic Lotte Eisner (2008), who argued that during those times German people with their eternal inclination to daydreams and contemplations indulged in ideas of mysticism and magic; and, finally, those claims were put to two German students present in the classroom to hear their personal experience and understanding, and then discuss them with other students. Overall, this research focuses on two theoretical concepts: film literacy (using neo-formalist film theory) and intercultural education, to study how their combination can foster the development of film literacy skills and intercultural understanding among international students.

Therefore, this study's research question is: How can film literacy be taught from the perspective of intercultural education? The study suggests a pedagogical framework for teaching intercultural film literacy and evaluates its film literacy and intercultural outcomes from students' point of view.

Case Study: University-Level Course

The research used a qualitative case study approach, which is “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (Stake, 1995, p. xi). Case study work seeks to examine a bounded phenomenon to portray, analyse and interpret the uniqueness of the case through accessible accounts (Cohen et al., 2000). This research focuses on a single case of the university-level course Workshop in Film Education (5 European Credit Transfer System credits) and analyses its teaching strategies and learning outcomes using participants' observations delivered in the form of reflective essays and interviews.

In this case study, the researchers acted as teachers with the first author organising and conducting the lectures, communicating with students, and running the course's page in Moodle, and the second author overseeing the implemented teaching strategies and commenting on the course's plan. Students knew from the start that the course was a case study for research with voluntary participation. They all agreed to participate, and signed research consent forms which had a description of the study. Ethical aspects, for example, anonymity, of the research process were discussed in the course. Participants in the study were adults and capable of understanding the nature of this study .

The course was designed for 5 ECTS and entailed seven meetings

with a total of 21 hours of contact teaching, including group assignments, discussions, and a seminar. The structure of the course was based on neo-formalist film theory with lectures on film history, film form and style, sound, and film analysis. Each lecture combined traditional teaching with PowerPoint presentations full of audio-visual examples and group work or/and discussions. For the group work the students were encouraged to form groups of different nationalities and to provide everyone with an opportunity to present their ideas. The teacher monitored the groups during their work, assisting in any questions, and asking about the progress.

The course featured a seminar, during which students presented some topics of their choice about their own film culture. It lasted almost two sessions and was specifically designed to promote intercultural education. There was a discussion round after each presentation, during which the students were encouraged to reflect on what they just learnt through their own cultural experience. For example, a presentation on the gender gap in Hollywood inspired the conversation on this issue in other film cultures, while the presentation about Mexican filmmakers inspired the comparison of Mexican films with American and European cinema from a cultural standpoint.

The learning outcomes for the course were to learn “the basics of film history, theoretical and practical aspects of filmmaking, tools and criteria for critical analysis of films” (Tampere University, 2018-2019). Additionally, the course aimed to introduce different film cultures, to talk about cultural diversity through film and film through cultures.

The course materials included PowerPoint presentations, a large collection of short clips from YouTube, recordings of film scores and scientific articles available as reading materials after each teaching session. Clips of films were used to illustrate each topic that was discussed, for example, an extract from *Children of Men* (2006) to illustrate the long take, discussed during the lecture on film style. The majority of the films included were from Europe, the USA, and South Asia including Japan, China, South Korea.

The course had four major assignments, in which every student participated: 1) Seminar on Film Cultures: student presentations on any topic of film cultures of their origins, 2) Film Topic Analysis: analysis of how a chosen topic is presented in three different films from formal and stylistic perspectives, 3) Short Video Assignment: group task in which students filmed a video with some editing techniques of their choice that were discussed in the class, and 4) Final Reflective Essay: free-form text in which students reflect on the course, its teaching approach and their own learning outcomes. For the essay students were provided with some general guidelines. The collection

of reflective essays (N=23) became the primary research material for this study, since it offers students' perspective on the teaching practices and helps to evaluate the significance of those practices in achieving the course's learning outcomes. The students had one month to complete the task and then submit it online to Moodle. In this study a thematic analysis was adopted to analyse the research material, as "a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis" (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p.82). A theme in thematic analysis "captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.10). The thematic analysis for this study was done semi-anonymously, meaning that the information of each students' identity was coded by the researcher, leaving only a number and a country as identifiers, for example, Student 1, USA. The analysis of reflective essays revealed two major patterns: Film Literacy Skills Outcomes and Intercultural Understanding Outcomes. The first pattern recognises students' reflections on the generated knowledge and skills related to film language and the concept of film literacy itself. The second pattern includes the reflection on intercultural knowledge and experiences during the course.

This study also includes supporting research data, which is a set of online interviews completed by the course participants in September 2019, almost a year after the course took place. Several questions were repeated throughout the interviews: about the overall perception of the course; change in watching habits; the success of intercultural education; and future suggestions. One question varied in each interview and was related to students' final essays. Eight student profiles were chosen on Facebook, five responded, but only four completed the final interview. In one case the questions were asked through Facebook Messenger, while the others employed email to communicate. The interviews were thematically analysed and reflected with two already established patterns: *Film Literacy Skills Outcomes* and *Intercultural Understanding Outcomes*.

Research Findings

Film Literacy Skills Outcomes

There are three distinctive aspects that amount to film literacy from the data: 1) knowledge of film language or film devices, 2) critical thinking towards film's content and visuals, and 3) content creation or film production. The students had reflected on personal learning experiences regarding each of those aspects in their final essays.

The data analysis reveals that almost every student had expanded their knowledge of film language with each person deriving something spe-

cific and unique for them. The course had covered film history, form and style, and film sound, and each topic was mentioned in one or another essay. Students welcomed the information on various editing techniques and mise-en-scene, as well as genre conventions. However, the most eye-opening topic proved to be film sound, especially the art of foley. During the lecture, students saw a short documentary about the foley process, which shows that almost every sound we hear in films is artificially created, as well as how it is created. Students mentioned the lecture helped them to realise the importance of sound, and few of them suggested that from now on they will pay attention to sound in films.

The development of critical thinking is a significant aspect of becoming film literate. Several students had reported that they were able to improve their critical thinking skills, especially by completing the Film Topic Analysis assignment. One student mentioned that this assignment was one of the most enjoyable parts of the course, because they could put theoretical knowledge about film language into practice. Another student confirms this by stating how abstract terminology from lectures on film language became more understandable and vivid upon doing the assignment.

In their assignments several students had reflected on the chosen topic in the context of our societies. One student had focused on the depiction of rape in films, discussing who is the centre of the scene (victim or abuser) or how filmmakers represent the horror of such an act. Another student focused on the topic of drug use and analysed how film is partly responsible for how we view drug addicts. A third student focused on the scenes of childbirth, which is a natural event, but, as the student says, they usually have an “ick factor”. That student analyses scenes of childbirth in different genre films and sees how often it feels as if there is something shameful and taboo in childbirth. In these examples, the students selected a topic, analysed how it is presented and then critically reflected on it through the values of our society.

A final aspect of film literacy is the ability to produce one’s own moving image text. During the course, students were put in groups and asked to make a short video that represents a specific editing technique. This assignment proved to be quite useful and memorable for the students. It showed students that film is collaborative art that involves many people and a lot of work and gave them the opportunity to use theoretical knowledge about film language in practice. One student wrote:

Next time when I am shooting a video, I would realize the usage of camera and the lightning may affect visual impression and adjust in the best way that meets the expectation.
(Student 3, China)

Overall, the course had increased the students' levels of film literacy by broadening their knowledge of film language, developing critical thinking, and providing an opportunity to make creative decisions in their own video productions. In addition to that, students had also reflected on the concept of film literacy itself and the role it might play in their lives. Plenty of course participants had not encountered the concept of film literacy prior to the course, however, afterwards, not only were they able to generate their own interpretations of it, but also able to elaborate on its significance in modern education, and connect film literacy with their own lives. One of the students wrote about the meaning of film literacy, and how film literacy skills are essential for every one of us:

Film literacy could educate a cultured person who knows their values, will stand behind them and can share them with their surrounding world through different expressions and symbols. These skills are undoubtedly important not only to the students of the media and educators but to each of us.
(Student 20, Czech Republic, Reflective Essay)

Other students who spoke about film literacy shared the same sentiment. They mentioned the significance of being film literate, that it helps to critically examine the messages of films and to appreciate them as an art form. The course participants also indicated how film literacy knowledge can be helpful in their future careers. A Malaysian student wrote that as a language teacher they would plan to use films as pedagogical tools. An anthropology student from Japan stated that they intended to use films as a reflection of society. A Spanish journalism student reported that they intended to use generated knowledge to form editorial groups with a focus on film reviews and reports. Finally, a Slovenian student reflected on how film literacy may be useful in their career in marketing:

As a marketing and public relations student I see a huge potential in the usage of the gained knowledge in advertisement production. The content and the quality of ads I will be contributing to in the upcoming years will benefit hugely from this course. I would have never thought this much about the usage of for example the light, shadows and the contrast that can be achieved with them. Nor would I take into consideration how much different camera angles can affect the image. (Student 13, Slovenia, Reflective Essay)

To conclude, the findings suggest that students had improved their levels of film literacy by studying film language, developing critical thinking towards film and, at the end, making a video of their own. The course resulted in generating the understanding of the concept of

film literacy and its importance in popular culture and private lives.

Intercultural Understanding Outcomes

The course aimed to introduce different film cultures, inspire an open cultural dialogue, and foster overall intercultural experience. Almost all students had reported that they experienced cultural exchange and broadened their perspectives on various film cultures. Students highlighted the significance of the seminar during which the participants made short presentations on the topic of their choice related to the film culture of their country of origin.

In the course, the seminar proved to be an eye-opening experience from an intercultural perspective. Several students mention how exciting it was to get a sense of global film production and discover local film industry traditions. One student said that they would never have found out information about popular actors of Bangladesh, Poland or Slovenia, and another said that the whole seminar felt like a trip around the world. A Japanese student mentioned that both differences and similarities between cultures were interesting to explore. In a way the seminar showcased that although there are plenty of differences between each film industry, the language of film itself is universal.

In the short interviews conducted in September 2019, the students were given information about the aims of the course and the meaning of intercultural education, and then later asked if they felt that the aim was achieved. Finnish and Polish students agreed that they developed intercultural understanding, and that the seminar was one of the biggest factors for that. Additionally, a Finnish student also complimented constant discussions and group tasks that were done between members of different cultures. Discussions and group tasks were also positively welcomed by some students in their reflective essays.

Another part of intercultural experience for students was that while learning about other cultures, they had expanded the knowledge and developed an appreciation of their own culture. A Mexican student reported about the sense of happiness due to Mexican films being recognised internationally, while a student from the Czech Republic was able to expand their knowledge of the country's film history. A student from Malaysia wrote in their reflective essay that the most important thing was the appreciation for the film culture of one's country:

[The] presentation assignment also brings me to what I believe to be the most important thing I learned, on a personal level, during this course; which is a deeper understanding and appreciation for the film past and present of my own country. What I have learned, which has impacted me the

most as a direct result of this course, is about Malaysian film.
(Student 9, Malaysia, Reflective Essay)

Overall, during the course students had developed their intercultural understanding due to the specifically designed seminar and constant discussions within international groups. The adoption of intercultural education perspective in teaching film literacy proved to be fruitful since students broaden their understanding of film around the world and learnt something about film industries, cultural values, and traditions of other cultures.

Summary

Table 1 below summarises the findings of this study. The first column presents the topics of thematic analysis, the second is about summaries of the skills outcomes decoded from the data, and the third lists the teaching practices that fostered such outcomes.

Theme	Skills Outcomes Summary	Teaching Practices
<i>Film Literacy Skills Outcomes</i>	Broadening the knowledge of film language Development of critical thinking Practical creative filmmaking Understanding of the concept of film literacy Implementation of film literacy in one's future career	Audio-visual materials from films, short documentary films about the filmmaking Film Topic Analysis Short Video Assignment.
<i>Intercultural Understanding Outcomes</i>	Expanding the knowledge on various cultures and their film industries Developing an appreciation of own film culture	Seminar on Film Cultures, Discussions and group work within international groups.

Table 1: Outcomes and Teaching Practices

The summary of findings shows which were the most impactful teaching practices for developing film literacy skills and intercultural understanding. They were the practical tasks that included the film topic and short video assignments, as well as the seminar on film cultures. Course materials that included a great number of video snippets and short documentary films helped students to expand their knowledge of film language. The Film Topic Analysis and Short

Video Assignment put their knowledge into practice, allowing them to critically approach film and filmmaking. Finally, the in Seminar on Film Cultures, group work and discussions influenced their awareness of other cultures and customs, fostered intercultural exchange, and inspired a reflective look at their own culture. These tasks allowed students to practise their knowledge of film and film language, to exercise critical thinking about film, and, finally, to open themselves up to other cultures, while broadening the understanding of their own culture. By the end of the course, students not only had expanded their film literacy skills, but also were able to grasp the meaning of film literacy and its importance in education and their future careers.

Discussion

The findings show that the course achieved its aims in developing film literacy skills and adopting an intercultural perspective in teaching film. One positive outcome is that by the end of the course students had generated their own meanings of film literacy and were able to understand its importance, although the concept itself was rarely brought up during the lectures. This reinforces the results presented in Kovanen and Kotilainen (2018), where the participants had also developed an understanding of film literacy concept by the end of the course.

One of the most significant outcomes is that the students were able to experience intercultural education together with film literacy and develop an intercultural understanding. Group discussions, student-student and student-teacher interactions and the Seminar on Film Cultures had succeeded in creating an atmosphere of intercultural exchange throughout the course, the benefits of which were recognised by students in their reflective essays. While group tasks were highlighted in several reflective essays as beneficial to learning about other cultures, it was the Seminar that proved to be the most fruitful activity. The group tasks and discussions usually separated students into small factions, however the Seminar was *for* everyone and *by* everyone: it allowed everyone to witness a great variety of different cultures and their film industries.

At the same time, the Seminar helped the course participants not only to expand their understanding of other cultures, but also to develop an appreciation of their own culture. While preparing for the Seminar several students felt responsible for how they represented their own culture and put an effort into their research, which resulted in a growing sense of pride and appreciation. They were able to recognise their roles as cultural representatives and to combine personal experience with broader traditions and customs of their own cultures.

However, it needs to be acknowledged that although students had reported the broadening of cultural knowledge, it is hard to measure exactly what they had learnt of the other cultures. As Irja Pietilä

(2010) points out, in intercultural exchange people interpret the information they receive and select what they feel is important. This interpretation and selection of information may alter the original information and create a misleading image of another culture.

Additionally, this study was conducted in Tampere University, a place which welcomes people from around the world having a variety of English-language courses for international students. The course had exchange students, international degree students, who by the virtue of willingly being in a foreign country, might have been predisposed to the idea of intercultural dialogue. Due to this, the results of this study cannot be generalised to every possible classroom, so further research is needed in implementing intercultural education among people who might resist cultural exchange and hold on to cultural prejudices and stereotypes.

Nevertheless, this research was able to advance students' understanding of film, and to use film as a window to other cultures. Intercultural education allowed us to utilise the cultural diversity of the course participants in a pedagogical process, while creating a safe space for self-expression. At the same time, the students developed their film literacy skills, by learning how different film devices were used in various historical and cultural contexts.

Overall, this study contributes to the research on teaching film literacy by focusing on international study environments and adopting intercultural education to shape a pedagogical strategy that welcomes cultural diversity and emphasises the multifaceted world of film.

Practical Pedagogical Implementations

Based on the findings, these educational practices can be listed as suggestions for teaching film literacy from an intercultural perspective:

1. Inspire cultural exchange and open dialogue. This can be achieved by provoking various discussions and group tasks where students from various countries can compare their own experience with others. For example, when teaching about film distribution, one can ask students to discuss the ways they watch films in different parts of the world, or to talk about their country's film festivals. Additionally, the teacher may foster the dialogue by engaging in it and sharing something from their own experience.
2. Seminar on film cultures. The main task is to create a short visual presentation about any topic related to one's own film culture. It can be about a director, a genre, censorship, a historical topic, for example. A seminar like this broadens people's horizons on film and gives a glimpse into someone else's culture.

3. Content creation tasks. The main recommendation is to arrange students into international groups, and to give them specific direction. In this course, students were asked to focus on and illustrate an editing technique of their choice. In other cases, students could be asked to explore the possibilities of camera movements, or to create a story within particular generic conventions, or to make a black-and-white silent movie.

4. Film Topic Analysis. The main idea is that students choose any specific topic (a kiss, suicide, car chase, shopping) and then analyse how it is displayed in three various films from formal and stylistic perspectives by focusing on certain creative decisions that helped to achieve the result. The feedback can be generated by either the teacher or by other students if they are comfortable with sharing the work. This can be done online, by having students comment on each other's works, or in class, where students can discuss what topics they had chosen and what were the results of their analysis.

5. Embracing the cultural differences. This final recommendation means that teachers should not only make use of the cultural differences in the classroom, but also embrace and adapt towards them. It is better to have more visual examples of theoretical aspects (scenes from the films, screenshots) and less text on the presentation slides (to overcome possible language barriers), as well as to find these examples from films across the world which go beyond American or European films (to increase representation). When talking about film genres, it is also advisable to discuss some sub-genres unique to a specific culture, for example, Italian *giallo* or Japanese *Jidai-Geki*. Additionally, the teacher should welcome students' opinions, questions, and suggestions, and encourage them to speak up without the fear of being judged.

These suggested practices may be used in various contexts, for example, in classes with multi-ethnic origins, where students can introduce their own cultures and customs and learn about others. Also, intercultural education may ease the assimilation process and foster the understanding of unfamiliar cultures. Similarly, the listed educational practices may be adopted for teaching film to adults in any adult educational contexts. Some of the practices may be used for teaching film to youth and children, especially if the classes have students with different cultural backgrounds. Studying film literacy at a young age may positively affect the development of film tastes and watching habits and inspire them to try filmmaking on their own.

Conclusion

Overall, this study has the potential to improve the quality of film education by applying an intercultural perspective to teach-

ing film literacy. Still, this study has been a small step, since it is based on a single film course as a case study. The findings may be used to influence education in Europe and beyond by incorporating intercultural education for teaching film literacy. This can be achieved globally by displaying the teaching methods used for the course online as a digital open educational resource. In conclusion, while film literacy celebrates films, intercultural education celebrates cultures and their customs, and together they provide an opportunity to grasp how rich and wonderful the world (of film) is.

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