UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR

FACULTAD MULTIDISCIPLINARIA DE OCCIDENTE

FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

UNDERGRADUATE WORK

A PROPOSAL TO TEACH AMERICAN CULTURE AND IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS TO INTENSIVE INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH II STUDENTS THROUGH THE COLLABORATIVE LEARNING APPROACH AT THE WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR DURING YEAR 2018

SUBMITTED TO ATTAIN THE DEGREE OF

LICENCIADO EN IDIOMA INGLÉS, OPCIÓN ENSEÑANZA

PRESENTED BY

RAÚL EDUARDO ESCOBAR ESCOBAR

PEDRO ARMANDO GUADRÓN PEÑATE

EDER ENRIQUE MARTÍNEZ ALEMÁN

ROBERTO JOAO SALAZAR FIGUEROA

THESIS ADVISOR

LICENCIADA ANA YANIRA ESCALANTE DE ESCOBAR

APRIL, 2019

SANTA ANA, EL SALVADOR, CENTROAMÉRICA

UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR

AUTHORITIES

M.Sc. ROGER ARMANDO ARIAS ALVARADO

RECTOR

DR. MANUEL DE JESÚS JOYA ÁBREGO

ACADEMIC VICERRECTOR

ING. NELSON BERNABÉ GRANADOS ALVARADO

ADMINISTRATIVE VICERRECTOR

LICDO. CRISTOBAL HERNÁN RÍOS BENÍTEZ

SECRETARY GENERAL

M.Sc. CLAUDIA MARÍA MELGAR DE ZAMBRANA
UNIVERSITY RIGHT DEFENDER

LICDO. RAFAEL HUMBERTO PEÑA MARIN

UNIVERSITY ATTORNEY

FACULTAD MULTIDISCIPLINARIA DE OCCIDENTE

AUTHORITIES

DR. RAÚL ERNESTO AZCÚNAGA LÓPEZ

DEAN

M.Ed. ROBERTO CARLOS SIGÜENZA CAMPOS

VICEDEAN

M.Sc. DAVID ALFONSO MATA ALDANA

SECRETARY

M.A. EDGAR AMÍLCAR PÉREZ MENDOZA

HEAD OF FOREIGN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

My special dedication and gratitude to:

My mother **María Teresa Escobar Cañas** who has always supported me since the day I was born. She has been my motivation to continue studying as she is the only one that still believes in me,

My uncle **José Atilio Escobar** who always took care of me and gave me wise words since I was a kid,

My grandmother **Rosa Escobar Monge** who raised me and taught me about life and all that comes with it; my favorite person in this world until the day she left it,

and my best friend **Luis Gerardo Andoni Climaco García** who was my confident for almost fifteen years until the day he decided to leave this world.

Raúl Eduardo Escobar Escobar

My special dedication and gratitude to:

God, for to my perception of life, He is the one who allows things to happen. There is no doubt He guided us as a team through all this journey during our career and most importantly through our thesis project.

I also thank Him for giving me life, health, and the most precious things I have: **my family and friends**, specially to my parents that always supported me no matter what through all these years.

To my mother **Vilma E. de Guadrón** and to my father **Pedro Manuel Guadrón.**

Finally, to my **brother and sister** because they have always been my inspiration in life; they have always encouraged me to be better than yesterday.

Pedro Armando Guadrón Peñate

My special dedication and gratitude to:

My mother, **Sonia Alemán** who has stood by my side since day one in my life, the one in charge of planting the seeds of values to shape my character and morality; she has always run through rain and illness to support me in the hardest moments always believing in my abilities, a loving and caring figure, simply the most important person in my life.

My father, **Rafael Martínez** for providing all he could give to make sure I had the opportunity to complete my studies.

My aunts **Gladis and Carolina Alemán** for the huge support in all areas along my whole life and during the major. Two professionals who have always encouraged me to follow their steps into life of permanent learning and growing both academically and morally. My grandparents, **Graciela Ascencio and Manuel Alemán** who passed away during this process but remain forever in the realm of my memory, whose actions of integrity and honesty are carved on my wonderwall.

To all teachers who provided all the knowledge I could grasp to develop my professional skills which have helped me not only along the major but also in the outside wild world.

At last, I want to dedicate this huge accomplishment to myself for never giving up on fulfilling my dreams.

*Eder Enrique Martínez
Alemán*

My special dedication and gratitude to:

My parents, first, my mother Rosa Figueroa Girón, for being the most important person in my life, for being someone who is always there for me even in the hardest of times; **Second, to my father Roberto Arturo Salazar Duran,** who passed away some years ago but supported me in every way he could. Thanks for all the support and for helping me to reach one of my dreams. Thanks for giving me the courage to face difficulties in my studies and thanks for all the love.

My cousin, Sandra Eduviges Toledo López, for her constant support, encouragement, advice, and all her help in every aspect of my life since I met her.

My step-father, Hector Abel Contreras Bolaños, for all the support he has given me and my mother, thanks a lot.

My best friend, Marvin Elenilson Árevalo Espino, for his friendship during all the years we studied the career. I want to thank him for all the moments when he helped me with advice on different aspects of my life and career. He is a friend I can count on, thank a lot.

My friends whom I met during the major and my life, Yoshi (my dog), Andrea Cortez, Reina Aldana, Erika Salazar, Carlos Monrroy, Miguel Avila, Karla Lopez, Nanci Salas, Claudia Torres, Humberto Vasquez, Olga Herrera, Laura Enamorado, Katya Najera, Erika Lobos, Kenia Cavazos, Fernanda Salazar, Pedro Tenias Castillo (R.I.P.), Andrea Suazo, Saii Garcia, Kim Jihye, for their friendship. Thanks to all of them because they were key parts of my life during the major and my life in general.

Licenciada Ana Yanira Escalante, for all the help and support she gave us, it was not an easy journey for her and us. She was an important part for this work.

Finally, yet important, my friends and thesis work partners, Eder Alemán (Eddie), Eduardo Escobar (Chino), Pedro Guadrón (Peter). Thanks for all the good moments and the laughs we had together during all this time of the major and the time spent during the thesis. It was not an easy journey for us because we had so many difficulties to finish this work, but here we are at the end, thank you guys, we are such a team to remember.

Roberto Joao Salazar Figueroa

also on the most important aspects of our lives as he always takes care for knowing more of everyone individually(personally). We indeed thank him for creating that sparkle that set the fire in our hearts and minds for the endless search of proficiency. He definitely brought idioms into our lives and tried to give us the tools and means to be better every single day.

Finally, we thank to all the other teachers of the English Language department who were part of our education and grow along the major.

INDEX

ABSTRACT

The project "A PROPOSAL TO TEACH AMERICAN CULTURE AND IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS TO INTENSIVE INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH II STUDENTS THROUGH THE COLLABORATIVE LEARNING APPROACH AT THE WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR DURING YEAR 2018" aims to prepare the basis to teach American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions with the incorporation of these two elements as contents to be studied in the Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus and lesson plans through the Collaborative Learning Approach to Intensive Intermediate English II students. English is recognized as the most important foreign language worldwide; consequently, the learning of this language has become a necessity due to the era of globalization. In addition, students aspire to different kind of jobs in which international relationships might be involved. That is why, learning the American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions can provide more probabilities of getting other jobs besides teaching. For the revision and redesigning of the Intensive Intermediate English II Lesson Plans, researchers took into account the Collaborative Learning Approach because it has been shown that students feel much more comfortable working in groups or pairs at the moment of expressing their thoughts, ideas and statements rather than expressing them directly to the teacher. During this study, researchers elaborated a set of questionnaires addressed to the Intensive Intermediate English II teachers and students in order to get reliable and precise information. Also, an evaluation checklist was provided to the English Competences Coordinator to assess the modified lesson plans.

INTRODUCTION

This research "A PROPOSAL TO TEACH AMERICAN CULTURE AND IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS TO INTENSIVE INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH II STUDENTS THROUGH THE COLLABORATIVE LEARNING APPROACH AT THE WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR DURING YEAR 2018" was carried out

from August 2017 to December 2018. It focused on incorporating American culture and Idiomatic Expressions in the Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus and the designing of lesson plans to teach those elements to Intensive Intermediate English II students. The main purpose of this research project was to adapt aspects of the American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions as contents in the Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus through the Collaborative Learning Approach at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador.

Therefore, this research project contains six chapters:

Chapter I, "Statement of the Problem", presents a description of the phenomenon and the justification to carry out this research work. Besides, it includes the scope and limitations of the study; as well, the general research objective and four specific objectives; these led this investigation to create the incorporation of two elements, American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions in the Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus as contents to be studied and the respective lesson plans.

Chapter II, "State of Art", presents reliable information about American Culture

and Idiomatic Expressions and the ways of teaching these elements. Moreover, this chapter presents information about the Collaborative Learning Approach and the different activities. Also, this chapter presents information about requirements to create an effective syllabus, and the different types of lesson plans. Then, Chapter III, "Operationalization of Variables", indicates how the variables were operationalized and how this operationalization enabled the researchers to build up accurate tools to obtain a reliable and precise analysis of the whole investigation.

Chapter IV is the Methodological Design. First, it describes the paradigm and type of study the researchers used to carry out this project and the preliminary phase. Then, it presents how the variables were operationalized, the data collection instruments the researchers used to collect reliable data and the description of the validity and reliability. Moreover, it presents how data were processed to show the results of the study. Also, researchers describe the validity, reliability, and the importance of ethical aspects to make the investigation trustworthy. Finally, it shows the timetable of the research project and the budget. Besides, Chapter V presents the analysis and interpretation of the data instruments. Finally, Chapter VI displays the conclusions gotten by the researchers and some recommendations for the institution, teachers, and for future researchers.

CHAPTER I : STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Along the major Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés: Opción Enseñanza at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador, Intensive Intermediate English students have to course some subjects in which it is required to have knowledge about the American culture in order to understand and utilize various language expressions, specifically, idiomatic expressions. Nevertheless, freshmen taking Intensive Intermediate English II show a limited understanding and negotiation of idiomatic expressions of the American culture.

Intensive Intermediate English II students are exposed to individual and group activities in order to improve their English language; nevertheless, the phenomenon arises because Intensive Intermediate English II students are not exposed to enough collaborative learning activities in which they can learn about both the aspects of American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions. They are basically restricted to be receivers of the language content instead of being the actors of their own learning and development of the English language.

1.1. Description of the problem

According to the Common European Framework description, Intensive Intermediate English II students should be placed at B1 level that should allow them to "understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc." Also, they should be able to "deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken (Press, 2001, p. 24). Nonetheless, it has been observed that students of Intensive

Intermediate English deal with real and difficult situations when trying to communicate in English during their time studying that level on a daily basis; Intensive Intermediate English students are taught classes in which American culture and its idiomatic expressions are overlooked as part of the content of the lesson. That happens because the Intensive Intermediate English lesson plans does not have American Culture and idiomatic expressions as a content to be developed in class. Students deal with difficulties stating their own arguments as they keep on with the expressions learned in classes which are purely academic, proper for a teacher; the curriculum is intended to provide students with tools to perform in an academic environment; indeed, students have a clear disadvantage when expressing their thoughts on daily life events as a consequence of the limitations they have when missing idiomatic expressions from the American culture.

Based on the previous information, important questions arise:

How can the modification of the Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus and lesson plans through the Collaborative Learning Approach promote the effective learning of the American Culture and idiomatic expressions to Intensive Intermediate English students at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018?

How can this proposal study contribute to the awareness of Intensive Intermediate English II teachers need of incorporating Collaborative Learning activities in classes to teach American Culture and Idiomatic expressions at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018?

1.2.   Justification

The study is worth carrying as researchers observed that students of Intensive Intermediate English at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador showed low knowledge about American culture and English language expressions, specifically, idiomatic expressions.

Through the information gathered from the observation checklist (Appendix A) and the diagnostic test (Appendix B), the researchers realized that Intensive Intermediate English II students showed difficulties when expressing their opinions about some specific topics related to American culture and idiomatic expressions listed in the criteria based on the Common European Framework characteristics attributed to an intermediate level (B1). As it was observed through the application of diagnostic test (Appendix B), researchers noticed that students were not familiarized with what thanksgiving refers to. As an example, students made use of short sentences with no gap fillers finding themselves in trouble when giving complex answers. Consequently, they did not feel confident when adding comments to the discussion.

In between their lessons, students are given spotted idioms from American culture just as extra information having no chance to practice since it is not part of the Intensive Intermediate English curriculum. Students would learn some of the expressions and new words, but this way of learning comes in terms of isolation disallowing the students to internalize and apply this knowledge into everyday use.

Since English is recognized as the most important foreign language worldwide, its learning has become a necessity due to the era of globalization. In addition, not all the students of the Licenciatura en Idioma Ingles: Opción Enseñanza are aiming at pursuing a teaching experience. They aspire to different kind of jobs in which international relationships might be involved.

Consequently, researchers propose the incorporation of the Collaborative Learning Approach in the Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus to promote the effective learning process of the students with the exposure to elements from the American culture in order to better both their knowledge about the American culture and its idiomatic expressions. The addition would not only bring better performance but better outcomes for the Intensive Intermediate English II students.

This research proposes a very handy craft for students to cope with the difficulties mentioned above. Eventually, this proposal will supply teachers with an innovative approach to teach their pupils both fixed and informal language getting in touch with the American culture and its idiomatic expressions. This will bring up a broader comprehension of American culture to the students, and in this way, it will foster their production of the language in a more accurate way. The Intensive Intermediate English curriculum contents will be used to elaborate the lesson plans integrating team work activities through the Collaborative Learning Approach.

The proposal will be focused on Intensive Intermediate English course at the University of El Salvador. Based on this need of having a better comprehension of the American culture, the researcher's proposal can help students get an easier transition

of the internalization of the language as one of the greatest and most powerful means of expression of society.

1.3.   Scope of the Work

This research study started in August 2017 and ended in December 2018. It was intended to modify the Intensive Intermediate English curriculum to incorporate American culture and its idiomatic expressions through the Collaborative Learning Approach at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador. The purpose of the research team was to provide a modified curriculum and lesson plans to be used to teach American culture and its idiomatic expressions to intermediate students.

The Intensive Intermediate English II lesson plans were modified in order to elaborate the Collaborative Learning Approach activities to be presented and meant to teach American culture and its idiomatic expressions. This was planned to be a way to keep the format being used adding the two extra elements mentioned above.

The target population for the research at its first stage consisted of a small sample,15 students out of 4 different groups of Intensive Intermediate English II course. After researchers had obtained the results from their sample, a series of instruments were created to extend the scope of the work to other groups in the same level. This proposal was aimed to approximately 200 students of the Intensive Intermediate English II of the Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza at the University of El Salvador.

1.4. Limitations

The limitations for this research project may vary as any other research project. One of the limitations for the research team was the absence of the proper studies and theories about the collaborative learning approach on Latin American countries/Spanish speaking applied to the English language learning due to the fact that, at the point on which this project was carried out, such information could only be taken and interpreted from experimental projects performed in countries as China or Russia focused on whether teaching math or working on handicap learning development using such an approach.

Since the researchers needed reliable information for the literature review, terminology used by experts in the Collaborative Learning Approach was a difficulty at the beginning of the research project. Besides, once the research team had collected the information and began analyzing the data, the English language department announced that they would stop using pioneer pre-intermediate book which students had been using during researchers' observation and data collection procedures, and the new book would be available until next year once the study would be finished already. In addition, the time frame to culminate the study extended to twice the time agreed at first stages of the investigation process.

1.5. Objectives

1.5.1. General Objective

✓ To propose the incorporation of American Cultural references and Idiomatic

Expressions in the current Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus through activities based on the Collaborative Learning Approach at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

1.5.2. Specific Objectives

✓ To study the effectiveness of Collaborative Learning Activities in the current Intensive Intermediate English classes at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

✓ To analyze the need of incorporating American Culture and its idiomatic expressions in the contents of the Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

✓ To propose Collaborative Learning Activities to include American Culture and its idiomatic expressions at the Intensive Intermediate English II lesson plans at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

✓ To contribute to the awareness of Intensive Intermediate English II teachers' need of incorporating Collaborative Learning Activities in classes to teach American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

CHAPTER II : STATE OF ART

The value of the idiomatic expressions in the English language is evident nowadays. As a result of globalization, English has become a worldwide language; therefore, it is essential for people around the world to have knowledge of the English language. In this way, several idiomatic expressions that provide students a broader idea about American culture can be found in the English learning process since we all know that language and culture could not exist along the way without the other. According to Leveridge (2008), "Language is used to maintain and convey culture and cultural ties." Obviously, EFL/ESL students are not the exception to these cultural ties' acquaintance, and somehow, they are critically impacted by it. Indeed, due to the exposure to English during the learning process, EFL/ESL studentsfind themselves in trouble when recognizing and making use of idiomatic expressions because they have poor knowledge of the American culture, which is the case of Intensive Intermediate English II students.

At some point, foreign language learners are now considered to be learners of a foreign culture in matter. In fact, EFL students, by the daily use of media, are exposed to expressions and idioms that are proper from the American Culture. Thanasoulas (2001) states that:

The knowledge of the conventions, customs, beliefs, and systems of meaning of another country, is indisputably an integral part of foreign language learning, and many teachers have seen it as their goal to incorporate the teaching of culture into the foreign language curriculum.

Henceforth, the research team suggested an approach implementing these elements by the hand of the Intensive Intermediate II lesson plans; as a result, this approach may reinforce the knowledge of American culture and its idiomatic expressions and propel students' performance of the language in various ways.

2.1 Historical Background of American Culture Teaching

In the past years, there have been a lot of research and studies in regard to culture as a part of language itself. Indeed, it could go back a long time ago, though it was just until 1980s and 1990s that certain techniques for teaching and analyzing cultural behaviors had taken place all together with instruction on second language skills. Consequently, the research team started the analysis of contents and how these ones contributed to Intensive Intermediate English II students understanding and application of idiomatic expressions and vocabulary as EFL/ESL students and novice teachers.

Byram (1989) remarks an intriguing concept for culture as a "hidden curriculum of foreign language (FL) teaching" since inevitably knowledge and perceptions of the world will be addressed while teaching and throughout the development of the lesson plans cultural learning will be arising. Undoubtedly, learning and managing the American culture have EFL students getting better and a lot more fluent and accurate as communicators of the English language in everyday situations that require them to use their knowledge of the language according to the context in which the students are trying to fit. This addresses the need Intensive Intermediate English II students have to develop not only grammar structures appropriate for their level but also their vocabulary

array to fit in different contexts and settings.

2.2. American Culture

In language, learning culture is significantly important, and it is an item that cannot be disregarded because culture acts as the flesh and language as the skeleton of a society. We know that language and culture are strictly intertwined and if there is no culture, there is no language. Therefore, a language class cannot be imagined without involving the cultural elements of the targeted language (*ACSIT* Press, 2012).

It has to be noted that the US is considered a multicultural country where diverse cultures interact with one another and bring something new to the local culture. Just as the nations across the world have greatly influenced the American culture, nowadays, the US nation influences the cultures of other countries all over the globe. Some immigrants who go to the USA keep some of their traditions and language, but they integrate into the American lifestyle in a number of ways. At the same time, lots of immigrants bring something new to the American culture so that it continues to change and evolve.

2.2.1. The Need of American Culture in an EFL/ESL Classroom

There are many aspects that support teaching American Culture in the classroom (Lubin, n.d.). The most common are:

2.2.1.1 Engaging Students

Teaching culture can improve the language learning experience by engaging

students. It can show them the similarities and differences between their own culture and that of the English-speaking world. As a result of this engagement, Intensive Intermediate English II students might be instigated to know better both their own culture and American Culture. Therefore, Intensive Intermediate English II students will be benefited with this proposal because they will become multicultural learners.

2.2.1.2 Preparing Students for Studying Abroad

For EFL/ESL teachers, culture lessons could help prepare students for studying abroad in English-speaking countries. Many of EFL/ESL students have preconceived notions of the American life, and they are surprised to discover that reality does not always match those notions that are reinforced by local news and education. In the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus, Intensive Intermediate English II students do not have a complete understanding of American Culture. Henceforth, teachers of the foreign language department should prepare their classes based on updated and reliable information from American Culture so that students do not get diverted by the media and find themselves affected when they are in an English-speaking country or a conversation with native English speakers.

2.2.1.3 Exposing Students to New Ideas and Vocabulary

These lessons can aid the students in understanding American culture in general. When students learn history and traditions of another country, they are actively learning new vocabulary as well as a subject. This will provide them with a wider variety of ideas to discuss in and out of class. Therefore, this research proposal aims at idiomatic expressions in order to provide Intensive Intermediate English II students

vocabulary and expressions related to the American Culture. As means of an end, students will enrich their ability to express themselves on different contexts and cultural frames that they will face during their lives.

2.2.2. American Cultural References

In the American culture, idioms and expressions are presented as essential parts of the English language. For EFL/ESL students, it is more difficult to learn these idiomatic expressions because the meaning of those words or phrases can be unpredictable. For many EFL/ESL students, idioms and expressions are an obstacle in their English learning process. This is because the meaning of the words in an idiom or expression does not match with the meaning of the idiom itself, which is why, Intensive Intermediate English II students do not get the meaning as it is intended on different contexts in conversation.

2.3. Idiomatic Expressions

Idioms are commonly known as phrases used within a given culture and are regularly understood to have a meaning different from its literal meaning (Rodriguez & Winnberg, 2013). They are words that reflect the world view of a nation that speaks a language, its lifestyle, environmental conditions, customs and beliefs. (Aksan, Göçmen, Göçmen, & Ünsal, 2012). They are said to be part of the category of nonliteral or figurative language that also includes metaphors, similes, and proverbs (Rodriguez & Winnberg, 2013). All of the former mentioned are an important part of everyday English; however, Americans use idioms the most in both written and spoken English.

Expressions using idioms can be a real challenge for English as foreign language (EFL) students. Non-native speakers usually find themselves at a loss to understand the full meaning of English language conversations. It is evident that they always have a hard time in a variety of settings such as business meetings, workplace discussions, and casual conversations among native English speakers. In this matter, to be able to get the meaning of these phrases, it is vital to capture the substance of a conversation. Besides, it is also said that someone`s confidence in their overall communicative proficiency while speaking English increases by the managing and understanding of such idiomatic expressions.

Burke (as cited in Rodriguez & Winnberg, 2013) explains that non-native speakers might always be considered as outsiders if they do not get to a point in which they understand idioms. He even said that there is "absolutely no way a nonnative speaker of English could fully understand an American movie, tv show, news broadcast, or even a typical conversation without help because the language is loaded with nonstandard English, i.e., slang and idioms". In regards to this, Cooper (as cited in Rodriguez & Winnberg, 2013) also thinks that "sooner or later, imprecise idiomatic usage will cause difficulties even for a student with an excellent knowledge of grammar and high level of vocabulary attainment"; he believes idiomatic expressions require special attention in language programs and "should not be relegated to a position of secondary importance in the curriculum".

In certain way, Burke (as cited in Rodriguez & Winnberg, 2013) supports Cooper on such thoughts as including idiomatic expressions as part of the curriculum, but just because for him, it is much better for students to hear of them and this type of language

inside the classroom for the first time rather than getting it from outside of an educational environment. English as second or foreign language (EFL/ESL) students might misinterpret the correct usage of an idiom and finish on a difficult or awkward situation by using it in the wrong context.

2.3.1. Teaching Idiomatic Expressions

Burke (n.d.) as cited by Rodriguez & Winnberg (2013) mentions that teaching students about and explaining nonliteral language thoroughly in school is preferable to students hearing this type of language outside the classroom. Outside of an educational environment the risk of the student misunderstanding an idiom, for example, is higher. The student might end up in a situation where he or she uses the idiom in the wrong context and gets into trouble or an awkward situation because of it.

Since idioms are so common in everyday language use, and since they seem difficult for foreign language students to learn, as educators, teachers have the responsibility to familiarize the nonnative speaker with this type of language by including activities in the syllabus and lesson plans which idiomatic expressions can be applied perfectly; consequently, Intensive Intermediate English II students can be exposed to the learning and production of idiomatic expressions in context.

2.4. Collaborative Learning Approach

It is well known that the human being is a creature who needs to socialize all the time; interaction is a part of one's everyday life. Anywhere a person goes, he or she would find more people; thus, this creates the necessity to interact and to find solutions

to any problem that may arise.

Johnson states that cooperative learning represents the most carefully structured end of the collaborative learning continuum. Defined as "the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" as cited by Smith (1992).

Collaborative learning represents a significant shift away from the typical teacher centered or lecture-centered milieu in college classrooms. In collaborative classrooms, the lecturing/ listening/note-taking process may not disappear entirely, but it exists alongside other processes that are based on students' discussion and active work with the course material. Teachers who use collaborative learning approaches tend to think of themselves less as expert transmitters of knowledge to students, and more as expert designers of intellectual experiences for students-as coaches or mid-wives of a more emergent learning process. (Smith, 1992)

2.4.1. Background of the Collaborative Approach

The background of the collaborative approach is related to the ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) theory developed by Lev Vygotsky. The ZPD gives guidance as to what set of skills a learner has that are in the process of maturation. In Vygotsky's definition of zone of proximal development, he highlighted the importance of learning through communication and interactions with others rather than just through independent work. This has made way for the ideas of group learning, one of which being collaborative learning. Collaborative learning is very important in achieving critical thinking. According to Gokhale (1995), individuals are able to achieve higher levels of

learning and retain more information when they work in a group rather than individually; this applies to both the facilitators of knowledge, the instructors, and the receivers of knowledge, the students. For example, indigenous communities of the Americas illustrate that collaborative learning occurs because individual participation in learning occurs on a horizontal plane where children and adults are equal Gokhale (1995).

2.4.2. Definition of the Collaborative Learning Approach

In the words of Friend, Mastropieri, McDuffie, Scruggs and Murray, collaborative learning initially emerged as a tool to provide support for increasing the inclusion of students with disabilities in the United States in the 1970s. Also, collaborative learning emerged to promote students' learning referred to a general education teacher being paired with a special education teacher in an inclusive classroom and working as partners to teach a diverse group of students. Perry and Stewart also describe collaborative teaching as a part of a continuum of collaboration that varies depending on the levels of coordination and shared responsibility (as cited in Taşdemir & Yıldırım, 2017).

Collaborative learning, is defined by Friend and Cook as a style of interaction between, at least two parties, voluntarily engaged in shared decision- making as they work toward a common goal. Welch adds that "teachers share responsibility for the development, implementation, and evaluation of classroom instruction designed to meet students' needs." (as cited in Taşdemir & Yıldırım, 2017).

2.4.3. Collaborative Approach for EFL/ESL Students

Collaborative learning is a teaching approach which enhances maturity, experience and social communication in an academic environment while discouraging passivity, repetition and individuality. In collaborative learning, students can develop their own learning strategies and select their own objectives. At the same time, they are responsible for what they learn and how they gain knowledge of a topic.

Collaborative learning has long been of interest to practitioners of communicative language teaching since it offers widely tested classroom procedures such as those described, for example, by McCafferty, Jacobs and Dasilva Iddings (as cited in Carrió & Perry, 2010). In other words, collaborative learning is an approach that undeniably helps students develop their language abilities according to their needs; thus, collaborative learning reinforces their knowledge in problem solving activities that require students to reach decisions that are only achievable by working in groups.

The interdependency and mutual respect between the components of the collaborative activity is essential to obtain a coherent proposal. Students and teachers should become a coherent group that dialogues and negotiates in a dynamic class (González Fernández, 2006: 3). Nunan (1991: 1) suggests a number of reasons for collaborating: In language education, teachers, learners, researchers and curriculum specialists can collaborate for a number of reasons. They may wish to experiment with alternative ways of organizing teaching and learning; they may be concerned with promoting a philosophy of cooperation rather than competition; they may wish to create an environment in which learners, teachers and researchers are

teaching and learning from each other in an equitable way; or they may wish to experiment with ways of incorporating principles of learner-centeredness into their programs.

Thus, there are different motivations for incorporating collaborative approaches and different ways in which such approaches can be implemented in language learning as cited in Carrió & Perry (2010). This research team particularly, expects that by using Collaborative Learning Approach, Intensive Intermediate English II students, teachers, and researchers themselves can omit competition inside the Intermediate English classroom and instead promote an environment in which collaboration is the base of learner-centeredness. In this way, Intensive Intermediate English II students can create a sense of independency as active participators of the decoding of the English Language, specifically idiomatic expressions of the American Culture.

2.5. Syllabus

A syllabus is a guidance that teachers use to establish the contents in a specific order to be taught to the students. According to Karavas (2014), a syllabus can be described as a statement of what is to be learnt. Syllabus refers to the content or subject matter of an individual subject. Karavas (2014) also refers to a syllabus as a detailed and operational document which specifies the content of a particular subject. It is a type of plan which translates the abstract goals of the curriculum into concrete learning objectives.

Kavaras (2014) establishes that a syllabus should include:

A narrow view of syllabus design: a syllabus is only concerned with the specification of learning objectives and the selection and grading of content.

The broader view argues that a syllabus is not only concerned with the selection and grading of content but also with the selection of learning tasks and activities. In other words, syllabus design is also concerned with methodology.

2.5.1. Syllabus Requirements

Kavaras (2014) declares that some requirements must be followed in order to design a syllabus:

1. The course plan should provide an accessible framework of the knowledge and skills on which teachers and learners will work.

2. It should offer a sense of continuity and direction in the teacher's and learners' work.

3. It should represent a retrospective account of what has been achieved.

4. It should provide a basis on which learner progress may be evaluated.

5. It should be sufficiently precise so that it may be assessed through implementation as being more or less appropriate for its purposes and users.

6. It is a document of administrative convenience and will only be partly justified on theoretical grounds, and so is negotiable and adjustable.

7. It must harmonize the three contexts within which it is located: The wider

language curriculum, the language classroom and the participants within it, and the educational and social reality that the course-plan is supposed to serve. The Intensive intermediate English II lesson plans perfectly qualified in all these requirements mentioned above.

2.6. Lesson Plan

A lesson plan is the base structure a teacher must have to teach a class because that is what dictates the order. A lesson plan is a teacher's detailed description of the course of instruction or "learning trajectory" for a lesson. A daily lesson plan is developed by a teacher to guide class learning. Details will vary depending on the preference of the teacher, subject being covered, and the needs of the students. There may be requirements mandated by the school system regarding the plan. A lesson plan is the teacher's guide for running a particular lesson, and it includes the goal (what the students are supposed to learn), how the goal will be reached (the method, procedure) and a way of measuring how well the goal was reached (test, worksheet, homework etc.) (Lesson, n.d.).

2.6.1. Lesson Plan Types

A lesson plan consists on a sequence of elements aimed to a final result; nonetheless, According to Zeiger, Stacy. (n.d.) its design varies amongst the following:

2.6.1.1. Five-Step Lesson Plan

A five-step lesson plan is a form of daily lesson planning that includes the following components: anticipatory set, instruction, guided practice, closure or

assessment and independent practice.

In the anticipatory set, a teacher should note the objective of the lesson, explain how it connects to past learning and describe the purpose for what is being learned. These items should be written in a student-friendly form so the teacher can easily convey them to the students during the lesson.

For the instruction section, a teacher must list how she will use direct teaching through modes such as lecturing, providing notes or showing a video, and modeling by demonstrating how to complete a process or activity. This section should also include questions or brief activities the teacher will use to check to see if students are understanding the material.

The third step is guided practice, which asks the teacher to list any activity students will complete in the classroom with teacher or peer assistance. This is followed by the fourth step, closure or assessment, which requires an activity to help the teacher get a snapshot of what students learned that day. This section can include an exit slip, a short reflection or something more in-depth such as a quiz or a test.

Independent practice is the fifth section of this format. In many cases, independent practice can be completed in class; however, in the five-steps plan, independent practice is the place the teacher lists any homework assignments students will be expected to complete related to that day's lesson. (Zeiger, S n.d.).

2.6.1.2. Five-E Lesson Plan

The five-E lesson plan format asks teachers to list components that deal with

engaging, explaining, exploring, elaborating and evaluating.

This lesson plan begins with a question or brief activity that hooks or *engages* students at the beginning of the lesson. In the second phase, the teacher lectures or provides a video, reading passage or demonstration to *explain* the material and its key terms. After explaining the concept, a teacher must show what activity students will complete to help them *explore* the material. These activities can include stations, cooperative learning groups, games, worksheets or other instructional methods.

The fourth component, *elaborating* can be compared to independent practice. Activities should help students apply the concept to a variety of situations. This work can be completed in class or as a homework assignment.

Each five-E lesson plan ends with an *evaluation* component to determine whether students have learned the material. This can come in the form of a formal, graded assessment, or students can be informally assessed with a question and answer session, exit slip or short writing prompt. (Zeiger, S n.d.)

2.6.1.3. Weekly Lesson Plan

A weekly lesson plan is an ideal format for teachers who are covering a similar topic throughout the week. At the top of the lesson plan, teachers should list the standards, objectives and essential questions being covered that week. Under that section, each day of the week is listed with a short description of the activities for that day. At the end of the plan, a section should be included to list any assessments that will cover the week's instruction, such as a unit or chapter exam or special project. (Zeiger, S n.d.).

2.6.1.4. Unit Plan

For teachers who do not work well with elaborate plans, a unit plan is a simple way to guide instruction. At the top of the unit plan, teachers list all of the standards and objectives covered in the unit along with the projected time-frame for the unit. Below that is a list of all activities expected to be part of the unit, followed by a list of all assessments related to the unit. Each day, a teacher presents lessons to students with that unit in mind, but since there is no specific plan laid out, there is some flexibility in what is covered each day. (Zeiger, S, n.d.).

2.6.1.5. Inquiry-Based Lesson Plan

Inquiry-based lesson plans involve experimentation and hands-on activities that allow the teacher to be a facilitator of learning rather than an instructor. Lesson plans that are inquiry-based include very little lecture or notes. Teachers begin this type of lesson plan by listing the standards and objectives to be covered. After that should be a detailed description of any activities students are to complete during the day's lesson. Activities should not include worksheets or exams, but instead hands-on problem-solving experiences through cooperative learning groups or stations. After the activity, teachers should list a variety of inquiry-based questions to ask students to promote discussion of the concepts and material covered in the activity and help further facilitate student learning. (Zeiger, S n.d.).

2.6.2. Parts of Lesson Plan

Piñera (2013) states that there are five parts of detailed and semi-detailed lesson

plans:

- ***Objectives:*** the objective drives the whole lesson; it is the reason the lesson exists. Care is taken when creating the objective for each day's lesson as it will determine the activities the students engage in.

- ***Subject matter:*** subject matter or specific topic includes sources of information, e.g., textbooks and library references.

- ***Procedure:*** the procedure is the body of a lesson plan, the ways in which it shares the information with students and the methodology to use to help them assume a measure of mastery of that subject.

- ***Evaluation:*** it can take the form of formative test consisting of a 10-item multiple choice questions after the day's lesson to determine the level of understanding of the students.

- ***Assignment:*** it includes questions, exercises, and/or a set of practices designed by the teacher.

2.6.3. Examples of Collaborative Learning Lesson Plans

Even though it is well known that collaborative learning activities allow students to cooperate and to learn, it is difficult for teachers to know which the proper way of conducting such collaborative learning activities is. Therefore, in order to prove the effectiveness of the collaborative approach, the researchers found the following three examples: **the jigsaw strategy, group investigation, and double**

journal.

According to Hayden, K (2018) collaborative learning activities can help students to develop problem solving and group work skills. There are many types of collaborative activities that students can complete. These activities are the following:

2.6.3.1.   Jigsaw Activity

As Hayden, K (2018) states, one simple activity that can be done with a variety of content is the jigsaw activity. The content or reading assignment is a metaphor for a "puzzle" that students break into smaller pieces to learn.

➢ "Puzzles" or groups can be small, such as four to six students. Each student will be given a piece of the puzzle to learn or to investigate. For example, a long reading assignment can be broken into six smaller "chunks." Each student will take a chunk and become an expert on the content.

➢ When the pieces of the "puzzle" are put together or when the group comes back together, each student will share what he or she learned.

➢ After the group has its information organized and compiled, it can share its knowledge with the class.

Situations to use the jigsaw strategy:

➢ Covering a great deal of content in a textbook

➢ Researching a new concept or idea

- Learning new vocabulary from a list

2.6.3.2. Group Investigation

According to Hayden, K (2018) when a group investigates a new topic, it can be very fun, and the group will take ownership of the topic and the presentation. The teacher should select a broad topic, such as the Civil War.

- The group of three-to-five students should narrow the topic down to a topic that they could research. Then, the group will share the information in around a five-to- ten-minute presentation, depending on the age of the student.

- The group will need to assign each person a subtopic of the group topic to research.

- The group will come back together to share and organize the information.

- The group will present its information to the class.

2.6.3.3. Double Entry Journal

Finally, Hayden, K (2018) mentions that a double entry journal can be completed with a pair of students. Students can each make one on their own. Then, the pair can collaborate and compile their ideas into one double entry journal. Teachers can use this with novels, textbook reading assignments, news articles, research information, etc.

- Students need to create a large T on a piece of notebook paper.

➢ On one side the student needs to write down interesting or important information from the reading assignment.

➢ On the other side, the student needs to write what he or she thinks about the information.

➢ When the journal is complete, the student needs to share his or her journal with another student.

➢ The students need to compile one journal with information that the pair believes is important or intriguing.

Researchers considered the jigsaw activity; group investigation and double entry journal are just three ways in which students can collaborate and learn important content during classes such as the case of the American culture aspects and its idiomatic expressions. These activities have been used to introduce or assess collaborative tasks where students learned important American culture hints, idioms, vocabulary, and some sort of holidays they were not familiar with. Researchers present this along the adapted lesson plans found in *The Proposal Collaborative Learning Activities to include American Culture and its idiomatic expressions at Intensive Intermediate English II Lesson Plans (Appendix H).* For the economical saving measures taken by the researchers, this section is stored in a CD attached to this document.

CHAPTER III
3.1. OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE VARIABLES

General objective	Specific objectives	Units of observation	Variables	Definitions of variables	Indicators	Instruments	Time
To propose the incorporation of American Culture references and Idiomatic Expressions to the current Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus through the Collaborative Learning Approach at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018	To study the effectiveness of Collaborative Learning Activities in the current Intensive Intermediate English II classes at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus from the University of El Salvador during year 2018	Intensive Intermediate English II Teachers

Intensive Intermediate English II Students

Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus

English competences coordinator | **Independent Variable:**

Collaborative Learning Activities

Dependent Variable:

The effectiveness of Collaborative Learning activities | Activities which focus on learning through collaboration among students

The assertive outcome of the activities developed through collaboration | Collaborative Learning Approach Activities:

- Group activities

- Problem solving situations

- Discussions

- Peer-to-peer collaboration

- Jigsaw activities

- Double Entry Journal | Questionnaire for Intensive Intermediate English II teachers (Appendix C)

Questionnaire for Intensive Intermediate English II students (Appendix D) | 1 hour

1 hour |

	To analyze the need of incorporating American Culture and idiomatic expressions in the contents of the Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018		**Independent Variables:** American Culture	American Culture refers to the characteristics and knowledge of American people, encompassing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts.	Knowledge of American Culture Influence of American Culture in the Classroom AmericanCultural References taught in classes Use of Idiomatic Expressions in class	Questionnaire for Intensive Intermediate English II Students (Appendix E)	1 hour
			Idiomatic Expressions	Idiomatic expressions are the type of informal English that have a meaning different from the meaning of the words in the expressions.		Questionnaire for Intensive Intermediate English II Teachers (Appendix F)	1 hour

			Dependent Variables: Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus	The guide of the Intensive Intermediate English II course that includes rules regulations, required texts, and a schedule of assignments			
			Intensive Intermediate English II contents	The topics to be developed during the course			

		To propose Collaborative Learning Activities to include American Culture and idiomatic expressions in the Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018		**Independent Variable:** Collaborative Learning Approach activities **Dependent variable:** American Culture and idiomatic expressions in the Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus	Activities to be incorporated using collaboration among students in the class Enrichment in the contents of the Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus	Current Activities in the Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus Isolated learning Multicultural learning Student centered activities	Syllabus Evaluation Checklist for English Competences Coordinator (Appendix G) Lesson Plans and Checklist for English Competences Coordinator (Appendix H)	1 week 1 week

	To contribute to Intensive Intermediate English II teachers' awareness on the need of incorporating Collaborative Learning Activities in classes to teach American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018		**Independent Variable:** Incorporation of Collaborative Learning Activities in classes **Dependent Variable:** Intensive Intermediate English II teachers' awareness to the need of incorporating Collaborative Learning Activities to teach American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions	The addition of activities in which students learn through collaboration The perception teachers have about the additions of Collaborative Learning Activities to the current Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus	Teachers avoidance of Idiomatic Expressions Teachers promotion of the use of Idiomatic Expressions Inclusion of Multicultural Collaborative Learning Activities American Culture Learning Encouragement	Modified Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus Syllabus Evaluation Checklist for English Competences Coordinator (Appendix G) Lesson Plans and Evaluation Checklist for English Competences Coordinator (Appendix H)	1 week

CHAPTER IV : METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

Intending to reveal the answers for the questions: 1) How can the modification of the Intensive Intermediate English syllabus and lesson plans through the Collaborative Learning Approach promote the effective Intensive Intermediate English students learning of the American Culture and idiomatic expressions at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018? and 2) How can this proposal study contribute to the awareness of Intensive Intermediate English II teachers need of incorporating Collaborative Learning activities in classes to teach American Culture and Idiomatic expressions at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018?, the researchers conducted a qualitative study in order to collect the data used to propose possible solutions to the problem. During this research study, several steps were followed. These steps were carefully planned, organized and described as follows.

4.1. Paradigm and Design

To carry out the research project "A Proposal to Teach American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions to Intensive Intermediate English Students through Collaborative Learning Approach at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018", the researchers took into account the qualitative paradigm in order to collect data through participant observation, interview tests, and qualitative instruments to profile the participants on the variables of interest. Most of the data gathered was focused on characteristics, concepts, or opinions from the objects of study, teachers, and students of Intensive Intermediate English II.

4.2. Sampling Procedure

The whole population of Intensive Intermediate English II course consisted of approximately 200 students, 12 teachers and the English Competences Coordinator of the Foreign Language Department. The research team selected groups 1,2,4 and 5 as a sample to start with the project in order to get the necessary data to create a set of instruments for the data collection procedure during the execution phase. The participants were selected randomly. By randomly, the researchers asked for volunteers and saw participants´ willingness to participate in the process. Since not all IIE- II students were eager to help out, researchers respected students position as it is stated in our ethical principles below.

4.3. Preliminary Phase

The researchers, first, observed an intermediate I group. The observation was informal since researchers only took notes on teachers and students' behavior. This brought a phenomenon to discussion. Right after that, the researchers introduced a description on the approach to the study of interest in order to diagnose and define the current situation. This procedure took place on the chosen environment addressing a diagnostic test (appendix B) to the Intensive Intermediate English students at the University of El Salvador Western Multidisciplinary Campus during semester II,2017.

4.3.1. Approaching the Field of Study

To begin with the project during semester II 2017, researchers requested the authorization of teachers to observe classes, address questionnaires and check the current Intensive Intermediate English curriculum and lesson plans. Helped by an observation checklist (Appendix A), researchers observed that Intensive Intermediate English students got few references of American culture and idiomatic expressions during classes. As a result, students showed an absence of naturalness on the oral production of the English language as they tended to express themselves mechanically because they were restricted by the vocabulary given during classes as it was strictly academic.

4.3.2. Diagnostic Study

To identify and verify researchers' primary thoughts on the phenomenon during semester II 2017, researchers designed a diagnostic test (Appendix B) to assess the understanding of idiomatic expressions in the American Culture of Intensive Intermediate English students of the major Licenciatura en Idioma Ingles: Opción Enseñanza at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus. The test was a very short way of assessing students' comprehension and vocabulary input on a simple matter, Thanksgiving. Students watched a fragment of the TV series FRIENDS. After they watched the video, they were given the diagnostic test. It consisted on five questions related to thanksgiving, an important holiday in the American culture depicted by the characters in the short clip; in each question, students were asked to provide the definition of an idiomatic expression. After the research team

had been given the teacher's permission to work with 20 students from groups 1, 2 and 4, this diagnostic test was administered during a class. From the different answers given by students, a definition to thanksgiving arises as" A holiday with a religious background in which people give thanks for everything they have". Moreover, students were asked to provide the meaning of phrases such as "Getting over someone" or "take someone off". The results contributed to find out if Intensive Intermediate students had little and limited knowledge of the American Culture.

4.3.3. Definition of the Problem

Through the diagnostic test (Appendix B) addressed to students of Intensive Intermediate English in which they had to write down the meaning of some idioms, the research team discovered that, in fact, students did not have much knowledge about the American Culture. The results showed that students were not aware of the reason to celebrate thanksgiving; also, they did not know the meaning of the idioms as they failed to interpret them. It was clear that there was a void regarding American culture and its idiomatic expressions. As a result, in order to unveil the cause of this problem, the research team observed some Intensive Intermediate English classes helped by an observation checklist (Appendix A) to assure if students were taught American Culture and its idiomatic expressions. During the classes, it was observed that students were taught some idioms and vocabulary from American culture not only as a mere additional information but also as a part of the syllabus, with no chance of putting them into practice. Since it was not part of the curriculum, students did not even write the words down in their notebooks, meaning that the few expressions given were simply forgotten. Even if one of the students would learn one of the expressions, this isolated way of

learning did not provide the student with the tools to develop the capacity of using the expressions in a different context or when giving an opinion being restricted by the vocabulary taught in the lesson. Consequently, researchers searched for a solution to the problem which would allow Intensive Intermediate students to learn about American Culture and its idiomatic expressions in classes.

4.4. Planning Phase

Once the diagnosis was held, planning took place. Researchers started to work on the literature review by collecting information from reliable sources to set the foundations of the state of art; the research team started a deep investigation on key important terms such as American culture, idiomatic expressions, collaborative learning approach, syllabus and lesson planning. Then these ones set the means to write the variables to be operationalized and elaborate the most suitable instruments for data collection. Each of the instruments' content and purpose is described in detail at a later stage. Moreover, it was necessary to conduct the validation of all instruments according to the criteria of validity and reliability. Researchers presented also the ethical principles to go along with the process. The next section exposes broadly the procedures and actions performed during this phase.

4.4.1. Literature Review

To create the state of Art, the research team gathered information from different sources both digital and printed. The data observed and collected related to the object of study was carefully analyzed to extract the most relevant and reliable information related to the field of study, leaving behind information that would not enrich the state

of art. The major source of information was taken from digital books in PDF format, magazines, and books.

In the state of art, researchers focused on gathering information related to American culture; in addition, they sought data regarding to lesson planning and the Collaborate Learning Approach, setting the basis to start building up the project. The state of art contains information related to the American culture and its idiomatic expressions to have a wide perspective of the content that would be introduced. Researchers included information on teaching idiomatic expressions and its importance through the learning process for EFL students. Furthermore, researchers introduced the Collaborative approach which had been chosen to be the basis of the methodology to be applied to teach the American culture and its idiomatic expressions.

Also, the collaborative approach needs to be incorporated in the lesson plans of the Intensive intermediate English syllabus of the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus. Finally, researchers provided a collection of ideas from different authors to define and profile both syllabus and lesson plans. The researchers needed to get familiar with the parts and elements they will include in the lesson plans, core of this proposal.

4.4.2. Operationalization of the Variables

As the operationalization delimited the concepts and units to be studied, the research team broke down all the elements to be observed and analyzed. The general objective gave an overview of what was expected to be achieved at the last stages of the project. The general objective had to be divided into 4 specific objectives to have a

precise and concise mindset of what to explore, study and learn to build a solid state of art settling the researchers' tracks to be followed. The state of art provided the information to define the dependent and independent variables; as a result, researchers established the indicators to begin with the elaboration of data collection instruments.

4.4.3. Data Collection Instruments

Researchers requested permission to the authorities of English Language Department to approach teachers and students in order to gather enough data to begin with the project. The research team settled themselves inside the classrooms with the Intermediate English II students in pursuance of observing, analyzing, understanding and reflecting based on the studies and theories pointed out in the literature review.

Throughout the observation (Appendix A) and a diagnostic test (Appendix B), researchers established that the contents related to American culture aspects and its idiomatic expressions were not considered as an essential part of the lesson derived from the fact that these contents were not part of the syllabus. Therefore, researchers designed instruments in order to check if the problem did exist at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador.

4.4.3.1. Questionnaire for Teachers and Students

In order to collect data during the process of this research, researchers used a questionnaire, which was addressed to Intensive Intermediate English II teachers of the foreign languages department. This questionnaire consisted of 10 open questions aiming to know the effectiveness of Collaborative Learning Activities in the current

Intensive Intermediate English II classes (Appendix C). Moreover, a questionnaire with 10 questions of the same nature was aimed to the students to know their conception of collaborative learning activities (Appendix D). Also, researchers addressed Intensive Intermediate English II students a questionnaire containing 16 open questions in order to discover if they had knowledge of American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions and to know their opinions about the incorporation of American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions to the current Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus (Appendix E). Furthermore, another questionnaire was addressed to Intensive Intermediate teachers to analyze the need of incorporating American Culture and idiomatic expressions in the contents of the Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus (Appendix F).

4.4.3.2. Diagnostic Checklist

In addition, researchers had elaborated a diagnostic checklist, addressed to the English Competences Coordinator of the foreign language department, with 10 items designed to assess and diagnose the modified Intensive Intermediate English lesson plans (Appendix G). The criteria were intended to evaluate the changes made to the lesson plans through 10 different aspects in correlation with the collaborative learning approach activities and those of American culture and its idiomatic expressions. The expert had to rate the lesson plans overall by excellent, very good, good, regular, needs improvement. According to the results, the research team worked along with the given feedback to settle the proposal.

4.4.4. Validation of the Data Collection Instruments

All the research tools used for this study were validated by English teachers of

the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador. In order to validate the tools, the researchers provided a validation sheet with five segments containing different items that were graded in the following way: 1. Needs Improvement, 2. Good, 3. Very good, and 4. Excellent, leaving space for observations at the end of the validation sheet. The experts' assessment of the tools provided feedback to be considered by the research team.

4.4.5. Validity and Reliability

To corroborate the validity of the tools, researchers used "construct validity" which checks the inferences made on the basis of observations or measurements. Also, researchers used triangulation to interpret the data gathered.

The reliability presented in the tools checked by the experts is the Inter-Rater reliability which consists on establishing clear guidelines and thorough experience giving observers clear and concise instructions about how to rate or estimate behavior.

4.4.6. Ethical Aspects

The researchers followed ethical principles which were of great importance during the whole research project. Therefore, the research team was willing to respect them along. The target population was a key for the study, and the researchers were committed to respect the confidentiality and integrity of each member of the study. Also, privacy was important, so the participants' information was kept confidential. Moreover, the research team was committed to respect the will of the participants who were free to quit the study when necessary. Consequently, the researchers were respectful, polite

and careful during the development of the study.

4.5. Execution Phase

The execution phase during semester II 2018, at the University of El Salvador included the researchers' data collection procedure and a detailed description of the data processing, data analysis and interpretation, and how the research team conducted the whole project from its foundations. The research team only proposed a plan of action; that is there was no direct execution of the lesson plans. The research was carried out taking into account the qualitative paradigm, all the data gathered were processed and analyzed as it is explained below in this chapter.

4.5.1. Data Collection Procedure

In order to retrieve the necessary data, researchers had to select the appropriate instrument. Consequently, researchers based their objectiveness upon the operationalized indicators for the investigation. Afterwards, the research team delivered the chosen instruments to be validated by the experts on the field from the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary campus.

The investigation focused on the submission of a proposal to teach American Culture and its idiomatic expressions to Intensive Intermediate English II students; to assure that an adaptation of the collaborative approach to the syllabus might be suitable, researchers designed a questionnaire which was addressed to the Intensive Intermediate English II teachers of the foreign language department (Appendix C). Moreover, a 16 - item questionnaire was elaborated in order to spot their previous

knowledge of American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions and to know students'
opinions about the incorporation of American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions to the
current Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus (Appendix D). In addition, using a
10-item questionnaire, researchers assessed and diagnosed the modified Intensive
Intermediate English II Syllabus of the Foreign Language Department of the University
of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus (Appendix E). Also, another
questionnaire was addressed to Intensive Intermediate Teachers to analyze the need
of incorporating American Culture and idiomatic expressions in the contents of the
Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus (Appendix F) Each of the experts was
approached individually and given a week to work on the instrument. In addition,
researchers got together with the English Competences Coordinator of the foreign
language department to have an evaluation on the early modified Intensive
Intermediate English lesson plans (Appendix H). This assessment was based on a 10-
item diagnostic checklist (appendix G) designed to evaluate the lesson plans according
to the criteria elaborated based on the state of art.

4.5.2. Data Processing

To analyze the information gathered, the research team classified into
categories and summarized all the qualitative data using the software Microsoft Word
to display each of the results extracted from the administration of the instruments to the
research participants. Researchers would interpret the data through triangulation in
order to obtain the guidelines to elaborate an appropriate project to be developed by
future researchers.

4.5.3. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Triangulation played a significant role. When analyzing data, researchers went over every piece of information gathered from Intensive Intermediate English II students and teachers´ cooperation as well as the assessment provided by the Competences Coordinator of the foreign language department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador. The research team started with their own observation of the phenomenon along with a diagnosis to help them establish whether or not American culture and its idiomatic expressions were taught in classes or somehow included in the syllabus. The research team analyzed the data by selecting the answers and findings by objective according to the variables and indicators. Based on the data collection and distribution, researchers started the analysis by stating how the students' answers connected with the previously stated phenomenon and how the research team would use the data to modify the existing lesson plans. These data would orient researchers to the needs and possible likes from the target population. Then researchers mixed those elements with the information from the state of art. Besides, in order to have stronger ties within the connections in the triangulation, the research team elaborated a diagnostic checklist for the assessment and diagnosis of the modified Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus addressed to the English Competences Coordinator of the foreign language department (appendix H).

4.6. Timetable

Activities	Responsible	Months																
		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Research Team Formation	Research Team	■																
Choosing of the Topic		■																
Preliminary Phase																		
Approaching the Field of Study	Research Team		■															
Diagnostic Study			■															
Definition of the Problem			■															
Planning Phase																		
Literature Review	Research Team		■															
Operationalization of Variables				■														
Elaboration of the Research Project				■														

Task	Responsible	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Revision of the Research Project				■														
Incorporation of the Suggestion made by the Advisor							■											
Presentation of the Research Plan to the Advisor								■										
Elaboration of Data Collection Instruments									■									
Validation of Data Collection Instruments										■								
Protocol											■							
Execution Phase																		
Collection of data	Research Team											■		■				
Treatment of data														■				

		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Analysis of data														■				
Writing the Final Report																	■	■

4.7. Budget

Type of supply	Name	Cost of ítem	Total
Office Supplies	Reams of bond paper	$30.00	
	Prints	$40.00	
	Internet	$220.00	
	Folders and fasteners	$6.00	
	Pens and pencils	$5.00	
	Stapler	$3.00	
			$304.00
Transportation	Bus	$160	
			$160.00
Food	Breakfast	$176	
			$176.00
Total			**$640.00**

CHAPTER V : DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The aim of this study was to promote the effective learning process of the students with the exposure to elements from the American culture in order to better their knowledge about the American culture and its idiomatic expressions through the collaborative learning approach as part of the Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus. Later on, this chapter, researchers included the analysis of the data gathered through a set of instruments created based upon the results of the tools used during the first stages of the investigation.

In order to collect the information to be analyzed, the first tool used was an observation checklist to be used during the Intensive Intermediate English II classes. The tool contained 6 elements to be observed during the classes to diagnose if the implementation of American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions as contents of the syllabus was possible, if Intensive Intermediate English II students were able to acquire multicultural knowledge, and if Intensive intermediate English II students could learn Idiomatic Expressions used in the American Culture (Appendix A). This means this instrument was addressed to the research team at a very preliminary stage of the research. During classes, teachers did not provide idiomatic expressions. They provided sentences and examples using the new words from the lesson, but these were not related to aspects of American culture and were not idiomatic expressions either. Students were not willing to participate, and they were settling with their heads to make the teacher aware that they had supposedly understood the examples. As a result, when the time to express their opinions came, students took their time to think of the specific words to express their ideas, and their lack of vocabulary caused that answers

sounded similar and simple.

Also, a diagnostic test was addressed to the Intensive Intermediate English II students to obtain a wider perception of the knowledge they had about American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions. It contained 5 items to assess what they knew about thanksgiving which is a major celebration in the United States. Besides, students had to interpret some idiomatic expressions given from the context (Appendix B). Researchers found that Intensive Intermediate English II students had poor knowledge about thanksgiving. For example, one of the most common answers was this: "Thanksgiving is a celebration from the USA in which family get together and enjoy meal (turkey)". Students had such interpretation of the celebration as that is the way it is present in cartoons, movies and tv series. They did not know the origin and the true meaning of the celebration. On the word "touchdown", some students expressed they have heard about the word coming from American Football but still did not know the meaning of it. Some others took the meaning as literal, being this the result of joining the words "touch" and "down". These answers provided researchers a start line to begin the study.

Having all the information gathered and organized, the research team interpreted, analyzed and reflected on it according to the specific objectives which were set at early stages of the investigation.

5.1. The Study of the Effectiveness of Collaborative Learning Activities in the Current Intensive Intermediate English II Classes

To study the effectiveness of Collaborative Learning Activities in the current Intensive Intermediate English II classes at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018, the researchers administered a questionnaire addressed to Intensive Intermediate English II teachers; this tool contained 10 open questions to study the effectiveness of Collaborative Learning Activities in the Intensive Intermediate English II classes (Appendix C). The Intensive Intermediate English II teachers manifested that, in fact, they have management of the collaborative learning approach and its activities. Nonetheless, most of the participants answered the questionnaire as a yes/no set of questions without providing any proof for their answers, examples, or further opinions. That turned into a limitation for the research team as it did not provide any material for an in-depth analysis.

Also, in the second question "How often do you implement collaborative learning activities in your classes?", one of the Intensive Intermediate English II teachers declared "I rarely implement the collaborative learning approach in classes because I perceive that sometimes students with different backgrounds slow down the pace of the classes". This refers to the situation where, like in a melting pot, students come from different learning environments. On the one hand, some students did not have English classes in their schools, so we are talking about the high school background students bring and affect the college performance. On the other hand, students coming mostly from private schools have at least a basic background knowledge of the English language; plus, the fact that in private schools, students have access to different

technologies and sources, ICTS, that give them a broader view of the aspects of American culture.

This unbalance restrained some teachers from implementing the collaborative learning activities. As an answer to the question "Do you consider that student centered classes using the collaborative learning activities are more effective than teacher centered classes?", an Intensive Intermediate English teacher stated that "not all students' performance will be fluent and deriving in a teacher-centered class where the teacher gives the information to the students to be reviewed and practiced in the outside with no chance of interaction inside the classroom

Furthermore, other teacher expressed that "the Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus partially included activities that allow to execute the collaborative learning approach". In addition, teachers established that in few of the collaborative activities implemented in classes, students showed that their vocabulary increased whenever they interacted among their classmates; besides, students seemed to be comfortable when addressing to their classmates rather than talking to the teacher or answering generic questions in front of the whole class because they felt confident even if they made mistakes.

Moreover, all teachers stated that some of the collaborative activities that are suitable for Intensive Intermediate English II students are discussions, jigsaw activities, problem solving activities in groups, peer to peer activities, and group work. Likewise, teachers expressed that student-centered classes with implementation of collaborative activities were vital in the Intensive Intermediate English II classes since the students

perform the main character in classes, and they need to develop their skills rather than a teacher using more of the class time to give information that might not be conveniently absorbed by students to have an effect on their English learning process.

Through Appendix (D) addressed to students during classes, they pointed out that with collaborative activities, they created strong bonds with classmates promoting team work. On the other hand, even though students did not really have a clue about the syllabus content scheme, they all concluded that discussions, conversations, debates, presentations, and interviews were really interesting activities for their classes and that such activities were incredibly good when they practiced in groups or pairs. They also understood that student centered classes could be beneficial to their confidence development.

Researchers infer that the collaborative learning activities to be included in the proposed syllabus had to provide new tools to be implemented in improvised scenarios to solve real life situations, such as the example of a role play of a family having trouble getting ready for a typical American holiday. The activity fosters team work and problem solving. As stated in the state of art, an additional direction of including idioms gives the student the opportunity to learn, perform and understand the use of the idiomatic expressions. The whole activity transforms the teacher-centered scenario into a student–center learning environment. Thus, this will result in more meaningful activities for students where they will get acquainted with the use of the idiomatic expression and cultural content they should master at this level.

5.2. Analysis of the Need of Incorporating American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions

To analyze the need of incorporating American Culture and its idiomatic expressions in the contents of the Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018, researchers administered an 11- item - questionnaire to the Intensive Intermediate English II students (Appendix E). Some students declared that they had knowledge about American cultural aspects such as celebrations and things that Americans usually do; nevertheless, they expressed that they have obtained the knowledge from external sources as they did not often see that during classes.

Students understood idiomatic expressions as a short phrase conveying a broader meaning using simple words or metaphoric hints. Students emphasized that the use of this "jargon" would take their speech to another level in comparison to what they currently learned. Nonetheless, they understood that these expressions were utilized in an informal context. Students expressed that the best way to learn idiomatic expressions was through peer to peer collaborative performance in order to internalize the use of the language. According to students' opinions, having the knowledge of American Culture and its idiomatic expressions was important if one attempts to perform the language as natural as possible.

Also, researchers administered another questionnaire to the Intensive Intermediate English II teachers to perform an in-depth analysis of the need of incorporating the elements mentioned above (Appendix F). It is considered that culture

influences the way students learn the language as students express their ideas based on the contexts where they have acquired the language. Students come from different backgrounds, and each of them has a different way to view the world. During classes, they were given topics related to American Culture; nevertheless, the contents from the lesson plans could be enriched in order to augment the student's exposition to it. As a result, they would have the opportunity to expand their ideas when the time to deal with a foreigner comes. Because students are not familiarized enough with American Culture, few very committed teachers try to teach about certain American festivities from time to time. It is important to mention that some of these themes, festivities, are not even part of the lesson plans intended for the topics.

Students always enjoy learning about a different culture. The American culture is historically famous, trendy, and fascinating. The most important feature is that it is linked to English as it is the official country's language. If students had heard about some holidays celebrated in the US and showed interest in it, why not teaching those contents in classes? A clear example of the result of it can be exemplified in a scenario were the student, while watching a movie, series or news, notices that people are talking of a Memorial Day. The student would automatically associate the term/situation with the holiday that has been taught in classes and the specific vocabulary that has been included during the lesson.

Moreover, Intensive Intermediate English II teachers expressed that not only did they consider that idiomatic expressions should be taught to students but they also tried to add these expressions to the lessons so that students improved the scheme of their ideas; consequently, this would help students to communicate in a more effective way

among themselves fostering the after-class practice.

In addition, idioms make speaking sound more natural and makes interaction with others way easier. The student who uses idiomatic expressions would feel more relaxed increasing the confidence to express ideas and approach classmates. In a student-centered class, a routine of formal speaking would still generate a bit of tension among participants. To overcome that scenario, the use of idiomatic expressions adds fresh and funny elements to the class helping the student to unwind and be more open to collaboration during the lesson.

It has been understood that the incorporation of American culture aspects and its idiomatic expressions enriched the way students learned the language and their disposition to be participants and the main actors of their own learning process. The inclusion of the content elements mentioned before suit perfectly the collaborative learning approach which is not only interesting but effective.

5.3 The Proposal of Collaborative Learning Activities to include American Culture and its idiomatic expressions in Intensive Intermediate English II Lesson Plans

After choosing the different activities that could be part of the modifications to be made to the 8 lesson plans, a draft was presented to the English Competences coordinator. The tool to assess the lesson plans was a 10-item checklist (Appendix G). The criteria were elaborated according to the information analyzed from the state of art in order to accomplish an effective incorporation of the different elements of American culture and idiomatic expressions to the current lesson plans. The research team and

the English Competences Coordinator had a one on one session in order to clarify any doubts right in the spot and together elaborate the feedback to be considered to improve what was presented.

The Competences Coordinator advised not to include isolated lists of idiomatic expressions within the lesson plans. Instead, researchers agreed that the best way to accommodate them was to distribute them through all activities that could foster getting meaning from context or problem-solving situations such as role plays. Plus, readings on the lesson plans should be related to the main theme of the lesson plan to avoid misleading students from the central idea of the units. The Competences Coordinator mentioned that the addition of the elements of American Culture and its idiomatic expressions to the lesson plans would increase the interaction level among students giving the opportunity to let go off the routine they are used to. The main advice given was to foster interaction instead of memorization. Finally, the research team was told by Competences Coordinator that there would not be a second revision of the lesson plans. The modifications made based on the feedback would be showed until the final presentation of the project.

This proposal aims to include American cultural aspects within the 8 lesson plans that composed the syllabus of Intermediate English II at the foreign language department, University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus, 2018. Researchers added different activities by substituting other activities considered not relevant or too repetitive. Activities vary along the 8 lesson plans due to the fact that each of the lesson plans was designed by different teachers who had their own styles and ways to create them.

The only activity that remains uniform within all the lesson plans is the wrap up section. In this section, researchers added an article that would be mandatory to be covered. The articles are about different festivities either Federal or Popular in the United States. The articles contain information about the origin of the celebration, history of it through the years, situations regarding to it and traditions proper from American people on those days. Furthermore, it contains a glossary for all the words that might be unknown to students. These are not the only festivities within the lesson plans, but they are the activities found in lessons 1-8 that share an exact format and procedure.

Plus, different events and popular locations around the United States were included so that students have a wider view of the different historical aspects that surround Americans in their daily lives. In order to complement this cultural addition to the lesson plans, researchers have added idiomatic expressions throughout all lesson plans. Some idiomatic expressions have been spotted individually within the examples of the language notes to add a variety of expressions in there and contextualize the grammar and vocabulary. Moreover, there are activities that work specifically with idiomatic expressions; these are presented as matching or fill in the blanks activities so that students get the meaning of the expressions from the context of the sentences to be completed. This might result in cooperative activities and word meaning negotiation among peers.

In addition, students are requested to use those idioms in further activities later on the lesson plan so that they keep on practicing them, and at the end, they could internalize the application of these expressions. Most activities had been assigned to

be worked in pairs, trios and groups because collaboration is one of the principal foundations of the modifications made to the lesson plans.

Assignments as well are meant to be developed though collaboration; in this way, students would get together after class to have a chance of practicing what they have learned. Besides, the next class would give them the chance to show what they have worked on to recap their vocabulary progress in the previous classes. In all these group activities, teachers should make sure that students work with different people every class to foster collaboration among everyone. Next, researchers describe the activities that had been modified within the 8 lesson plans orderly. The full lesson plans can be found in the appendices section. All the activities, elements and directions modified Appendix H (modified lesson plans) had been highlighted in yellow color.

5.3.1   Lesson Plan I

Lesson plan 1 target content was about food and art. These topics are attached to quantifiers which is a topic that covers a lot of different structures that require practice by repetition. This situation did not leave much room to modify most activities; nevertheless, the research team found the way to adapt some. For instance, there was a warm-up that talked about a place called Cape Town located in Europe, instead of using that activity, the research team decided to insert a reading about the McDonalds history. It is perfect to be introduced in the target content because McDonald's represents one of the most important aspects of American culture, a well-known fast food brand that has fed American for over 60 years.

Right after the language notes, the research team added a matching activity about idioms related to food with its corresponding definitions which could be found later on. In the last activity from the controlled practice, the researchers found a reading activity using the

pioneer pre-intermediate book. The reading was about 2 art expositions in Brazil and London. The research team decided to modify it and create a discussion in which students will define the concept of art and what they know about it. This will open the path to introduce some idioms related to art; students have to write sentences using the idioms.

With the environment set, students would go over the reading on Marvel comics, but why Marvel Comics? Marvel comics is the origin of the most famous superheroes with which we have grown, and they play an important role in the American geeky scene that influences ours. After reading the article, students would share their thoughts about comics characters' popularity and their place in art. In the second activity of the semi-controlled practice, a reading activity entitled "Belgian Yogurt" was found. Researchers considered that such an activity should be changed to something more representative from the US culture, and it was agreed to introduce an article about the famous "Apple Pie". Before going into the reading, students would do a matching activity to introduce some words that might be new to them.

After the activity, they would complete a comprehension exercise. As a wrap –up, there was a debate on mass media. This activity provided students with time to work in groups, but researchers decided to move it to the homework section. The new wrap -up activity would consist on reading an article about Thanksgiving which is one of the most important celebrations through the United States history. For the homework assignment, researchers finally agreed on taking out the debate and propose that students create a role play. The role play will be in trios because 3 people can have a wider chance to meet schedules. Students will create a conversation in which they talk about having a healthy diet. Students will be asked to use idioms related to food.

5.3.2　Lesson Plan II

The lesson plan themed sequences, events and narrative. On the presentation section, students had to read an article about space satellites. Researchers added a post-reading activity in which students would have to work in pairs to create a satellite and create a drawing of it explaining on a mini presentation the characteristics of the satellite and what its functions will be. This would introduce students to outer space elements while they share their ideas in groups about previous knowledge on the subject.

In the controlled practice, researchers modified the first reading activity. The reading talked about two men in a hospital room. Researchers thought that it would be more contributive to change it for a reading activity about the Challenger disaster, the biggest tragedy concerning space exploration by NASA; students will reflect and discuss on the situation and write a paragraph about it. Originally, for the wrap up, students had to talk about the part of the lesson they learned the most. Free practice activity 1 had students to work in groups of 3 members to prepare a mini News presentation on a Uruguayan soccer player and a missing boy in Europe. Researchers changed the subjects so that the content could be Americanized for students' benefit. On one of the most infamous school shootings in the Us and about Tom Brady, the most iconic quarter back on American Football history.

Free practice speaking activity had a reading on movies. Researchers modified the theme because later on there is a lesson plan all dedicated to movies. Instead, a role play activity was added with 3 stories for students to perform narrations during them since one of the lesson's target contents is narrating events. Researchers kept on their proposal to add a federal celebration article as a wrap- up for all the lesson plans. For Lesson 2, the article was about the 4th of July which is the United States Independence Day. For the homework section, students would work in groups of 4. They would look for a typical American food

recipe and next class to teach their classmates how to prepare it. They would use realia to practice narrative and sequenced information.

5.3.3   Lesson Plan III

The lesson plan themed traveling. The presentation was completely modified. The presentation originally included a video activity about Petra which is a historical and archaeological city in southern Jordan. This was all changed; the pre- listening now includes questions about national parks and destinations from El Salvador. For the video although Petra is interesting, researchers' quest was to include American culture aspects; as a result, the video was changed for "Top 29 Best National Parks in the USA" taken from Vagabrothers' YouTube channel that specializes in traveling reviews. After watching the video, students would talk about locations shown in the video and then express their ideas on visiting similar places but within Latin America.

Right after the language notes, a fill in the blanks activity was added to introduce some travelling idioms. On the speaking activity from the controlled practice, students are asked to use the traveling idioms to provide suggestions, requests, and pieces of advice about traveling. The next activity from the controlled practice included a reading that talked about traveling in a general concept. The reading was substituted by an advice guide called "What You Should Know before Traveling to the US." The reading covers aspects from Americans' social conventions and such as hygiene, personal space and talking to American children. This provides the students with a wider and deeper view of American behavior and lifestyle. After reading the guide, they would get in trios to discuss the differences and similarities between Salvadoran and American social conventions.

Right after, activity 4 suggested completing fill in activities about past perfect simple in the pioneer pre-intermediate book. Taking into consideration that next two activities were

almost the same, researchers considered it was a good chance to take that section out and instead generate a discussion on one of the most important cultural events in US history, the Woodstock music and art festival. Students would discuss on the importance of this festival within American cultural history and express their thoughts on going there if they had been alive at that time and traveling from El Salvador. The first listening activity from the semi - controlled practice included a post activity completing task where students were encouraged to use idiomatic expressions mixed with their own ideas.

The wrap up asked students to work in the pioneer pre-intermediate in a reading about Alexandria, an Egyptian city founded by Alexander the Great in 332 BC, but following the researchers' line with the decision of including a Federal Holiday in this section of the lesson plans, they included a reading on New Year's Day. This celebration has many differences from the way it is celebrated in El Salvador and involves massive outdoor gatherings and traditions. Finally, the homework assignment was about preparing a mini presentation to talk about a place students had visited. Researchers boosted the output of the activity by requesting students to prepare a mini presentation pretending they had visited a place in the US during vacations including important information as the name of the place, location, special things about it, if it is good for tourists, recommendations, what to do over there, what they liked the most about it. They, of course, should include idiomatic expressions in their description.

5.3.4   Lesson Plan IV

The lesson plan themed technology and future events. The presentation shows a book activity based on a video about technology. Nonetheless, the link provided opened a video with no relation with the description and activities in the lesson plan at all, and the devices described in the book had not even been invented yet. In order to fix the situation,

researchers searched for a video with the same theme but with inventions that already existed. Before watching the video, students would have to form trios in order to discuss some questions regarding technological devices. After that, they would complete a fill in the blanks activity introducing idioms about technology. Later, they would watch the video Best Phones Ever which describes the evolution of cell phones over the years pointing out the models that made a huge impact on mobile technological development. Next, students would think of a cell phone that covered their needs. At the last part of the language notes, a list of phrasal verbs was added. These are very common phrasal verbs in our everyday networking vocabulary.

In the controlled practice second activity (speaking activity), students had to form trios and create a device that would help the environment. Naturally, students would have to use the idioms introduced in the presentation to talk about technology. In Activity 6, students had to create a conversation of a prediction about a classmate's life. Researchers took this idea and redesigned it. Students would form trios to create a role play conversation in which they go to a fortune teller to find out about their future; they would have to use idioms to talk about the future as well. The semi-controlled practice activity 2 suggested working on pioneer pre-intermediate book on a reading on the possibility of space tourism in a far future, but researchers decided that it would be a better fit to have students create more sentences using the idioms about the future, such idioms were provided the proposed lesson plan.

Free practice activity 1, part D, had students write an email to a friend describing fashion trends at school. Researchers modified the activity so that students would go over phrases to talk about trends, which are included in the appendices. Students will pretend they have visited our time coming from the future. After class, they will choose a pair to write a double journal entry comparing the trends and fashion that both remember from their own era.

The following activity in the free practice was a speaking activity based on a card game. Researchers turned it into a reading and speaking activity. During pre-reading students would provide information on what they know about space and the first man going to the moon. After setting the atmosphere, students would go over the reading 1969: Man takes first steps on the Moon which talks about Apollo 11, the spaceflight that landed the first two people on the Moon.

Students would share their thoughts on this historical event and the impact it had on human development. After that, students will get in groups of 4 to create a role play conversation in which human beings meet aliens for the first time talking about technological devices and trends using structures and idioms to talk about the future whenever possible.

For the wrap -up, originally students had to work on a fill in the blanks section in the pioneer pre-intermediate book, but following the researchers' strategy with this section, a reading on Labor Day was included, a day that honors the American labor movement and the contributions that workers have made to the strength, prosperity, laws, and well-being of the country. The homework assignment for lesson plan 4 was good. Researchers added some features, though. In trios, students will have to design the ideal world for the future including some high-tech devices existing in the future represented with realia and including the vocabulary and structures they have learned so far and as many idioms as possible.

5.3.5   Lesson Plan V

The lesson designed themed personality and appearance. In the warm- up activity, researchers adapted the activity to make it more collaborative and promote student's cooperation while negotiating meaning. In the controlled practice, researchers added a hangman game activity in order to introduce idioms about personality. Students would guess the words and once they have been found, they would try to provide the meaning of the

idioms and later they would check them in the list provided in the appendix section. The reading activity from the controlled practice was about a fictional article on a "mysterious case" that happened on the night of July 6th. A large truck bumped into a building in the Maryland Street. Researchers decided that it would be more productive to introduce one of the most infamous characters in American crime history, with the reading Charles Manson-American criminal and cult leader. Manson formed what became known as the Manson Family, a quasi-commune in California that committed a series of nine murders at four locations in July and August 1969. Students would discuss a set of 6 questions in groups of 4. The teacher has to make sure that students would work with other students with whom they do not get together often. After discussing each group would provide opinions on all questions.

Researchers also added a discussion section where students would work either in pairs or in trios to talk about the article "The 1950s and the Roots of LGBT", a glimpse into the origins of one of the most popular social phenomena of our era. Besides, on semi controlled practice writing activity, students would read an advertisement on the New Orleans pagan celebration "Mardi Gras" in order to write a paragraph expression their thoughts on attending this event in the USA. In the wrap- up section, students had to create a tourist brochure with Salvadorian destinations. The research team decided that the wrap up had to be substituted as it was done in all lesson plans, and this one was not the exception. Students would have to read the article about Federal holiday: Martin Luther King Day. This holiday is celebrated in January 15th marking the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr who was the chief spokesperson for nonviolent activism in the Civil Rights Movement, which successfully protested racial discrimination in federal and state law. The campaign for a federal holiday in King's honor began soon after his assassination in 1968.

Homework section requested students to work in pioneer pre-intermediate book. Researchers, looking for a different output, decided to modify and get students to go write a

double entry journal describing their friends using idioms and vocabulary about personality and character.

5.3.6   Lesson Plan VI

Lesson plan VI designed themed movies and entertainment events. The presentation had students work on pioneer pre-intermediate book to read a conversation between 2 athletes warming up, but researchers modified it and added a reading about the super bowl. The Super Bowl is the annual championship game of the National Football League (NFL). The game is the culmination of a regular season that begins in the late summer of the previous calendar year, and it is the sports event with more rating worldwide. This event is one of the most representative from American Culture.

The controlled practice activity 1 asked students to transform sentences into exclamatory declarations. Researchers modified the activity by adding more elements to it. Students would make groups of 10. The teacher would give them a page and scissors to each group, and students would change the sentences into exclamatory sentences by using "What" or "How". While they start transforming the sentences, they would cut the page in order to create a hole, big enough that a person could pass through it (without cutting the edges of the page or without needing to paste it again to make the hole bigger) After they have given the proper transformation to any sentence, they can start going through the page. In the case they have given the proper transformation to all sentences, each of the 10 students could go through the page whether one by one or all together at once depending on the dimensions of the hole they created and a winner would be picked by taking into account which group had more students going through the page before the time of the activity ended or by checking which group had the 10 students going through the page first. Then the book time activity was taken out, and researchers added a fill in the blanks activity to introduce

idioms related to movies.

Besides, a target shooting activity was suggested by researchers right after. For this activity the teacher would bring a dartboard to the class. The dartboard should be altered a little bit by adding pieces of color papers on it. Each color will represent an idiom that would be taken from boxes of same color of the paper where the dart landed. Students would create groups of 5 or 6 and choose a representative of the group to throw the darts. Meanwhile, the rest of group would create a sentence using the Idiom related to movies picked from the box of the color in which the representative placed the dart. After all of the groups have at least one sentence written, students would share the sentences with the whole class. Other groups would suggest if the sentences could be rewritten with a different usage of the idiom they might know (being polite). Finally, the teacher would give all necessary feedback about the usage of the idiom.

The wrap- up section requested students to work in pioneer pre-intermediate book with fill in the blank activities. Trying to get a different output, the researchers decided to modify it into students going over the reading on Columbus Day which is a national holiday in the US officially celebrating the anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas on October 12, 1492. Christopher Columbus was an Italian explorer who set sail across the Atlantic Ocean in search of a faster route to the New World, and it is well known in our culture, but the way this celebration is seen in American culture differs a lot from the Salvadorian way of looking at it. In the homework, students will be asked to form groups of three. Each group will choose a movie and will create a poster to promote it. Finally, groups will present their poster and will explain why they chose that movie.

5.3.7   Lesson Plan VII

Lesson plan VII themed work and jobs as the target contents. The controlled practice,

a listening activity required students to watch a video of "THINGS TO KNOW AFTER HIGH SCHOOL". Then they had to form groups of 4 to discuss what should be their experience gained from high school after graduating. In order to provide new vocabulary, researchers introduced idioms related to school activities so that students could use them when providing their opinions.

Next activity had students to work in pairs working in the pioneer pre-intermediate book. They had to discuss about 8 situations that were shown in there so that they expressed agreement or disagreement. Originally, this activity included a vocabulary section to support students. It included from 4 to 6 expressions to show opinion, agreement and disagreement.

Researchers expanded the number of expressions going from 18 to 70 in total to have a great variety of choices for students.

In addition, researchers added a fill in the blanks activity in order to introduce idioms about personality profiles in jobs and school. The first free practice first activity had role plays about a job interview and some professions that were considered the best to some people. Researchers modified the activity by changing it to a conversation in trios in which they are forming groups of 5 for their thesis project. They are missing 2 members, so they will discuss who to choose. They have to use idioms related to school and personality which had been studied in previous activities. The free practice Integrated activity requested students to create a diverse list of popular career fields and describe them. In order to enrich students' vocabulary, researchers added a list of idioms related to work and jobs.

The wrap - up consisted on a fill in the blanks practice on grammar structures from the lesson. Even though the activity was worthy, students had practiced already the structures in several activities before. Following researchers' lesson design, in the wrap - up section, an

article about Memorial Day was added. This is a federal holiday in the United States to commemorate the people who died while serving in the country's armed forces. This is one of the most important and honored celebrations in the United States. Homework assignment had students work on page 96 of the pioneer pre-intermediate book with a grammar fill in the blanks activity and to write a letter addressed to the teacher to explain their plans in their studies. According to researchers' idea of students' output the task was modified so that students would work in groups of 4. They will search for a famous attraction in the USA and create a TV spot to advertise it. They will perform it next class.

5.3.8   Lesson Plan VIII

Lesson plan VIII themed money as the target content. Right after the language notes, researchers put a fill in the blanks activity to introduce idioms related to money. This would give students a chance to figure out the meaning of the idioms from the context of the sentence. After that, they would check the idiom list with the corresponding definition to clarify their doubts and to have it handy in order to use it for future activities within the lesson.

Integrated activity 2 asked students to work on Pioneer students' book reading the article about someone with the ability to memorize almost everything. Then, they had to create sentences to share their ideas about the reading. Researchers decided to modify the reading; the researchers integrated an event that originated in the US, and it is now seen as a trademark of their culture. The new reading is about Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, regarded as the first day of the traditional Christmas shopping season, in which retailers offer special reduced prices. This traditional shopping celebration has spread over the world, and it has travel directly to ours. El Salvador currently hosts many days labeled as "black + day or weekend", but its origins and reasons are completely unknown for most Salvadorians. After the reading, students would discuss in groups some questions related to the reading.

Free practice speaking activity 1 had students answer 10 questions about savings and banking. Researchers decided to modify the questions by changing the theme of the activity to the influence of Latin American in US economy and their thoughts on call center outsourcing which is one of the best paid and popular jobs for English speakers in our country.

The wrap- up consisted in a fill in the blanks practice on grammar structures from the lesson. As in the previous lesson plans, the wrap- up section was substituted by a reading on an American festivity. The reading is about Halloween, a well-known traditional celebration, but not very well known at its origins and history behind it. Homework had students write a paragraph about the process of changing from Colón to dollar in El Salvador. Researchers modified it so that students would form groups of 4 to prepare a mini presentation to talk about American products that influence their lives. They would have to use idioms to talk about money and trends (which has been studied in previous lesson plans).

5.4. Analysis of Intensive Intermediate English II Teachers Awareness to the Need of Incorporating Collaborative Learning Activities in Classes to Teach American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions

Teachers must be aware of students' need of mingling with different people all time. Moreover, teachers should be documenting and looking for all types of information in regard to the activities to be developed in classes in order to help students properly. This means teachers must have all different points of view to answer any doubt students might have about different American related themes and contents. It is clear that students might come up with any answer or even any doubt when conversing or talking over those aspects that link them to the target language, and teachers need to play a coaching role to provide fair opportunities for students to use L2 in real life

situations.

Nevertheless, that is one of the greatest things about collaborative activities since every single aspect of a subject matter being studied contributes for teachers and students to bring pieces together and finally see the big picture and the different colors it might have. In alliance to the previous thought, teachers need to be an auto-evaluative agent in order to know what could be done better and the course of action he might take on future activities by stepping out of the spotlight and taking less participation, resulting in students' talking time.

Teachers must allow students to be the main figure of the learning process for a student center environment or conditions to take place in the classroom and in such way give up the space for collaborative activities that will foster students collaborative thinking, develop students vocabulary, encourage communication even if they make mistakes, and finally bring a semblance of proficiency on the English learning and performance of the Intensive Intermediate II students.

CHAPTER VI : CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After carrying out the research study "A PROPOSAL TO TEACH AMERICAN CULTURE AND IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS TO INTENSIVE INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH II STUDENTS THROUGH THE COLLABORATIVE LEARNING APPROACH AT THE WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR DURING YEAR 2018" and after incorporating American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions to the contents to be studied in the Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus and analyzing the qualitative data collected and processed, the researchers established the following conclusions and recommendations.

6.1. Conclusions

6.1.1. The Effectiveness of the Collaborative Learning Activities

The research team infers that if a modification was to be made to the lesson plans in order to include American culture-based content within them; that implementation had to be based on a teaching/learning approach and a series of activities that would suit the researchers' objectives without deviating from the students' needs according to the English language department outcomes.

After studying and analyzing the information presented in the state of art, the research team concluded that the Collaborative Learning Approach is the most suitable to implement to the Intensive Intermediate English II lesson plans because this approach certainly provides Intensive Intermediate English II students all the necessary tools for a student-centered environment in the classroom. It would nurture the effective learning process of the students through interaction among themselves and teachers

of the institution by their exposure to elements from the American culture aspects during classes in order to better their knowledge about the American culture itself and its idiomatic expressions in their oral production.

Bringing and inferring from Vygotsky's definition of the ZPD, the research team highlights the importance of learning through communication and interaction with others rather than just through independent work. Since the lesson plans in this proposal encourage both teachers and students to make way for the ideas of group learning, team orientedness, and peer -to -peer performance, the outcomes projected might be much more beneficial in the learning process of these intermediate students. The research team also acknowledges that collaborative learning is very important in achieving critical thinking, so the inclusion of reading tasks along with team work activities can provide students the opportunity to become more proficient speakers and writers of the target language now as students and later as teachers.

Finally, according to Gokhale (1995), individuals are able to achieve higher levels of learning and retain more information when they work in a group rather than individually; therefore, the research team establishes this strong relationship between the collaborative learning approach and the use of idiomatic expressions and American culture references as a trendy and useful manner to develop critical thinking skills.

6.1.2 The Need of Incorporating American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions in the Contents of the Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus

At the first stage of this project, researchers collected data through observation (Appendix A) at Intermediate English II classes. Early in the study, researchers

evidenced that students made use of generic sentences without a sense of property finding themselves in trouble when giving complex responses as shown in the answers collected through appendix B. As a result, they did not feel confident when adding comments to the discussion. This led to the assessment of students' knowledge on American culture and idiomatic expressions. Once the results of all instruments were collected, analyzed and interpreted, researchers concluded that students needed an accretion of content related to American culture and its idiomatic expressions. It is clear that students need American culture-based contents to boost their performance during classes.

In other words, researchers concluded and then proposed the incorporation of these American culture references and idiomatic expressions accompanying different sections of the lesson plans used in the Intermediate English level in order to arise the need of making the contents more meaningful and contextualized for students. As written in the state of art, Byram (1989) remarks an intriguing concept for culture as a "hidden curriculum of foreign language (FL) teaching" since inevitably knowledge and perceptions of the world will be addressed while teaching and throughout the development of the lesson plans cultural learning will be arising.

As a result, learning and managing the American culture will empower IIE-II students to be a lot more fluent and accurate in everyday situations that require them to use their knowledge of the language according to the context in which the students are trying to fit in and outside the classroom.

6.1.3 Use of Collaborative Learning Activities to include American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions in the Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus

Researchers found out that students showed difficulties when expressing their opinions regarding some specific topics related to American culture and idiomatic expressions. There is no possibility to aid students on those specific areas of opportunity with the current lesson plans used by teachers because as described in the analysis, the lesson plans isolate target structure from target content. Also, the researchers concluded that there were not American Culture features that could enrich students' vocabulary, which is why, students did not turn the passive vocabulary into new active vocabulary efficiently.

Researchers considered proposing a series of modifications to rise up the students' adeptness by including American culture and Idiomatic expressions in the Intermediate English II Syllabus. The modifications adapted most of the former activities designed and proposed by the teachers in change of the courses. The research team provided a fresher and more cooperative manner of discussing and making sense of the very target content disassociated from the target structures. That being so, the researchers infer this thesis proposal combines both collaborative activities aiming to develop correct grammar, vocabulary and content use.

6.1.4 Teachers of Intensive Intermediate English II awareness to the Need of Incorporating Collaborative Learning Activities in Classes to Teach American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions

In the state of art, the research team portraits the semblance and attitude teachers must have as agents of the collaborative learning approach. Undoubtedly, it is crucial for teachers to be aware and fully committed to make a change of mind in the way they perceive themselves as teachers. Otherwise, the migration from teacher - centered classes to student - centered classes might not take place properly. The research team has concluded that teachers of the English language department need to understand that the addition of the collaborative learning activities would not only help students master their performance but surpass the edge of the unknown in regard to students' English learning and proficiency output.

There are not records of a project like this being implemented before with the Intensive Intermediate English students from the foreign language department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador, so this thesis proposal can help teachers, students, and the competences area coordinator see the many advantages of making the language more real for students.

Literally retrieving some accounts from the state of art of this study, researchers conclude that *the broader view of the Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus should not only be concerned with the selection and grading of content but also with the selection of learning tasks and activities*. In other words, syllabus and lesson plan design should also concerned with the methodology that merges cooperation and

language use through themes as the ones suggested in the reading selections and idiomatic expressions listed in many activities in the 8 modified lesson plans.

6.2.   Recommendations

Having identified specific areas of improvement that can be worked out in order to better IIE-II students' outcomes at English language department of the University of El Salvador 2018, the research team has established some recommendations. These are directed to institution, teachers and future researchers in order to help them be aware of elements that had been studied and pointed out along this whole project and to avoid future inconveniences and limitations that are a common part at the in the elaboration of future researches.

6.2.1.   Recommendations for the English Language Coordinator

➢ The teaching of American culture and idiomatic expressions is an established need throughout this research; therefore, the research team suggests the authorities and institution to trigger consciousness in teachers that the inclusion of multicultural themes and collaborative learning activities should be a priority for future lesson plans at Intensive Intermediate English II level. In this way, teachers will encourage their students to use idiomatic expressions that are included in the lesson plans so that they get a vast variety of new phrases or words that will be useful in their everyday lives.

➢ All in all, researchers advise that whenever collaborative approach gets to be implemented within the lesson plans, the coordination should get teachers to

gather together in order to get into an agreement on the changes being made.

The gatherings will consist on discussing the new changes regarding aspects of American culture and idioms implemented on lesson plans as well as how the changes made will benefit students to improve their language skills. Indeed, these changes will enhance students' language skills and will improve their social abilities to collaborate to achieve common goals.

➢ Researchers recommend the foreign language department of the University of El Salvador at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus to foster a class environment of students' team collaboration instead of competition throughout all the courses implemented on the career. Based on what (Smith 1992) thinks, teachers who use collaborative learning approaches tend to think of themselves less as expert transmitters of knowledge to students, and more as expert designers of intellectual experiences for students-as coaches or mid-wives of a more emergent learning process. Therefore, teachers should be given the tools and the conditions to turn their classes from teacher-centered to student- centered learning environments using collaborative learning activities.

6.2.2. Recommendations for Teachers

➢ Teachers should pay careful attention to the way they design the lesson plans because they need to include information that contextualizes the vocabulary and structures to be used in classes. In fact, it is important to include appropriate vocabulary and examples to match the lesson theme that would be studied in classes. In this way, students have fewer chances of deviating from

the main idea generating distraction and confusion. As it is supposed to be followed on the second requirement of a syllabus according to Kavaras 2014 "It should offer a sense of continuity and direction in the teacher's and learners' work."

➢ After revising the lesson plans, the research team found many inconsistencies in the lesson plans. That is the target content and structures as well as the vocabulary were dissociated. Therefore, teachers should thoroughly reflect upon and then check the lesson plans they create in order to make corrections in case something does not match with the units. For instance, if a topic does not match with the theme, the teacher can suggest his/ her own adapted examples. Only in this way, teachers should be able to correct it before they implement the lesson plan.

➢ It is recommendable that teachers, who are involved in the process of creating the lesson plans from the syllabus, get to be a little bit more concise when bringing American culture to the spotlight against playing safe with as many book time activities that sometimes do not even fit the classes. There are some book time activities that can be enriched with a team work research, mini presentation, and so forth.

➢ Furthermore, teachers should encourage other teachers to include collaborative learning activities because they are particularly very effective to make students aware of the socialization, they need to establish with other people in order to solve every day problems. In other words, socialization is a

key role in the English language development progress in the learning process in and outside the classroom.

6.2.3. Recommendations for Future Researchers

➤ Interest plays an important role in any research project, and this one is no exception. That is why, the research team recommends future researchers to look for different ways to make participants of the research be interested in the topic so that they might be willing to participate giving information to fill up the instruments created for the research project. In this way, researchers would recollect all the information that is needed to make the project progress to its completion.

➤ The research team recommends for any future researcher to check if any changes on the current syllabus would be taking place within the duration of their project in order to avoid changes on such conducted project. It is recommendable that future researchers keep on updating the content on the syllabus to the latest and hottest content that is keeping people's attention.

➤ For future researchers that might place this proposal into action it is recommendable to coordinate and collaborate with all the agents that influence the results of the project and that consequently will also be influenced back as a result of the interaction and collaboration. It will be the most efficient way to conduct the project in order for it to be beneficial.

➤ Finally, the research team suggests the respectful execution of the activities

adapted and thought to develop students' proper use of American culture references and idiomatic expressions in Intensive Intermediate classes using the collaborative approach techniques suggested in along this research study and proposal.

6.2.4 Recommendations for Students

➤ The research team recommends that students expand their horizons and break down the barriers on the way they express themselves. Students are used to believing that idiomatic expressions can only be spoken outside the classroom even though they are in an academic field. The inclusion of these informal aspects of the English language is a chance to feel more confident and eager to speak inside a classroom.

➤ Researchers suggest students to require their teachers to foster communion among all participants in the learning process. Students are often accomplices in a teacher centered class as they hide to avoid participating, but if students step up and work together with their teacher, the environment turns into a collaborative atmosphere where socialization is key and facilitates their learning outcomes.

➤ The research team strongly recommends that students reinforce their knowledge of American culture through the implementation of extracurricular activities to their daily routine such as reading books, watching tv series or shows in English; so that, they can learn about the language naturally identifying how it works depending on the different contexts. Besides, these

activities foster student's eagerness on learning about the origins of the different events and celebrations proper from American culture.

REFERENCES

Aksan, D. (1998). *Anlambilim*. Ankara: Engin Yayinevi

Brown, S. (2000). Understanding language, structure, interaction, and variation.

Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

Gokhale, A.A. (1995). JTE v7n1 - Collaborative Learning Enhances Critical

Thinking. Retrieved from

https://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JTE/v7n1/gokhale.jte- v7n1.html

Hudson, R. (1996). Sociolinguistics Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics.

Retrieved From Publisher Cambridge University Press.

Holmes, J. (1992). An Introduction to Sociolinguistics Volume 2 of Learning about

Language.

Jiang Ting. (n.d) A Lesson Plan of TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching).

International Journal of Secondary Education. Vol. 4, No. 3, 2016, pp. 32-

38. doi: 10.11648/j.ijsedu.20160403.12

Leveridge, A.N. (2008) The Relationship Between Language & Culture and the

Implications for Language Teaching. Retrieved form

https://www.tefl.net/elt/articles/teacher-technique/language-culture/

Lubin, M (n.d) A Starter Guide to Teaching American Culture to ESL Classes with

"The Simpsons". Retrieved Form https://www.fluentu.com/blog/educator-

english/esl- culture/

McKay, S. (2005). Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning.

Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Press, C.U. (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.* Strasbourg: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/source/framework_en.pdf

Press.I. (2012). Why and How to Apply Culture in an EFL Classroom? Singapore

Gail K. (2008). Authentic Task-Based Materials: Bringing the Real World Into the Classroom.

Rodriguez J, Winnberg H (2013). Teaching Idiomatic Expressions in Language Classrooms – Like The Icing on the Cake". Retrieved from https://www.really- learn-english.com/idiomatic-expressions.html

Thanasoulas, D. (2001) The Importance Of Teaching Culture In The Foreign Language Classroom. Retrieved from https://media.startalk.umd.edu/workshops/2009/SeattlePS/sites/default/files/files/The%20Importance%20Of%20Teaching%20Culture%20In%20The%20Forei gn%20Language%20Classroom.pdf

Taşdemir, H & Yıldırım, T. (2017). Collaborative teaching from English language

     instructors's perspertives. Retrieved from

     https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321996850_Exploring_Collaborat

     ive_ Teaching_Practice_Of_EFL_Instructors

Wardhaugh, R. (2006). An Introduction to Linguistics Fifth Edition. 350 Main

     Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
Observation Checklist

TOPIC: A Proposal to Teach American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions to Intensive Intermediate English II Students through the Collaborative Learning Approach at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

Objective: To assess Intensive Intermediate English II students' comprehension of American Culture and idiomatic expressions at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

Group_____   N°_____

**RESEARCHERS' CHECKLIST TO EVALUATE STUDENTS'
    COMPREHENSION OF AMERICAN CULTURE AND IDIOMATIC
    EXPRESSIONS**

CRITERIA	1	2	3	4	5
1. Oral production					
2. Students' language comprehension					
3. Oral proficiency					
4. Speech register					
5. Naturalness					
6. American Cultural aspects					
TOTAL					

NOTE: 1. Needs improvement; 2. Regular; 3. Good; 4. Very good; 5. Excellent

Observations:_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B
UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

Diagnostic Test

Objective: To assess the understanding of idiomatic expressions in the American Culture of Intensive Intermediate English I students of the major Licenciatura en Idioma Ingles Opción Enseñanza at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus, semester II, 2017.

Gender: M ☐   F ☐

Directions: You will watch a 5-minute fragment of the TV series FRIENDS. You will watch it two times. After watching the video, you are going to answer the following questions.

1- What is Thanksgiving?
_____
_____

2- What does the expression "Getting over her" mean?
_____
_____

3- What does "take your mind off Janice" mean?
_____
_____

4- What does "Tag her" mean?
_____
_____

5- What is the meaning of "Touchdown"?
_____
_____

APPENDIX C

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
Questionnaire for Teachers

TOPIC: Intensive Intermediate English II teachers' judgement of Collaborative Learning Activities for the current Intensive Intermediate English II syllabus at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

Objective: To study the effectiveness of Collaborative Learning Activities in the current Intensive Intermediate English II classes at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus from the University of El Salvador during year 2018

DIRECTIONS: Read and answer each question as carefully and as objectively as possible.

1- In a few words, could you tell what collaborative learning activities are?
_____
_____
_____

2- How often do you implement collaborative learning activities in your classes?
_____
_____
_____

3- What makes collaborative learning effective among students with different backgrounds?
_____
_____
_____

4- Do you consider the syllabus for Intensive Intermediate English II includes activities that lead to problem solving situations, discussion, jig saw activities or simple peer to peer collaboration?
_____
_____
_____

5- What activities from the collaborative learning approach have you ever used?

_____

_____

_____

6- Which do you consider are the short-term benefits of implementing collaborative learning activities in your classes?

_____

_____

_____

7- What kind of activities from the collaborative learning approach do you think are the most suitable to teach Intensive Intermediate English II?

_____

_____

_____

8- Do you consider the syllabus of Intensive Intermediate English II backs you up to make use of collaborative learning activities?

_____

_____

_____

9- Do you consider that student centered classes using the collaborative learning activities are more effective than teacher centered classes?

_____

_____

_____

10- Do you consider that the addition of activities through the collaborative approach would be effective for students to learn the language?

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX D

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
Questionnaire for Students

TOPIC: Intensive Intermediate English teachers' judgement of Collaborative Learning Activities for the current Intensive Intermediate English syllabus at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

Objective: To study the effectiveness of Collaborative Learning Activities in the current Intensive Intermediate English classes at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus from the University of El Salvador during year 2018

1- In your own words, what are collaborative activities for you?
_____
_____
_____

2- How often does your teacher implement collaborative activities in the classroom?
_____
_____
_____

3- Do you think activities that make you collaborate in groups are good for students to learn in a better way?
_____
_____
_____

4- Do you think the syllabus for Intensive Intermediate English II includes activities that make you solve problems, discuss an idea, or make you collaborate with your classmates?
_____
_____
_____

5- Can you give an example of an activity that made you collaborate with your classmates?

_____
_____
_____

6- For you, what are benefits of doing collaborative learning activities in your classes?

_____
_____
_____

7- What kind of activities collaborative activities do you think are interesting for Intensive Intermediate English II classes?

_____
_____
_____

8- Do you think the study program of Intensive Intermediate English II many useful collaborative activities?

_____
_____
_____

9- Do you think that a student-centered class using collaborative activities is more effective than a teacher centered class?

_____
_____
_____

10- Do you think that the inclusion of collaborative activities would be effective for you to learn the language?

_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX E

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
Questionnaire for Students

TOPIC: Intensive Intermediate English II Students' perception of American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

Objective: To analyze the need of incorporating American Culture and idiomatic expressions in the contents of the Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

DIRECTIONS: Read and answer each question as carefully and as objectively as possible.

1- How much do you know about American culture?
_____
_____
_____

2- Do you think culture influences the way people use the language?
_____
_____
_____

3- What aspects of American Culture do you think will help you to have a better understanding of the English language?
_____
_____
_____

4- Do you think you could hold a longer conversation with a Native American Speaker if you knew their culture?
_____
_____
_____

5- Do you think American culture influences the way we speak as EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners?

_____
_____
_____

6- What do you understand by idiomatic expressions?

_____
_____
_____

7- Do you think that learning idiomatic expressions would improve your language skills? Why?

_____
_____
_____

8- Are you in agreement with the permanent incorporation of idiomatic expressions to the class contents? Why?

_____
_____
_____

9- In which situations do you consider idiomatic expressions are more suitable?

_____
_____
_____

10- Do you think that the best way of learning idiomatic expressions is individual or peer-to-peer practice?

_____
_____
_____

11- Do you consider that having knowledge on American Culture and idiomatic expressions is essential if you attempt to learn the English language?

_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX F

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
Questionnaire for Teachers

TOPIC: Intensive Intermediate English Teachers' perception of American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

Objective: To analyze the need of incorporating American Culture and idiomatic expressions in the contents of the Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

DIRECTIONS: Read and answer each question as carefully and as objectively as possible.

1- How well informed are you about American culture?
_____
_____
_____

2- Do you consider that culture influences the way Intensive Intermediate English II students use the language?
_____
_____
_____

3- What aspects of American Culture do you think will help Intensive Intermediate English II students to have a better understanding of the English language?
_____
_____
_____

4- Do you think that Intensive Intermediate English II students could hold a longer conversation with a Native American Speaker if they knew American culture?
_____
_____
_____

5- Do you think American culture influences the way Intensive Intermediate English II students speak as EFL learners?

_____
_____
_____

6- In your own words, how would you define idiomatic expressions as part of the English language?

_____
_____
_____

7- Do you think that learning idiomatic expressions would improve Intensive Intermediate English II students' language skills?

Yes__No__Why?

_____
_____
_____

8- Are you in agreement with the permanent incorporation of idiomatic expressions to the class contents? Why?

_____
_____
_____

9- Based on your teaching experience, in which situations do you consider Intensive Intermediate English II students will find more suitable to use idiomatic expressions?

_____
_____
_____

10- Do you think that the best way Intensive Intermediate English II students learn idiomatic expressions is through individual practice or peer-to-peer practice?

_____
_____

11- Do you consider that having knowledge on American Culture and idiomatic expressions is essential for Intensive Intermediate English II students if they attempt to learn the English language?

_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX G

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
Checklist for English Competences Coordinator

TOPIC: English Competences Coordinator' assessment of Collaborative Learning Activities to include American Culture and Idiomatic Expressions for the current Intensive Intermediate English II lesson plans at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during year 2018

Objective: To propose Collaborative Learning Activities to include American Culture and its idiomatic expressions at Intensive Intermediate English II Syllabus at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus from the University of El Salvador during year 2018

CRITERIA	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	REGULAR	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
1.LEADS TO PROBLEM SOLVING					
2.ENHANCES PEER TO PEER COLLABORATION					
3.STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING					
4.PROMOTES THE USE OF IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS					
5.TIMING, PACE AND FLOW					
6.INCORPORATES ASPECTS FROM AMERICAN CULTURE					
7.ENRICHES THE LESSON CONTENT WITHOUT DEVIATING					
8.FOSTERS COLLABORATIVE GROUP LEARNING					
9.CLARITY OF CONTENTS					
10. PROPER ACTIVITIES FOR TARGET CONTENT					

APPENDIX H

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

The Proposal Collaborative Learning Activities to include American Culture and its idiomatic expressions at Intensive Intermediate English II Lesson Plans