

The Effects of Rubrics and Exemplars as Self-regulated Learning Tools on Students' Development of Evaluative Judgement of Intercultural Competence: An Exploratory Study

Anouar Smaoui^{1,2}, Hanen Bensalem^{1,2} & Amor Jebali^{1,3}

¹ General Required Course department, The Applied College, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, KSA

² English Language Unit, Faculty of Science of Sfax, University of Sfax, Sfax, Tunisia

³ Department of English, Faculty of Letters, Arts and Humanities. University of Manouba, Tunisia

Correspondence: Anouar Smaoui, General Required Course department, The Applied College, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, KSA. E-mail: aabdualazez1@kau.edu.sa

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the effects of a pedagogical intervention involving the combined application of rubrics and exemplars, as Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) support tools, on student's development of the Evaluative Judgement (EJ) of Intercultural Competence (IC). A group of students from the General Required Courses department of a Saudi college participated in a quasi-experimental study involving the administration of an English writing module as part of an intensive English course. Coursework was designed based on Byram's multidimensional IC model, guided by Liddicoat's pathway model for IC development, framed within Panadero & Broadbent's EJ framework, and mapped on Zimmerman's Self-Reflection Phase (SRP) of the self-regulatory process. A mixed-method design was adopted to gain insights on the learning processes the students went through as well as their perceptions of and attitudes towards the learning experience. The results indicated a variety of SRP strategies at work and provided evidence for the positive effects of rubrics and exemplars on the enhancement of students' EJ of IC. The results revealed several spheres where SRL, EJ, and IC relate and align to support students' development and practice of sustainable skills that allow them to take control of their own learning and adapt in ever-changing environments.

Keywords: evaluative judgement, exemplars, intercultural competence, rubrics, self-regulated learning

1. Introduction

Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) are key training grounds for students to develop the range of skills and competencies needed to operate effectively in the increasingly interconnected and rapidly evolving world. The continuous growth in international mobility and internationalization at home has taken this role even further, emphasizing the need for graduates equipped with the ability to interact appropriately with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006; Fantini & Termizi, 2006; Cramsch & Sullivan, 1996; Smaoui, 2020). Scholars have become increasingly interested in the study of the socio-cultural dynamics of language and language use, thus restoring the missed links between language and culture (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006; Smaoui, 2021, 2022). Various terms have been coined to encapsulate the inextricable link between language and culture as experienced by individuals using their own languages and cultures, including languaculture (Agar, 1994), linguaculture (Fantini & Termizi, 2006), linguoculture (Kunababayeva, 2013), language-and-culture (Byram, 1997), culture-in-language (Crozet & Liddicoat, 1997), and language-culture (Risager, 2007). Similar neologisms have also been introduced to capture the language-culture nexus in contexts involving interaction between speakers from different languacultures, including Byram's (1997) intercultural competence (IC). In this view, IC refers to a complex of competencies and abilities needed to perform effectively when interacting with individuals from different languacultural backgrounds (Fantini & Termizi, 2000). Worldwide, HEIs have recognized IC as a central learning goal and widened the scope of their mission to include the equipment of students with both the linguistic and cultural skills needed to mediate across languages and cultures.

The so called ‘cultural turn’ has brought critical insights into the complexity of language learning and teaching and opened up new areas of research in the field. Of particular interest, researchers argue that in order for individuals to develop IC, they need to develop sustainable learning skills, that allow them to take control of their own learning and adapt and sustain in ever-changing environments, which entails a high degree of self-regulation (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006; Cramsch & Sullivan, 1996; Smaoui, 2022). This justifies the large flow of research conducted under the framework of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) including the works of Zimmerman, (Zimmerman, 1989; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 1999; Zimmerman & Moylan, 2009; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990), Panadero & Tapia (2014), Panadero & Broadbent (2018), Pintrich (2000), Tai et al., (2018) and Thai et al., (2017) to cite only a few. Of particular relevance to this position, a growing number of researchers argue that in order for learners to develop SRL, they need to build an understanding of what quality is and how to judge their own work and that of others, generally known as evaluative judgement (EJ) (Boud et al., 2013; Boud & Falchikov, 1989; Lipnevich et al., 2023; Luo & Chan, 2023; Panadero & Tapia, 2014; Panadero & Brodbent, 2018; Petropoulou et al., 2015; Pintrich, 2000; Price et al., 2012, Sadler, 1989; Tai et al., 2018; Thai et al., 2017). This line of research highlights the need to frame teaching, learning and assessment around explicit outcomes and equip learners with the ability to judge performance against clear criteria and standards to become independent learners who can take control of their own learning and easily adapt and sustain in changing environments.

Despite the growing interests in IC, SRL, and EJ, the dynamic and synergistic relationships among and between the concepts still remain under researched. In fact, the three frameworks share various features in common, suggesting that they can suitably be linked and inform each other. Interestingly, recent research suggests that rubrics and exemplars can offer valuable SRL-support tools for the development of effective competencies, including students’ EJ of their own work (Andrade, 2000; Andrade & Brookhart, 2016; Boud et al., 2013; Brookhart & Chen, 2015; Gyamfi et al., 2022; Panadero & Tapia, 2014). Accordingly, the present study aimed to explore students’ experience with the combined application of rubrics and exemplars, as catalysts of SRL, and the effects of that experience on student’s development of EJ of IC. This general objective involved answering the following two research questions:

RQ1) What types of experiences, if any, have led to the understanding and practice of EJ of IC?

RQ2) What are students’ self-perceived developments of EJ of IC, if any, due to such learning experiences?

With this aim in mind, students enrolled in a second-year General Required Course delivered to a range of three-year specialist diploma programs at a prominent higher education college in Saudi Arabia were recruited to participate in a quasi-experimental study that involved the administration of an English writing module as part of an intensive English course.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Conceptualizing Intercultural Competence (IC)

Analyzing the dynamics of intercultural communication, Byram (1997) proposes a multidimensional model where IC refers to the synergistic interplay of three interrelated domains, namely cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitudes), and behavioral (skills). Byram (1997) organizes the three domains of IC in a taxonomical framework comprising five interconnected components termed as saviors (know-hows) that can be formulated into achievable aims and objectives of IC development and assessment. These are knowledge, attitudes, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness. The first element in IC, (1) ‘knowledge’, refers to a complex repertoire of conscious or unconscious conceptions that determine the ways individuals understand and view cultural phenomena. He argues that knowledge includes two broad categories. The first category (1a) refers to “knowledge about social groups and their cultures in one’s own country, and similar knowledge of the interlocutor’s country.” The second category (1b) designates “knowledge of the processes of interaction at individual and societal levels.” He adds that each of the two broad categories cover aspects from culture-specific (of one’s own and foreign cultures) and culture-general knowledge. Byram (1997) defines the second (2) element in IC, ‘attitudes’, as a complex combination of empathetic predispositions that individuals tend to call to understand and appraise cultural phenomena. He further subdivides attitudes into two broad categories. The first (2a) revolves around individuals’ tendencies to relativize self (decentering); the second (2b) involves individuals’ ability to value others based on an insider’s perspective. The third component (3), namely the skills of interpreting and relating, is defined by Byram (1997) as the “ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one’s own”. According to him, this skill draws upon existing knowledge and includes readiness (3a) to identify the underlying systems behind different worldviews and (3b) to consider appropriate ways to mediate between them. Byram (1997)

defines the fourth component (4) in IC, 'skills of discovery and interaction' as the ability to explore new cultural phenomena and function in new cultural contexts. This component includes the ability to (4a) "acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices" and (4b) the ability to "operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction." Finally, Byram (1997) defines the fifth component (5) in IC, namely 'critical cultural awareness' as "the ability to evaluate cultural phenomena in one's own and other cultures against explicit perspectives and criteria."

Liddicaot (2004) argues that IC development is a dynamic cyclical experiential process that engages learners cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally. He proposes a four-stage pathway for IC development. The process starts with exposure to (1) input, referring to all authentic forms or content (oral, written, visual, etc.) presented to the learners to initiate the learning process. In order for the learning process to take place, learners need to proceed to (2) noticing. In this stage learners notice particular elements in the input that are not familiar to them and seek to formulate a conscious understanding of the elements or events in the input that are different from what they used to see or do. Having noticed a particular difference in the input, learning proceeds by (3) reflection. This phase refers to learners' efforts to reflect on the nature of the difference noticed in the input, experiment with the options to respond to it, and evaluate the implications of their choices and decisions, thus modifying their repertoires of practice to accommodate the newly acquired input. The fourth phase refers to (4) output. In this phase learners attempt to apply the newly modified practice into communicative performances. This initial output production is not the final stage since it might itself provide a new input for noticing and become a potential object of further reflection, which again becomes realized in a further modified output; hence the formation of a continuous cycle of learning. Byram (1997) shares similar views and argues that although individuals can enter this process at any point, attitude is an ideal starting point from which knowledge and skills can be supported and enhanced.

Although the development of IC has been broadly defined and conceptualized, its assessment and measurement in educational and professional settings still remain quite problematic. Drawing on Byram's (1997) theoretical model, the authors of the INCA (2004) project have formulated a comprehensive framework for IC assessment that has been particularly influential in the field. The INCA assessment framework allows to observe and assess different stages of IC development from two perspectives, the assessor and assesses. From the standpoint of the assessor, it defines IC as encompassing six dimensions, namely tolerance of ambiguity (TO), behavioral flexibility (BF), communicative awareness (CA), knowledge discovery (KD), respect for otherness (RO), and empathy (E). The assesses version provides a simplified view of assessment, where the six aforementioned competencies are linked to three broader strands, namely openness, knowledge, and adaptability. The first strand of competencies, (1) openness (O), includes RO and TA. It refers to the extent up to which individuals are open to others, tolerate situations where they do or say something differently, and take up opportunities to engage with otherness in a relationship of equality and mutual respect. The second strand, (2) knowledge (K), encompasses KD and E. These refer to knowledge of and readiness to acquire knowledge of the processes and institutions of socialization in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country as well as an understanding of what other people think and how they feel in concrete situations. The third strand, (3) adaptability, comprises BF and CA. They denote individuals' abilities to adapt their behaviors and communication styles. Each of the six competencies is identified across three major elements, namely motivation, skills/knowledge, and finally behavior, corresponding to the affective (attitudes), cognitive (knowledge) and behavioral (behavior) domains of IC. In other words, individuals displaying IC need to enact willingness to engage in intercultural interaction (motivation, affective), have the skills and knowledge (cognitive) to do so, and showcase those resources in their behavior.

Table 1. The INCA (2004) Scale for IC levels

Basic	Intermediate	Full
At this stage, students are willing to interact with individuals from other cultures and learn from them as they go along; but they show no or little experience in working out an approach to dealing with complex intercultural situations. Moreover, they show low degrees of tolerance to other values, customs and practices and find them strange and subject to disapproval	At this stage, the students are beginning to show a more reasonable understanding of general aspects of intercultural situations and are, therefore, more prepared to respond and adapt to the demands of unfamiliar conditions.	At this stage the students demonstrate intuitive skills to deal with different situations and encounters. They exercise the necessary knowledge, judgement and skills and employ a large repertoire of strategies to deal with different values, customs and practices among individuals from other cultures. They also accept different worldviews and avoid hurtful or offensive behavior. At this level the students are confident enough of their position to put forth their views while being sensitive to and respectful of the viewpoint of others. The expectation was that students begin their experiences with basic levels of performance and achieve intermediate levels upon course completion.

The INCA (2004) framework provides an evaluation grid that described three levels of performance, namely basic, intermediate, and full, for each of the three (O, K, and A) or six (KD, E, RA, TA, BF, and CA) strands of IC, in the assesses and assessor's versions, respectively. It also provides concrete descriptions for each level. The levels and descriptors are expressed in plain understandable language for the assesses, in the form of 'can do' statements. Table 1 illustrates the INCA levels and corresponding descriptors. The combination of both perspectives enables the assesses to identify strengths and weaknesses and to develop plans for continuous improvement and development.

To operationalize the IC assessment process, the INCA (2004) manual provides a suite of teacher-led and self-assessment tools. The original INCA battery consists of three methods of assessment that embed five test instruments. The latter include questionnaires, scenario-based writing tasks and role plays. There are two types of questionnaires in the INCA suite, namely the biographical information questionnaire (BIQ) and the intercultural profile questionnaire (IPQ). There are also two types of scenario-based writing tasks, namely the intercultural encounter scenario (IES) and the critical incident technique (CIT), termed as a business trip to China. Finally, the INCA battery includes the intercultural role-play (IRP). Due to strict time limits and considering that the pedagogical intervention was conducted during regular class time, the study opted to reduce the number of instruments. The study involved the administration of three questionnaires, namely the BIQ, IPQ, and ERPQ (Exemplar and Rubric Perception Questionnaire) and CIT-based writing scenarios as described by Smaoui (2021, 2022).

2.2 Conceptualizing Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) of Intercultural Competence (IC)

There is a general consensus among scholars on IC development and assessment that IC is not merely a question of learning about and showing openness towards other cultures. It also entails some degree of awareness of self and other's linguistic and cultural repertoires through language use, and the ways to manage and control one's own development to function properly in this context. This justifies the relevance of the SRL approach to IC teaching and learning. In its essence, SRL refers to a process whereby learners regulate their thoughts (knowledge), emotions (attitudes), and skills (behavior) to achieve a learning goal (Zimmerman, 1989), and, in this respect, IC is a key goal in educational and professional environments. Moreover, SRL can help equip individuals with the tools and strategies needed acquire IC by allowing them to set goals for intercultural skills, monitor their progress, and adapt their behavior based on diverse cultural experiences and according to changing conditions.

Zimmerman (1989) suggests a triadic SRL model that places the learner at the center of the learning experience and posits a broad framework that captures the joint operation of various personal, environmental and behavioral factors. Personal factors refer to the beliefs and attitudes that learners have in a given learning situation. Behavioral factors refer to responses or reactions that the learner makes in a specific learning situation. Environmental factors refer to external aspects that affect and control personal factors during the learning

process. Zimmerman (1989) structures the SRL process in three phases, namely forethought, performance, and self-reflection, where learners are engaged cognitively, affectively and behaviorally. The (1) forethought phase refers to the process that occurs before the learners start to make efforts to learn. In this phase, learners approach the task, consider the strategies available for them to fulfill the task, and start to set goals and plan and organize what they are expected to do to reach their goals. The (2) performance phase refers to the process where the students carry out the task while selecting, monitoring and controlling the strategies that assist them in meeting the goals they have set in the forethought phase. Finally, the (3) self-reflection phase (SRP) refers to the process in which learners respond to the performances of the task (outcomes). During this phase, learners make judgements about their performances and engage in self-reflection and critique of failure and success. The phase contains two main variables: self-judgement and self-reaction. Panadero & Tapia (2014) define self-judgement as the process through which the students assess their performance. It is composed of self-evaluation and causal attribution. Learners engage in self-evaluation immediately after they obtain the results of the task based on their assessment criteria; and accordingly highlight the reasons of their failure or success (causal attribution). According to Panadero & Tapia (2014), self-reaction is a reaction to self-judgement and contains two processes: self-satisfaction and affect where learners witness their affective and cognitive reactions to the self-judgments they have made. These reactions are immediately followed by what Zimmerman (1989) calls Defensive/Adaptive decisions where learners show or lack the willingness to continue doing well or perform better in the future. Figure 1 shows the four categories in the SRP described by Zimmerman & Moylan (2009).

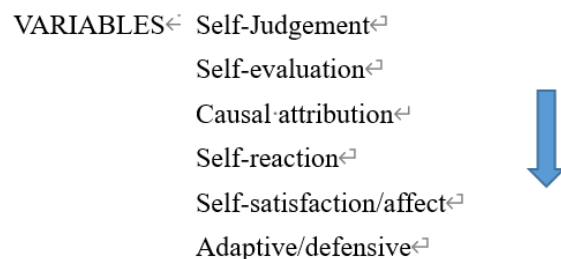


Figure 1. The SRP in Zimmerman & Moylan's (2009) SRL Model

Zimmerman (1989) proposes a four-level model for SRL development. He suggests that SRL skills can be learned through four sequential levels, namely observation, emulation, self-control, and self-regulation. At the observation level (Level 1), learning can be elicited by providing learners with a model demonstration (e.g. exemplar) and prompting them to observe, analyze, understand and generate key required features (e.g. a rubric) of desired performance. At the emulation level (Level 2), learning can be facilitated by allowing the learner to perform the task by following or imitating the model performance (e.g. exemplar) under structured guidance (e.g. a rubric) and reinforcement (e.g. feedback). At the self-control level (Level 3), learning can be further supported by providing learners with extended practice to apply the new skill or strategy on their own under self-controlled conditions, i.e., in the absence of a model (without exemplar), and then prompting them to reflect over the processes to enhance self-observation and evaluation (EJ). Finally, at the self-regulation level (Level 4), learning is further reinforced by providing learners with further practice to initiate and adapt the use of their new learning strategies according to changing personal and contextual conditions, and further opportunities to support their self-evaluation based on outcomes.

Zimmerman (1989) suggests an SRL assessment design that builds on the four hierarchy levels mentioned earlier. The observation level (Level 1) refers to learners' ability to observe and infer the underlying strategy from a model performance and predict future moves before they are executed. The emulation level (Level 2) is achieved when learners become able to emulate the strategy presented in the model performance under structured guidance and support. The self-control level (Level 3) occurs when learners can execute the learned strategy independently in the absence of guidance and support. The self-regulation level (Level 4) is attained when learners can transfer the model strategy to a different context and situation on their own.

2.3 Conceptualizing the Evaluative Judgement (EJ) of IC from the Perspective of SRL

Several researchers argue that in order for learners to be able to self-regulate their learning process appropriately, they need to develop the ability to judge their own performance and that of others, which entails an awareness of one's own assessment capability, termed as EJ (Lipnevich et al., 2023; Panadero & Tapia, 2014; Panadero & Broadbent, 2018; Price et al., 2012; Tai et al., 2018; Thai et al., 2017). The concept of EJ has been known under different terminologies in the literature, including evaluative competence (Sadler, 1989) and assessment literacy (Price et al., 2012). Thai et al. (2017) define EJ as "the capability to make decisions about the quality of work of oneself and others." Winstone et al., (2017) share a similar view and define EJ as "the processes of understanding the grading process and of applying this understanding to make academic judgements of one's work and performance". Panadero & Broadbent (2018) maintain that SRL and EJ are two distinct but highly interrelated concepts, and argue that in order for a learner to develop one, the other is a key.

Recent research has established several connections between the EJ and SRL models (Boud & Falchikov, 1989; Panadero & Tapia, 2014; Panadero & Broadbent, 2018; Tai et al., 2018). From perspective, Panadero & Broadbent (2018) argue that learners engage in cyclical self-evaluative judgment and feedback loops during the three phases of SRL until they achieve their learning goals. In the forethought phase, learners start to activate innate cognitive thoughts and approaches, such as self-perceptions and self-beliefs on how to deal with a learning task, which involve judgements about their perceived ability to complete a task successfully. These predictive judgement processes have significant impacts on subsequent learning processes, including the setting and planning of achievable learning goals as well as on learners' persistence to continue the learning process. In the performance phase, the learners build on, apply and calibrate the self-evaluative judgements activated in the forethought phase and engage in behaviors to attain the learning goals. This phase consists of three sub-phases, namely self-control, self-instruction, and self-observation. In the self-reflection phase, the learners engage in a process where they make judgements about the ways their perceived self-evaluative judgements compare with their actual task performance, evaluate where their performances and outcomes of the task stand in relation to the criteria and standards of achievement, and to take action as a result of this understanding. In other words, during this phase the learners generate post-dictive judgements on what they have achieved in the performance phase as compared to what they have set to achieve in the forethought phase and gain information on their strengths, weaknesses and areas to improve. The evaluative judgements made by the learners would, therefore, lay the grounds for future course of actions related to a new forethought phase.

Panadero & Broadbent (2018) connect EJ development to the four levels of self-regulation described earlier. In the observation level, students observe a model performance of the task. In the emulation level the students perform the task themselves in the presence of a model performance (with exemplar). In the self-control level students perform the task on their own in the absence of a model (without exemplar). Finally, in the self-regulation level, students perform a new task involving changing contexts and situations that require adaption of their newly learned strategies in the absence of a model (without exemplars) with opportunities to reflect on, review and revise their performance until they reach a final product, and consider action planning for future learning. From this perspective, it can be assumed that students' self-assessment process starts to operate at SRL levels 3 and 4 and involves the use of a number of relevant SRL-support strategies, such as prompting, scaffolding, modelling, and reinforcement, and their progressive fading to achieve greater levels of student engagement and, hence, self-control and self-regulation.

According to Boud & Falchikov (1989), the process of EJ involves self-assessment practices that relate to learners' own learning potentials, outcomes, and achievements. They describe a range of self-assessment related techniques, including the use of rubrics and exemplars, to guide and support learners in the process of developing EJ while making sense of success criteria and standards and taking progressive control of their own learning. The literature provides ample evidence for the effectiveness of rubrics in enhancing EJ (Carless et al., 2018; Gyamfi et al., 2022; Luo & Chan, 2023; Smaoui, 2020). Petropoulou et al. (2015) define an assessment rubric as a descriptive scoring guide listing the criteria and standards of quality used to evaluate and report student achievement. Likewise, Andrade (2000) maintains that the common features present in the multiple formats available for rubrics in the literature are a list of criteria ('what counts') and gradations of quality (descriptions of good, average, and needs improvement). William & Leahy (2015) argue that sharing learning intentions and criteria and standards of success with learners supports the development of self-regulation and EJ. Learning intentions refer to what the teacher desires the students to learn in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior, and success criteria designate the criteria used to evaluate student performance and determine the extent up to which the latter was successful in achieving the stated learning intentions (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; William & Leahy, 2015). Similarly, Andrade & Brookhart (2016) state that engaging learners in assessment tasks

and activities in light of assessment rubrics supports the learning process and provides valuable opportunities to exercise EJ by guiding practice through evidence.

Of particular relevance, one line of research highlights that engaging learners in analyzing exemplars in light of criteria and standards of success (rubrics) helps them understand teachers' expectations of performance. Exemplars have also been reported to offer valuable tools to help learners understand success standards and criteria (Carless et al., 2018; Lipnevich et al., 2023). Exemplars are defined as "key examples chosen so as to be typical of designated levels of quality or competence" (Pintrich, 2000). Several empirical studies have shown that the provision of exemplar responses to students helps clarify success criteria and standards of quality and demonstrate how performance aligns with those requirements (Andrade, 2000; Lipnevich et al., 2023).

In short, the rapid changes in modern days interconnected world make a compelling case for an appropriate approach to ensure that students learn to mediate between cultures and self-regulate and judge their learning. The literature suggests that the application of SRL-supported instructional designs can enhance students' development of IC as well as EJ of IC. Further research is, therefore, needed to investigate how SRL can be applied to help students to develop IC and the EJ of IC.

3. The Study

3.1 Material and Methods

The pedagogical intervention for the experimental condition was structured based on the teaching material available in Hughes et al.'s (2019) Life intermediate package (listening tracks, video clips, reading passages, etc.) published by National Geographic Learning, supplemented with extra support material from the INCA (2004) project manual and resources.

The course consisted of 12 units covered in one term (12 teaching weeks). The students studied 1 unit over 5 two-hour periods per week, making a total of 10 learning hours per week and 120 hours per term, with 2 additional examination weeks at the middle and the end of the semester allocated for mid-term and end-of-term exams, respectively. The topics covered in the course were as follows: people, possessions, places, free time, food, past lives, journeys, appearance, entertainment, learning, tourism, and the earth.

The overall goal of the course was to develop students' basic intercultural knowledge, attitudes and skills as a natural extension of language learning and to prepare them to become independent intercultural mediators able to engage with complexity and multiple identities and step beyond their own culture and function appropriately in contexts involving diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The general goal was broken down into a cluster of three main objectives that indicated what the students will learn in terms of knowledge, attitudes and skills. The cognitive orientation of the course aimed to develop students' (1) knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction. The affective orientation targeted the development of students' (2) curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own. The behavioral orientation sought to develop the skills of interpreting and relating, namely (3) the ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one's own.

The general goal was also translated into meaningful objectives and attributes that the course was intended to develop. The latter consisted of a cluster of three interrelated strands of competences, namely knowledge (K), openness (O), and adaptability (A). (1) Knowledge-oriented attributes refer to characteristics pertaining to knowledge discovery and empathy. They included knowledge of the processes and institutions of socialization in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country. (2) Openness-oriented attributes related to traits of respect for otherness and tolerance of ambiguity. They included the willingness to seek out or take up opportunities to engage with otherness in a relationship of equality, distinct from seeking out the exotic or to profit from others. (3) Adaptability-oriented attributes designated behavioral flexibility and communicative awareness. They included the ability to identify possible areas of misunderstanding or miscommunication in interaction and explain them with reference to the cultural systems present.

Three learning outcomes were also targeted in alignment with the course objectives. (1) Knowledge-oriented outcomes refer to the degree to which individuals understand the context, values and emotional manifestations associated with interaction with other people. They included (1a) knowledge discovery (KD) and (1b) empathy (E). (2) Openness-oriented outcomes refer to the extent to which individuals are open to respect and tolerate situations where others do or say something differently. They included (2a) respect for otherness (RA) and (2b) tolerance of ambiguity (TA). (3) Adaptability-oriented outcomes refer to the extent to which individuals adjust their interaction behaviors and communication styles to function effectively in different contexts. They included

(3a) behavioral flexibility (BF) and (3b) communicative awareness (CA).

In line with the INCA framework, competency in the six learning outcomes were denoted in terms of three dimensions, namely motivation, skill/knowledge, and behavior, corresponding to the affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions of IC. Consistent with the INCA framework, IC development was formulated as a developmental transformative pathway starting with individuals' attitudes towards engagement with others (motivation), through the acquisition of relevant aptitudes (skills/knowledge) to eventually succeed and validate those resources in actual intercultural communication (behavior).

3.2 Research Design and Participants

The study was carried out at the General Required Courses department of a prominent Saudi HEI. The latter had a large student population majoring in different subject areas (i.e., for whom SRL, EJ and IC are central). Participants included 24 male students, aged 18 to 22. They were from different disciplinary backgrounds, namely health, business, and IT. All participants have attended English classes for several years since elementary school. None of them reported to have had a previous long stay-abroad experiences in English-speaking countries. All participants have had previous experience in intercultural encounters at home with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. They had a beginner level of English language proficiency and never took any courses related to SRL, EJ or IC prior to attending the training course. All ethical aspects and procedures were observed, and participants were assured rights of privacy and confidentiality.

The pedagogical design employed in the study was Guided by Byram's (1997) IC model, structured around Liddicoat's (2004) four-stage pathway model for IC development (input, noticing, reflection, and output), mapped on Panadero & Broadbent's (2018) four-level model for EJ development (observation, emulation, self-control, and self-regulation), and framed within Zimmerman's (1989) three-stage SRL model (forethought, performance, and self-reflection). Considering the aims and objectives of the present study, this paper focuses on learning strategies that are relevant to a self-regulated writing process, particularly those that showcase SRL writing strategies in the self-reflection phase (SRP). Accordingly, the study opted for training students to develop EJ skills using model performances (exemplars) along with assessment criteria and standards (rubrics). The exemplars used in this study were collected from past students' submitted work. A rubric was co-constructed with the students in a language that is understood by them in line with the rubric provided by the INCA framework mentioned earlier.

3.3 Instruments

The research questions presented above were investigated using a mix of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Data pertaining to RQ1 were elicited through student CIT-based writing essays and SRWs. Data related to RQ2 were gathered through pre-intervention and post-intervention questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Both types of data were meant to be integrated to achieve a thorough understanding of participants' practices and perceptions around the learning experience.

3.3.1 Quantitative Data

The BIQ was administered only once, together with the IPQ, before the pedagogical information. It aimed to formulate a tentative profile of participants' intercultural experiences (IE) prior to the pedagogical intervention. In addition to asking respondents' (1) name and (2) age, the questionnaire elicited information about (3) number of languages spoken, (4) number of friends from abroad, (5) previous contact with people from other cultures, (6) previous experience in working with members from other cultures, (7) reading books written in foreign languages, (8) being abroad, (9) number of countries visited, and (10) length of stays abroad. Although the questionnaire had no evaluative intentions, it aimed to construct tentative background information on participants' intercultural experience profile (IEP). Responses to the BIQ were compiled and grouped into high, medium, and low intercultural experience groups for subsequent interviews and classroom observation. Participants' responses were coded on a three-point scale, where A-oriented choices referred to a low IEP, B-oriented responses indicated a medium IEP, and C-oriented responses designated a high IEP. They were assigned the scores of 1, 2, and 3, respectively. The score range was, therefore, between 0 and 18, corresponding to a highest frequency for A-oriented and C-oriented responses, respectively. Table 2 shows the scheme employed to identify students' IEPs.

Table 2. Scheme used for Intercultural Encounter Profile (IEP)

Intercultural experience profile (IEP)	Description
Low IEP	A tendency for more A options in the BIQ items
Medium IEP	A tendency for more B options in the BIQ items
High IEP	A tendency for more C options in the BIQ items

The IPQ was administered twice, in combination with the BIQ before the intervention and in combination with the ERPQ after the intervention. It was administered twice to identify any change in disposition due to the intervention. The IPQ comprised 18 items, divided evenly between six sets of identificatory parts, each containing 3 items gathering information relating to the six dimensions of IC, namely (I) O, including (1) RO and (2) TA; (II) K, including (3) KD and (4) E; and (III) A, including (5) BF and (6) CA. Participant responses were coded according to the INCA's three levels of competence (1, basic; 2, intermediate; and 3, full competence). Item scores would, therefore, range between 1 and 3. The questionnaire consisted of 3 items for each dimension of IC (RO, TA, KD, E, BF, and CA), which corresponded to 6 items for each strand of IC (O, K, and A) and 18 items for the overall IP. Therefore, the overall score for each dimension would range between 3 and 9; the overall score for each strand would range between 6 and 18; and the total IP score would range between 18 and 54, corresponding to basic and full levels of competence, respectively. A respondent's answers were added up, transcribed into points and the final score of each participant was calculated. The total scores of participants were presented in the form of attained points out of the total number of possible points. Based on the results, participants were divided into three groups showing basic, intermediate, or full self-reported intercultural profiles (IP). Table 3 illustrates the ranking scheme according to which student performances were ranked. The full version of the IPO is available from the first author upon request.

Table 3. Ranking scheme used for Intercultural Profile (IP)

Intercultural Profile (IP)	Description
Basic IP	18-26 points
Intermediate IP	27-37 points
Full IP	38-54 points

The ERPQ was administered after the pedagogical intervention. It aimed to elicit information pertaining to the types of instructional elements in the pedagogical design that the students perceived helpful in the understanding and practice of EJ of IC. The questionnaire, therefore, sought to elicit information on students' previous and current experiences with as well as plans to continue with the experience of using (a) self-evaluative judgement of own and other students' work, (b) examples of student work (exemplars), and (c) criteria and standards of success (rubric) as learning tools. The questionnaire consisted exclusively of closed-ended items to encourage responses. The questions required the students to rate responses on a three-point Likert scale, ranging from 'disagree' through 'undecided' to 'agree'. Section one consisted of three questions eliciting information on whether the students had previous experiences with (1) EJ, (2) exemplars, and (3) rubrics as learning tools. Section two consisted of five questions that sought to gather information on students' perceptions of the use exemplars in terms of (4) usefulness for developing of EJ skills, (5) clarity of understanding, (6) ease of use, (7) supporting their understanding of criteria and standards of success, and (8) supporting their preparation for exams. Section three consisted of five questions that aimed to collect information on students' perceptions of the use of rubrics in terms of (9) usefulness for developing of EJ skills, (10) clarity of understanding, (11) ease of use, (12) supporting their understanding of criteria and standards of success, and (13) supporting their preparation for exams. Section four consisted of ten questions seeking information on students' perceptions of aspects pertaining to coursework, particularly in terms of (14) support at different stages of learning, (15) impact on their EJ abilities, (16) influence on their understanding of how their work is assessed and evaluated, (17) inclusion of tasks and activities that link to the criteria and success in their course, (18) incorporation of resources that contribute to EJ skills, (19) focus on self-feedback, (20) integration of peer-feedback, (21) support from teacher feedback, (22) review and reflection on feedback, and (23) familiarization with action planning. Section five contained two questions eliciting information on students' (24) perception of their current level in EJ, and (25) their willingness to continue using exemplars and rubrics as tools for learning.

3.3.2 Qualitative Data

Qualitative data were collected through various instruments, including students' CIT-based writing essays and responses to open-ended interviews and self-reflective worksheets. The CIT-based writing tasks used in the study included text-based critical incidents involving a cultural misunderstanding between a native and a non-native in a business context (similar to the INCA's business trip to China). The students had to reflect on the situation and write an essay where they interpret the experience, identify the cultural differences, relate to the situation, and offer a potential strategy to deal with such issues where they take the role of a 'mediator' between native and target cultures. The students completed three writing tasks, each including an initial, a revised and a final submission. Student productions were carefully examined and analyzed to judge student work and observe their progress throughout the different phases of the study from two perspectives, the teacher and the students themselves. Considering the research objectives of the study, the students were actively engaged in self and peer assessment activities involving the use of a rubric and exemplars. The rubric employed in the study featured the list of categories and descriptors described in the INCA framework. Every written performance was carefully examined, and its content was dissected, thematized and matched with the respective criteria of IC (namely TO, BF, CA, KD, RO, and E in the teacher's version; simplified as O, K, and A in the students' version) and then identified across the major categories described in the INCA framework, namely motivation, skills/knowledge, and behavior, corresponding to the affective (attitudes), cognitive (knowledge) and behavioral (behavior) domains of IC. Responses were then coded into points guided by the INCA standards for the three levels of competence (1, basic; 2, intermediate; and 3, full). The minimum and maximum points achieved by each student for each strand of IC were calculated and then added up to calculate the total score for each domain-specific IC and then the overall score for IC. A three-point scoring scheme was applied for each category (RO, TA, KD, E, BF, and CS), where 1 designated a basic level, 2 an intermediate level, and 3 a full level of performance. Therefore, the possible points achieved by each student for each category ranged between 1 and 3, corresponding to the minimum and maximum points. Considering that each strand consisted of two categories (for instance, O includes RO and TA), the minimum and maximum points for each dimension of IC would range between 2 and 6. Likewise, the minimum and maximum scores for the total overall IC would range between 6 and 18, respectively. Students' scores on the draft essays were compared against revised and final essays to deduce potential changes and developments due to the pedagogical intervention. Table 4 below illustrates the scheme employed for the ranking of IC.

Table 4. Sample ranking scheme used for Intercultural Profile (IP)

Intercultural Profile (IP)	Description
Basic IP	6-9 points
Intermediate IP	10-14 points
Full IP	15-18 points

Moreover, the students were asked to keep SRWs and to submit them at the end of the term. The SRWs were used as documents for the students to showcase personal learning and to revisit to track progress and reflect on achievement. They were employed to record any changes made in response to the discussions and feedback provided between initial and final essay submissions. They required the students to reflect and comment on seven aspects of the learning process, namely (1) self-feedback, (2) peer-feedback, (3), teacher follow-on feedback, (4) strengths, (5) weaknesses, (6) areas that need improvement, and (7) action plan. These aspects were deemed useful to gather insights on how students changed their approach to using the exemplars and rubric to guide self-assessment; how the self and peer feedback processes affected their learning; and the skills that they have used in their development of self-evaluative judgements.

Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the student participants. The interviews consisted of 10–15-minute individual face-to-face semi-structured sessions eliciting information on participants' perceptions and behaviors in relation to SRL processes as they experienced prior to, during and after the pedagogical intervention. A loose agenda consisting of open-ended questions guided by the descriptions provided by Zimmerman (1989) was developed. The agenda consisted of a list of 15 questions that aimed to guide, but not to direct, the interview. Considering the aims of the present study, the interview questions referred basically to the third phase of the SRL model, namely the self-reflection phase. They sought to explore (1) the nature of self-reflection strategies developed and used by the students as a result of the pedagogical intervention and (2) students' perceptions and attitudes towards the SRL-supported learning experience in retrospect. The first part of the interview aimed to gain insights on the (1A) self-judgement strategies that the students might have

developed and used throughout the phases of the study. These included information on (1Aa) self-evaluation strategies (Do you evaluate your performance in your learning process? Do you make any personal record reflecting your learning?) as well as (1Ab) causal attribution strategies (What are the reasons for your current performance in learning?). The interview questions also included items seeking information on (1B) self-reaction strategies. These included a question on (1Ba) self-satisfaction/affect (Have you been satisfied of your overall learning experience?) and another item on (1Bb) adaptive/defensive behavior (What is your response to a low-test grade? High test grade?). The interview also contained questions seeking information about (2) students' perceptions and attitudes towards the SRL-supported learning experience in retrospect. This part of the interview sought information on (2a) elements of the training program that the students perceived helpful, and (2b) potential changes they perceived in themselves as a result of their participation in the pedagogical intervention. The full list of interview questions is available from the first author upon request.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

The data for the research study were collected between September and December 2023. Participants were informed about the research aims, tasks to be performed, right to decide about participation, and right to withdraw from research at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity were also assured, and participants' consents were obtained.

3.5 Data Analysis

The study used a mixed-method design, and the data were collected and analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The data obtained through qualitative methods included information from semi-structured interviews, self-reflective worksheets, and students' written essays in responses to CIT-based scenarios. The interviews were held in English and manually transcribed verbatim. They were analyzed in conformity with the thematic content analysis described by (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Quantitative data were entered into the IBM's Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows software (trial version 22.0; IBM SPSS Statistics) and submitted to frequency, descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed independently, and their results were brought together in the overall interpretation to answer the research questions. The findings from both methods are presented below.

1. 4. Results

The results were analyzed based on the theoretical framework, tied to the research questions and presented in two sets corresponding to the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study. The independent variables relevant to each instrument were considered and the dependent variables were students' perceptions and attitudes on coursework and the marks they obtained throughout the assessment phases of the study. Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed independently, and their results were brought together in the overall interpretation to answer the research questions. The findings from both methods are presented below.

4.1 Quantitative Results

The quantitative data were submitted to frequency, descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency and descriptive statistical analyses were used to examine the general characteristics of participants and determine mean and standard deviation values of the study variables. The data were also submitted to non-parametric and parametric analyses. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied to normality testing, and the Pearson test was performed to test the validity of assumptions and correlations between the variables. One-way ANOVA t-tests, paired sample t-tests and comparison of means tests were also applied to determine significant differences between variables. Chi-square, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Kurtosis analyses were used to test normality distribution. The Skewness and Kurtosis values obtained indicated that the data were normally distributed ($p < 0.001$), and the values were, therefore, reported as mean and standard deviation (SD) or frequencies and percentages.

The results obtained for the biographical variables (BIQ) indicated that the participants were aged between 18-23, spoke little (33.3 %) to no (66.7 %) foreign languages, had no (54.2 %) to little (45.8%) friends from abroad, had no (50 %) to little experience in dealing with people from other cultures, had no (100 %) previous experiences in working or studying with people from other cultures, had no (87.5 %) to little (12.5 %) practice of reading books in other languages, had no (79.2 %) to few (20.8 %) occasions to being abroad, with no (79.2 %) to few (20.8) foreign countries visited, and with no (79.2 %) to short (12.5 %) or relatively short (8.3 %) periods of stays abroad. Biographical data showed, therefore, that participants showed equal distribution on the scales of age, fields of study, foreign languages spoken, levels of language proficiency, and previous intercultural encounters, thus allowing for meaningful comparisons across those variables. Although the study collected data from

different sources and involved participants from different age groups and subjects of study, the sample size was small and exclusively male. This was due to the fact that the research site was a male campus. This is a limitation of the study whose outcomes can be viewed as an area for future research on the different gender-related patterns of SRL behavior (Zimmerman & Pons, (1990).

The results from the descriptive statistical analysis of the data from the IPQ revealed that the mean value for the scores recorded for the intercultural profile (IP) before the intervention was $M= 32.29$ compared to $M= 41.91$ for the one recorded after the intervention. There was also a difference of 1 in the range values (R) recorded for both IPs (before the intervention, $R=9$; after the intervention, $R=10$). The standard deviation values for both IPs were also different (Std= 2.44 before the intervention; Std= 3.28 after the intervention). While the IP before the intervention displayed slightly negative skewness (-.292) and kurtosis (-.484), the one after the intervention displayed moderately positive skewness (0.105) but negative kurtosis (-1.25) values, suggesting a relatively even distribution. In both cases, however, the distribution of overall scores was normal, as the skewness values were close to zero. Both IPs exhibited slightly negative kurtosis values (-.484 before the intervention; -1.25 after the intervention), suggesting that the distribution of overall scores tended to be flat. In fact, both cases showed normal score distribution, as the kurtosis and skewness values were close to zero.

Table 5. Students' self-perceived levels in terms of overall and domain-specific IC before and after the intervention

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	TotalROa	5.0833	24	.77553	.15830
	TotalROb	6.7500	24	.79400	.16207
Pair 2	TotalTAa	4.0833	24	.77553	.15830
	TotalTAb	6.4167	24	.50361	.10280
Pair 3	TotalKDa	6.0000	24	.00000	.00000
	TotalKDb	7.2083	24	.93153	.19015
Pair 4	TotalEa	6.4583	24	1.06237	.21685
	TotalEb	7.4583	24	1.14129	.23296
Pair 5	TotalBFa	5.5833	24	.50361	.10280
	TotalBFb	7.0000	24	1.17954	.24077
Pair 6	TotalCAa	5.0833	24	.92861	.18955
	TotalCAb	7.0833	24	1.05981	.21633
Pair 7	TotalOpennessa	9.1667	24	1.23945	.25300
	TotalOpennessb	13.1667	24	.91683	.18715
Pair 8	TotalKnowledgea	12.4583	24	1.06237	.21685
	TotalKnowledgeb	14.6667	24	1.68540	.34403
Pair 9	TotalAdaptabilitya	10.6667	24	1.16718	.23825
	TotalAdaptabilityb	14.0833	24	1.81579	.37065
Pair 10	TotalIPQa	32.2917	24	2.44023	.49811
	TotalIPQb	41.9167	24	3.28258	.67005

The data from both IPQs were also submitted to a paired sample t-test and a standard comparison of means. The results obtained for the mean values of students' self-perceived levels of overall and domain-specific IC before and after the intervention are presented in Table 5. The findings indicated significant ($p < 0.001$) differences between the mean values. The mean value recorded for openness was noted to increase from 9.16 to 13.16 and the one registered for knowledge increased from 12.45 to 14.66. The mean value recorded for adaptability also increased from 10.66 to 14.08. The mean value recorded for the overall IC also increased from 32.29 to 41.91.

As far as the ERPQ was concerned, the first three items aimed to elicit information on participants' potential familiarity with EJ and the use of rubrics and exemplars in their previous learning experiences. The results

indicated that all (100 %) participants reported to have had no previous experiences with (1) making judgements of their own work or that of other students (2) using exemplars, and (3) using rubrics in their learning prior to participation in the current study.

The ERPQ also contained 10 items gathering information on students' perceptions of the experiences they had while using rubrics and exemplars throughout the phases of the current study. As far as the use of exemplars was concerned, the results indicated that all (100 %) students agreed that the use of exemplars in the current study (4) was a useful exercise in guiding them to make judgements about their work and that of other students, and (5) helped them understand the criteria and standards of success. Although 54.2 % were undecided about the item rating (6) whether the judgement of student work was an easy exercise, all participants (100 %) found that (7) the exercise was beneficial in the preparation for their exams.

As concerns the use of rubrics, the results showed that all respondents (100 %) agreed that their application (8) helped them understand how their works were evaluated and (9) were helpful in guiding them to judge their own works and those of other students. Similarly, although 45.8 % of participants were undecided when they were required to rate the use of rubrics as (10) a clear exercise and (11) an easy task, all (100 %) of them agreed that the use of rubrics (12) helped them understand the requirements to do well in the course, and (13) was beneficial in the preparation for their exams.

Furthermore, the ERPQ consisted of 10 items eliciting information on participants' perceptions of the coursework they took part in throughout the phases of the study. The results indicated that all (100 %) participants felt that (14) they were supported during the different stages of the study, (15) their participation in the training program influenced their EJ skills and abilities, (16) their participation in the training course influenced their understanding on how their works were assessed and evaluated, (17) the tasks and activities involving the use of rubrics and exemplars connected well to the criteria and standards of success in their course, (18) the resources and materials used in the course were helpful in developing their EJ skills and abilities, (19) the self-feedback tasks and activities used in the course were helpful in developing their EJ skills and abilities, (20) the tasks and activities involving feedback from other students were helpful in developing their EJ skills and abilities, (21) the tasks and activities involving feedback from the teacher were helpful in developing their EJ skills and abilities, (22) the tasks and activities involving review of feedback from other students and from the teacher were helpful in developing their EJ skills and abilities, and (23) the action planning tasks and activities were helpful in developing their EJ skills and abilities.

The last two items of the ERPQ aimed to elicit information on participants' perceptions on their EJ profile immediately following the pedagogical intervention and potential future use of rubrics and exemplars as tools in their future learning. The results indicated that all (100 %) participants rated themselves as (24) being able to consistently judge their works and those of others, and (25) willing to continue to use rubrics and exemplars in their future learning.

4.2 Qualitative Results

All participants completed the CIT-based writing tasks ($n = 24$). The results from one-sample test revealed significant ($p < 0.001$) differences in the total scores the students obtained on the three essay versions they provided for each CIT-based writing task at a 0.001 level of significance ($P < 0.001$). The normal distribution of students' scores on the CIT-based essays was examined by Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Tukey's tests and the level of significance was set at $p < 0.001$. The data were then further analyzed by one-way repeated measures ANOVA and a paired samples t-test to compare the teacher ratings (TR) and students' ratings (SR) for domain-specific and overall IC. The means (averages) and standard deviations were calculated. Results on the students' and teacher ratings are presented in Tables 6, 7 and 8.

Table 6. Student vs. teacher ratings of the three versions of the first CIT-based writing essay

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	TRCIT1aOpenness	2.0000	24	.00000	.00000
	SRCIT1aOpenness	2.8750	24	.33783	.06896
Pair 2	TRCIT1aKnowledge	2.0000a	24	.00000	.00000
	SRCIT1aKnowledge	3.0000a	24	.00000	.00000
Pair 3	TRCIT1aAdaptability	2.0000	24	.00000	.00000
	SRCIT1aAdaptability	2.6250	24	.49454	.10095
Pair 4	TRCIT1aOverall	6.0000	24	.00000	.00000
	SRCIT1aOverall	8.5000	24	.65938	.13460
Pair 5	TRCIT1bOpenness	2.1667	24	.38069	.07771
	SRCIT1bOpenness	2.9167	24	.28233	.05763
Pair 6	TRCIT1bKnowledge	2.1667	24	.38069	.07771
	SRCIT1bKnowledge	2.9167	24	.28233	.05763
Pair 7	TRCIT1bAdaptability	2.6667	24	.86811	.17720
	SRCIT1bAdaptability	3.0833	24	.65386	.13347
Pair 8	TRCIT1bOverall	7.0000	24	1.10335	.22522
	SRCIT1bOverall	8.9583	24	.55003	.11228
Pair 9	TRCIT1cOpenness	2.7500	24	.84699	.17289
	SRCIT1cOpenness	3.2083	24	.50898	.10389
Pair 10	TRCIT1cKnowledge	2.7500	24	.84699	.17289
	SRCIT1cKnowledge	3.2083	24	.50898	.10389
Pair 11	TRCIT1cAdaptability	2.7083	24	.85867	.17528
	SRCIT1cAdaptability	3.0000	24	.72232	.14744
Pair 12	TRCIT1cOverall	8.2083	24	1.76879	.36105
	SRCIT1cOverall	9.4167	24	.92861	.18955

The results from TR informed that the mean values recorded for students' overall IC scores in the first set of draft essays underwent significant increases towards higher levels compared to the ones recorded for the second and final submissions. For example, the results informed that the mean value (M=6) and the minimum and maximum values recorded for the overall IC scores obtained for the first draft on the first CIT-based writing task were the same, namely a value of 6 (reflecting a basic level). The mean values recorded for student performances on the second draft revealed that although not all students scored above the average, the mean value of students' scores was M= 7 (reflecting a basic level), with scores ranging between a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 10. The mean values recorded for student performances on the final submission increased to M= 8.2 (reflecting a basic level), with scores ranging between a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12. The results indicated that while 100 % of the students exhibited basic level of IC on the first drafts, 4.2 % of the students moved to the intermediate level in second drafts, and 29 % shifted to an intermediate level on the final submission.

Table 7. Student vs. teacher ratings of the three versions of the second CIT-based writing essay

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 13	TRCIT2aOpenness	2.7500	24	.84699	.17289
	SRCIT2aOpenness	3.1667	24	.56466	.11526
Pair 14	TRCIT2aKnowledge	2.7500	24	.84699	.17289
	SRCIT2aKnowledge	2.9583	24	.75060	.15322
Pair 15	TRCIT2aAdaptability	2.7083	24	.85867	.17528
	SRCIT2aAdaptability	2.7917	24	.83297	.17003
Pair 16	TRCIT2aOverall	8.2083	24	1.76879	.36105
	SRCIT2aOverall	8.9167	24	1.28255	.26180
Pair 17	TRCIT2bOpenness	3.0000	24	.78019	.15926
	SRCIT2bOpenness	3.2917	24	.46431	.09478
Pair 18	TRCIT2bKnowledge	3.0000	24	.78019	.15926
	SRCIT2bKnowledge	3.0833	24	.71728	.14641
Pair 19	TRCIT2bAdaptability	2.9167	24	.77553	.15830
	SRCIT2bAdaptability	3.0417	24	.69025	.14090
Pair 20	TRCIT2bOverall	8.9167	24	1.63964	.33469
	SRCIT2bOverall	9.4167	24	1.10007	.22455
Pair 21	TRCIT2cOpenness	3.1250	24	.74089	.15123
	SRCIT2cOpenness	3.3333	24	.48154	.09829
Pair 22	TRCIT2cKnowledge	3.1250	24	.74089	.15123
	SRCIT2cKnowledge	3.2917	24	.55003	.11228
Pair 23	TRCIT2cAdaptability	3.0000	24	.72232	.14744
	SRCIT2cAdaptability	3.2500	24	.44233	.09029
Pair 24	TRCIT2cOverall	9.2500	24	1.75078	.35738
	SRCIT2cOverall	9.8750	24	1.07592	.21962

The results from descriptive statistics indicated that each set of data has fairly comparable mean values, thus further supporting the normal distribution of the scores. The data were further submitted to one-way analysis of variance to compare students' ratings (ST) and teacher ratings (TR) on the three sets of submitted works (each set consisted of three versions submitted on the first, second, and third CIT-based essays). Inter-rater agreement was also evaluated through an Intraclass correlation coefficient analysis using a two-way mixed model for consistency. Inter-item consistency was assessed by Cronbach's alpha. The results obtained for the ratings of the first set yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.865 and an intraclass correlation coefficient of 0.865, suggesting a good level of consistency and agreement between ST and RT. The results obtained for the second set yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.951. The values obtained from intraclass correlation coefficient analysis was 0.951, representing an excellent level of consistency and agreement between the two ratings. The results obtained for the third set yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.910 and an intraclass correlation coefficient of 0.910 for consistency, indicating an excellent degree of consistency and agreement between the two ratings.

Table 8. Student vs. teacher ratings of the three versions of the third CIT-based writing essay

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 25	TRCIT3aOpenness	3.2917	24	.62409	.12739
	SRCIT3aOpenness	3.6667	24	.48154	.09829
Pair 26	TRCIT3aKnowledge	3.2917	24	.62409	.12739
	SRCIT3aKnowledge	3.4167	24	.50361	.10280
Pair 27	TRCIT3aAdaptability	3.1250	24	.74089	.15123
	SRCIT3aAdaptability	3.2917	24	.55003	.11228
Pair 28	TRCIT3aOverall	9.7083	24	1.57367	.32122
	SRCIT3aOverall	10.3750	24	.92372	.18855
Pair 29	TRCIT3bOpenness	3.6250	24	.49454	.10095
	SRCIT3bOpenness	3.7917	24	.41485	.08468
Pair 30	TRCIT3bKnowledge	3.6250a	24	.49454	.10095
	SRCIT3bKnowledge	3.6250a	24	.49454	.10095
Pair 31	TRCIT3bAdaptability	3.5417a	24	.50898	.10389
	SRCIT3bAdaptability	3.5417a	24	.50898	.10389
Pair 32	TRCIT3bOverall	10.7917	24	.93153	.19015
	SRCIT3bOverall	10.9583	24	.75060	.15322
Pair 33	TRCIT3cOpenness	4.0000a	24	.00000	.00000
	SRCIT3cOpenness	4.0000a	24	.00000	.00000
Pair 34	TRCIT3cKnowledge	4.0000a	24	.00000	.00000
	SRCIT3cKnowledge	4.0000a	24	.00000	.00000
Pair 35	TRCIT3cAdaptability	4.0000a	24	.00000	.00000
	SRCIT3cAdaptability	4.0000a	24	.00000	.00000
Pair 36	TRCIT3cOverall	12.0000a	24	.00000	.00000
	SRCIT3cOverall	12.0000a	24	.00000	.00000

a. The correlation and t cannot be computed because the standard error of the difference is 0.

Similarly, the results revealed that the mean value recorded for student performances on the first draft of the second CIT-based writing task was $M= 8.2$ (reflecting a basic level), but this time the scores ranged between a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12. Although the maximum and maximum scores remained in the same range of 6 and 12 for the second and final submissions, the mean values recorded for student performances on the second and third drafts shifted to $M= 8.9$ (reflecting a basic level) and $M= 9.2$ (reflecting an intermediate level), respectively. Further results showed that 70.8 % of the students displayed a basic level of IC on the first draft essay on the second CIT-based writing task and 29.2 % an intermediate level. Moreover, the results indicated that 58.3 % of the students exhibited a basic level and 41.7 % an intermediate level on their second drafts. Finally, 54 % were noted to display a basic level and 55.6 an intermediate level on the third submission.

As far as the third CIT-based writing task was concerned, the results showed that student performances on the first draft reached a mean value of $M= 9.7$ (reflecting an intermediate level). It was noted that all students scored above the average, and the scores ranged between a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 12. The mean values recorded for student performances on the second draft revealed that the mean value of students' scores was $M= 10.7$ (reflecting an intermediate level), with scores ranging between a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 12. The mean values recorded for student performances on the final submission increased to $M= 12$ (reflecting an intermediate level), with all students achieving the score of 12. The results from descriptive statistical analysis indicated that while 54.2 % of the students exhibited an intermediate level of IC on the first draft essay of the third CIT-based writing task, this percentage increased to reach 91.7 % in the second draft, and 100 % in the

final submission.

The qualitative data from the student interviews and SRWs (n=23) were meant to provide information that could complement understanding of the quantitative data. They were carried out with the goal of getting deeper insights on students' self-reported perceptions and attitudes towards (1) the development and use of EJ of IC in response to the SRL-supported intervention involving the application of rubrics and exemplars as self-regulatory support tools; and (2) the SRL-supported learning experiences involving the practice of EJ of IC. Consistent with the research purposes, the results were organized into two main clusters, highlighting the nature of SRL strategies employed by the students and the nature of instructional elements that the students perceived helpful for the development and practice of those particular SRL strategies. Data analysis was grounded in Zimmerman & Moylan's (2009) SRP phase. The results were synthesized, illustrated in graphical representations, and expressed in narrative form supported by numerical data (2006).

The results revealed that the common references made by participants in the interview and SRWs basically related to the two major variables of SRP, namely (1) self-judgement, and (2) self-reaction, as illustrated in Figure 1. Further thematic analysis and coding of the data allowed for the identification of thirteen (n=13) major emerging themes (Figure 3), falling into the four broader categories of self-evaluation, causal attribution, self-satisfaction, and adaptive/defensive responses (Figure 2).

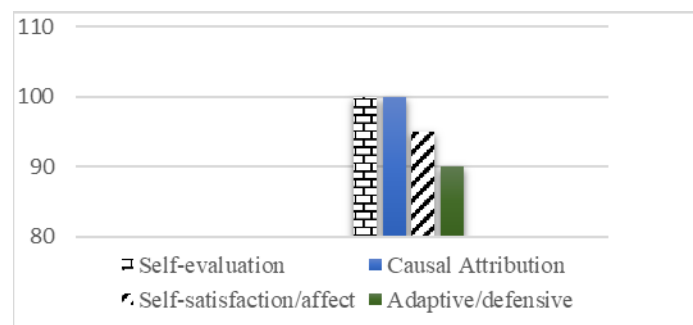


Figure 2. The four types of SRP strategies evidenced in student responses to the interview and self-reflective worksheets

First, the analysis of student responses relating to the self-evaluation process through which they assessed their performance immediately after they obtained the results of the task revealed that they explicitly referred to judgments in terms of strengths and/or weaknesses related to four general themes. One of the major recurring themes pertained to task-effectiveness as one of the most beneficial strategies they learned from the pedagogical intervention (85 %). As voiced by student (S9), “now, I feel I know to evaluate my work and work on my assignment with clear idea on comparing it with the things that the assignment wants me to do.” In this respect, the students were noted to voice the valuable effects of tasks and activities engaging them in comparing their work to a standard model and using a grading rubric and how those tools helped them gauge their performance against specific goals and objectives and compare them against success standards and criteria based on a clear grading scale. This was expressed by student (S12) who stated that “I check my work and can tell my writing weakness, and my friends also gave me ideas on that.” Another recurrent theme related to the beneficial effects of keeping performance records, where most students (75%) highlighted the valuable impacts of keeping performance records on enhancing their self-evaluative skills and abilities. This was, for instance, echoed by student (S7) saying that “knowing the positive and negative things in my work helps me improve.” The students also echoed issues relating to coherence in writing (74 %). This included problems in expressing their ideas coherently and making comprehensible statements. An equally important theme was cohesion in writing (85 %). In fact, the students reported judgements and evaluations related to cohesion issues pertaining to unclear connections between sentences and/or paragraphs, fragmented arguments, and ineffective transitions between ideas.

Second, students (100%) explicitly expressed the reasons behind their failure or success and the quality of the work they performed (causal attribution). In this respect, several students highlighted both strengths and weaknesses. Their strength was demonstrated in the way they successfully managed time (100%) and their perseverance and hard work (75%). This was clearly echoed by student (S4) who stated that “It is good to know where I am strong and where I am weak, and it is good to know that this is because of me in addition to other people and things.” In fact, when asked to judge their current states of performance, the students were noted to highlight reasons. Although a few of them were not sure of the causes, they mostly attributed weaknesses and

low performance to difficulties to adapt to course pace (52%) and inability to adapt to traits in the teachers (15%). This was expressed by one of the students (S7): “we can’t understand things because the teachers speak only English, and the program is very long and difficult.”

Third, self-reaction is a reaction to the self-judgement the students made. They echoed their affective and cognitive reactions (self-satisfaction/affect) and different degrees of satisfaction in relation to the self-judgments of the quality of the work they performed. Most of them mentioned either satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the strategies they used to approach learning tasks. In fact, 75% reported tangible improvement in their levels of self-satisfaction due to working hard towards goal achievement, which encouraged them to persist in finding solutions to task problems and helped them in their efforts to improve performance. On the other hand, 25% were not satisfied with their current status of performance and reported that they were negatively affected. This brings the analysis to the final category in the SRP.

References to the reactions mentioned above were noted to be followed by (adaptive/defensive) decisions where students, on the basis of learning difficulties, showed willingness to perform better in the future or continue doing well. The results indicated that most (90%) students referred to their persistence to reattempt a given task using new strategies to improve performance, with the remaining 10% either expressing their uncertainty (3%) or a decision to withdraw from the task so that to avoid future failure (7%). While student responses belonging to the first group echoed the application of adjustment strategies to improve performance, responses from the second group reflected helplessness, deferment, disengagement and task avoidance or inability to define any future action plan.

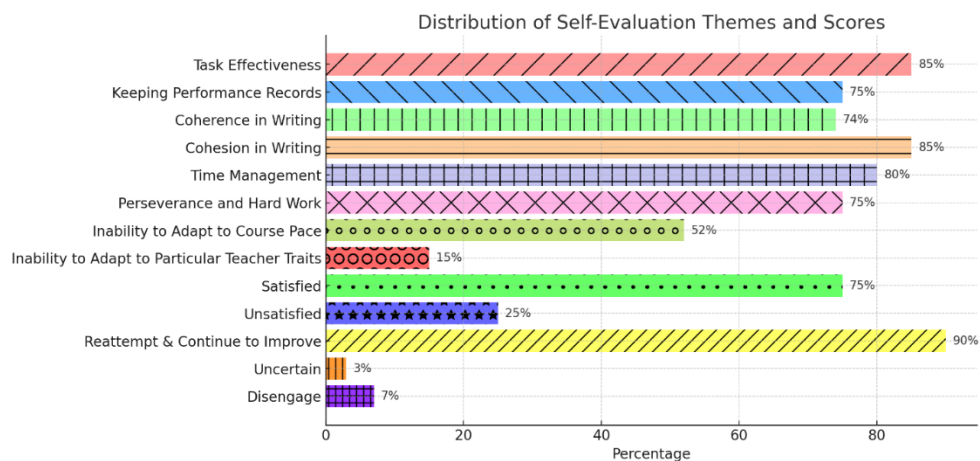


Figure 3. Distribution of themes and their respective scores

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Taken together, the results from the IPQ and ERPQ indicated an overall positive attitude of the learners towards learning experience, particularly the integration of rubrics and exemplars as SRL support tools for the learning of the EJ of IC. In fact, the students valued their engagement with the rubric and exemplars throughout the phases of the study. The findings also pointed to positive perceptions and attitudes towards the suite of self and peer assessment activities used in the pedagogical intervention. Many factors might have influenced these outcomes. In-class self-assessment and action planning activities engaged students in individual and group work activities that provided opportunities for reflection, judgement and discussion. Although those types of tasks and activities targeted strategies that initially seemed uncommon and somehow demanding on the part of the students, the latter were quick to appreciate and learn them. This might be attributed to the contribution of tasks and activities that required assistance and support from peers and the teacher. This is in agreement with the literature, where self-judgement and self-reaction strategies are reported to be trainable if interventions are properly designed (Lipnevich et al., 2023; Luo & Chan, 2023; Panadero & Tapia, 2014; Panadero & Broadbent, 2018; Pintrich, 2000; Tai et al., 2018; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 1999). Accordingly, the EJ framework used in this study suggests that the range of self-assessment activities used in this work can offer valuable tools for the development of both IC as well as the EJ of IC.

Moreover, the findings from the IPQ and ERPQ lent ample support for the positive perceptions and attitudes of the students towards the in-class activities used in the pedagogical intervention in terms of raising awareness of

criteria of quality and standards of performance. The students clearly voiced that the engagement with the rubric and exemplars helped them understand and practice the EJ of IC. This is in agreement with the results reported by Double et al. (2020) whose meta-analysis that involved over 50 studies supported the positive effect of peer assessment on academic performance. The results of the present study also indicated that in-class activities introduced significant changes in student learning as well as assessment awareness and behavior. This is in line with the results previously reported in the literature on the need for in-class activities that raise student awareness of success standards and criteria (Panadero & Broadbent, 2018). Most importantly, the results indicated that the use of exemplars in combination with a rubric was one of the most positively valued elements used in the intervention. The results also showed that the students attributed a great value to activities that engaged them in assessing the quality of exemplars against the rubric and then discussing their evaluations with their peers and the teacher. They perceived their engagement in the assessment of exemplars and their own work against the rubric helpful in guiding them to understand and practice the EJ of IC.

Furthermore, the results from the IPQ and ERPQ revealed that the students positively valued feedback and self-reflection activities. The students perceived feedback as a positive learning experience that increased their sense of commitment to their own learning, thus improving their agentic engagement with their learning (Winstone et al., 2017). This is a key finding of the present study for it suggests that the students valued engagement in learning and wanted to assume an active role in their own learning. The findings corroborate with the findings previously reported by Tomova (2021) who explored the development of IC with peer assessment involving 25 student teachers. She concluded that feedback enabled students with skills to provide constructive feedback, criticism and reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, thus leading to self-improvement. In fact, self-feedback encouraged the students to reflect on their initial drafts and consider their own cultural biases and communication strategies. This reflection was vital for self-improvement and greater cultural awareness. Peer feedback, on the other hand, was instrumental in providing students with an external perspective on how their communication was perceived by others and engage in EJ. It facilitated a deeper understanding of the nuances involved in intercultural communication and helped students refine their essays to be more effective and culturally sensitive. These results are also in line with several research studies in support for the positive effects of assessment practices providing students with success criteria that can be used to generate and produce feedback on their own work and that of others (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Panadero & Broadbent, 2018; Tai et al., 2018; Thai et al., 2017; Winstone et al., 2017). Such tasks and activities can help learners direct their learning without interference from the teacher, thus enhancing learner agency and control of own learning (Lipnevich et al., 2023; Luo & Chan, 2023; Tai et al., 2018; Thai et al., 2017; Winstone et al., 2017).

The mediatory effects of the rubric and exemplars on the enhancement of students' EJ of IC were further supported by the results obtained from the ICT-based writing tasks. The latter had as major objectives the enhancement of students' understanding of different cultural perspectives and improvement of their communication skills. Interestingly, the findings pointed to a significant improvement not only in students' IC but also in their EJ of IC. The results revealed that there was a significant ($p < 0.001$) and meaningful correlation between the teacher's and students' ratings and provided evidence for an increasingly strong degree of agreement between both raters and consistency in the scores assigned for a submitted piece of writing. This result suggests that familiarizing students with the use of rubrics and exemplars as tools for self-assessment may help students construct a clear understanding of task expectations and requirements as well as quality indicators and guidelines on how to accomplish them, thus enhancing not only their writing skills but also their abilities to use scoring rubrics for the purpose of evaluating their own work and that of others. The results of the present study are in line with several previous reports supporting the view that the scaffolded application of exemplars and rubrics in writing classrooms helps students to move progressively towards the development of self-directed learning (Andrade & Brookhart, 2016; Tai et al., 2018; Thai et al., 2017).

The results from the interviews and SRWs provided further support for the positive effects of the SRL-supported learning experience on the enhancement of students' EJ of IC. In fact, the results revealed a wide range of SRL strategies at work. The students were noted to value engagement in individual and group work dealing with rubrics and exemplars to identify and plan for challenges in their tasks. During the process, they expressed similar concerns and difficulties, and this seemed to have given them some sort of comfort for subsequent self-judgment activities. They also valued the use of the rubric for it helped them understand what was required in the task, set goals and plan actions accordingly. This result is in agreement with the one reported by Gyamfi, et al., (2022) where rubrics were found to have positive impacts on students' EJ and helped inform the teacher to formulate and implement pedagogically supported instructional designs. Interestingly, the students reported to have benefited from feedback, whether self-generated or from external sources. This provided further support for

the positive impacts of feedback in helping students to identify the areas where they need improvement and set goals and plan actions to adjust their performance and improve their drafts. This result concurs with the findings of Luo & Chan (2023) who, in a study involving 20 engineering students to evaluate their own IC and that of their peers in task-based interviews, found out that in the process of judgement-making, students were able to negotiate feedback, use knowledge of IC, make judgements, and take action to improve.

The data from interviews and SRWs also indicated that the intervention stimulated changes in students' writing performance and awareness of and ability to use a range of SRP strategies. They highlighted the positive effects of feedback-generating tasks (75%) on raising their awareness of the causes of their failure or success. The results showed that participants received positive feedback on the ideas they used in the writing task while they were given negative feedback on coherence and cohesion. The majority successfully used their cultural background to enrich their essays. Their arguments were interesting but lacked the language nuances to be expressed clearly. This major weakness involved cohesion issues, such as connections between sentences or paragraphs, which sometimes led to disjointed arguments. Overall, the results showed that students seemed to be highly reflective and proactive in their learning but may need additional support to improve their writing skills.

The triangulation of data from the different research instruments used in this study, namely the questionnaires, CIT-based essays, interviews, and SRWs, lent ample evidence in support for the positive mediatory effects of the rubric and exemplars as SRL-support tools on the enhancement of students' EJ of IC. The results indicated that the quantitative and qualitative datasets corroborated and complemented each other. In fact, the results from the interviews supported those from the questionnaires, and they both complemented the results from the CIT-writing tasks and SRWs. In brief, three main conclusions can be drawn. First, the findings provided evidence in support for the positive impacts brought by the SRL-mediated pedagogical intervention involving the combined application of exemplars and a rubric on learners' EJ of IC. The findings indicate that the SRL support tools are indeed very useful in stimulating learner reflection on their work (Gyamfi et al., 2022; Panadero & Broadbent, 2018). This effect could be attributed to students' appreciation of taking active roles (e.g., they are the evaluators making judgments, producing feedback, grading their work, etc.) in their own learning. Second, the EJ framework used in this work suggests that a wide range of SRL-support activities can be implemented. The results indicated that the students attributed a great value to activities that engaged them in assessing the quality of exemplars against the rubric and then discussing their evaluations with their peers and the teacher. They highly valued activities that engaged them in the elaboration of assessment standards and criteria of success and involved them in the active evaluation of their work and that of others. This might be attributed to the fact that the learners were not used to working with rubrics (Brookhart & Chen, 2015). Third, and most importantly, it can be inferred from the results that instructional designs integrating SRL, EJ and IC can offer promising opportunities for learners to develop sustainable skills that allow them to take control of their own learning and adapt in ever-changing environments (Carless et al., 2018; Gyamfi et al., 2022). In fact, the present study is exploratory, and further research is needed to continue to shed light on the ways the three frameworks can inform and support each other through more elaborate empirical studies. To the authors' knowledge, so far there has been little research in that direction. Further studies are needed to develop more robust instructional and assessment designs describing the SRL-supported means and processes to develop students' EJ of IC.

The results presented in this study might open new promising opportunities for future research on the synergy and complementarity between SRL and EJ and the advantages they might bring to the development of important skills sets, such as IC, in a variety of contexts, including in-class and online learning environments. The interactions between SRL and EJ present a fertile ground for future research, particularly when integrated with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and advanced learning technologies. This approach may have the potential to revolutionize educational practice by promoting autonomous, reflective, and culturally aware learners. Accordingly, AI-driven tools can personalize learning experiences, providing real-time feedback and enhance SRL strategies. AI-driven feedback systems can enhance EJ enabling learners to critically assess their own work and that of the others and can facilitate the development of IC by simulating diverse cultural scenarios and preparing students for a globalized world, promoting empathy, diversity, and effective communication across cultures. Additionally, future empirical studies should consider the different SRL models available in the literature, their potential application in different learning environments, and their effects on the development of targeted competences, including IC. Further research should also focus on the connections between SRL, EJ, and IC models on the one hand and pedagogical practice and learner uptake and retention on the other, exploring evidence for deep learning, and the processes of visible learning. Likewise, future studies are needed to explore the individual and joint effects of SRL strategies on students' development of creative and critical thinking and

the divergent and convergent thinking tools involved in the process. Last but not least, future research is warranted to capture teachers' understandings of SRL, EJ and key target competencies such as IC and discuss the implications for future teacher training and teacher development.

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