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Enacting Interpretation in Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning: The Interplay of Interpretive Vehicles and Resources



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Abstract

This qualitative case study examines how interpretation emerges in the enactment of intercultural language teaching and learning (ILTL) within literature-based English courses at an Indonesian university. Drawing on ILTL as an interpretive framework, the study conceptualises interpretation as a dynamic process arising through the interaction between ILTL principles, interpretive vehicles, and interpretive resources. Focusing on two English language courses delivered through an imported American curriculum, the research investigates how interpretive vehicles, including literary texts, teacher questioning, classroom dialogue, comparative activities, reflective writing, and classroom tasks, created opportunities for teachers and students to engage their interpretive resources, including linguistic, cultural, experiential, affective, ideological, and semiotic understandings. The analysis draws on collaborative lesson planning, classroom observations, teacher interviews, student artefacts, and classroom interaction. The findings show that the ILTL principles of active construction, making connections, reflection, and social interaction were enacted through diverse interpretive vehicles that supported learners in constructing literary and intercultural meanings. The study further demonstrates how teachers' pedagogical judgements shaped the enactment of these vehicles within existing curricular contexts. Building on these findings, the study proposes an integrated analytical framework that demonstrates how ILTL principles, interpretive vehicles, and interpretive resources interact to support the development of intercultural meaning in classroom practice.

Keywords: Intercultural language teaching and learning, ELT, interpretation, literature-based language teaching, Indonesia

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Introduction

Across diverse educational contexts, language teaching and learning is increasingly expected to move beyond the transmission of linguistic forms towards fostering learners' capacity to engage meaningfully across languages and cultures (Alred et al., 2006; Byram, 2008; Porto et al., 2018). Intercultural language teaching and learning (ILTL) has emerged as one influential orientation in response to this shift, conceptualising language education as an interpretive, relational, and reflective (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Rather than treating language as a neutral code, ILTL positions meaning as socially and culturally embedded, requiring learners to move between linguistic and cultural frames and decentre from their existing assumptions (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). In this view, interpretation is not simply an additional component of pedagogy but the instrument through which intercultural learning occurs, as learners continually construct, negotiate, and reshape meanings through engagement with texts, tasks, experiences, and others.

Recent scholarship has substantially advanced understanding of interpretation in ILTL, including the texts, tasks, interactions, and pedagogical designs that invite interpretation, as well as the linguistic, cultural, experiential, and affective understandings that learners draw upon in making sense of those experiences (e.g. Hoff, 2016, 2019; Kearney, 2015; McConachy, 2017; Porto & Byram, 2017; Wang, 2023). In this paper, the former dimensions are referred to as 'interpretive vehicles', while the latter are referred to as 'interpretive resources'. As both are essential to meaning making, it is important to understand how they come into interaction within teaching and learning.

Such questions are particularly pertinent in Indonesia, a multilingual and multicultural country in which English language education continues to be shaped by diverse linguistic and cultural resources alongside pedagogical models imported from English-dominant contexts (Hamied, 2012; Kohler, 2019; Lie, 2017; Setiawan, 2026). While scholars have advocated the adoption of ILTL in Indonesian English language teaching (Manara, 2014; Munandar & Newton, 2021; Newton et al., 2020; Setiawan, 2026; Siregar, 2016), relatively little is known about how interpretation is enacted in classroom practice, particularly within literature-based English courses delivered through transnational curricula.

This study investigates how interpretation emerges in the enactment of ILTL within literature-based English courses at an Indonesian university. Through analysis of teacher planning, classroom interaction, and student engagement, the study examines how pedagogical vehicles (conceptualised as interpretive vehicles in this study), enacted through ILTL principles, encourage learners to draw on their interpretive resources. In doing so, it proposes an integrated framework that extends existing conceptualisations of interpretation by making explicit the processes through which intercultural meaning-making is realised in classroom practice.

Literature Review

Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning

Intercultural language teaching and learning (ILTL) conceptualises language learning as an interpretive, relational, and reflective process that engages the learner's linguistic and cultural repertoires (Dasli & Díaz, 2016; Fielding, 2022; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013; Scarino, Kohler & Benedetti, 2016). Rather than treating language as a neutral system of forms, ILTL views it as embedded in social and cultural contexts through which meaning is constructed and negotiated. Learning a language thus involves understanding one's own language and culture in relation to those of others, a process that is dialogic rather than viewing it as simply adding a new language. The prefix *inter* aims to represent

a dynamic and ongoing process of moving between and negotiating multiple languages and cultural frames (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013; Kohler, 2020).

Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) propose five interconnected principles that underpin ILTL as a pedagogical stance within language education, namely *active construction*, *making connections*, *social interaction*, *reflection*, and *responsibility*. *Active construction* view learning as an interpretive process in which learners actively make sense of language and culture rather than simply passively receive information. *Making connections* involves relating new linguistic and cultural experiences to learners' linguistic, cultural, and social knowledge, while also recognising similarities, differences, and relationships across cultural boundaries. *Social interaction* emphasises that language learning occurs through dialogue and meaning negotiation with others, where learners continuously develop understanding by engaging with diverse perspectives and communication practices. *Reflection* involves examining one's assumptions, emotions, values, and interpretations in encounters with linguistic and cultural differences. It is argued that such a self-reflexive orientation facilitates the process of decentring (distancing oneself from the taken-for-granted) and opening up to other perspectives. Lastly, *Responsibility* highlights the ethical dimension of communication, requiring learners to take responsibility for understanding others, seeking to be understood, and engaging with diversity in respectful and constructive manners.

Liddicoat & Scarino (2013) further argue that learning itself is mediated by four interconnected processes that link the principles above to concrete instantiations of learning behaviour: *noticing*, *comparing*, *reflecting*, and *interacting*. *Noticing* involves learners becoming aware of linguistic and cultural phenomena that challenge existing assumptions and reveal points of similarity and difference. These observations provide the basis for *comparing*, where learners relate new linguistic and cultural experiences to their existing knowledge and experiences, examining similarities, differences, and relationships across cultural frameworks. Comparison functions as a means of developing more complex understandings of language, culture, and meaning-making rather than simply as an end-point. The processes of noticing and comparing subsequently inform *reflecting*, through which learners interpret the significance of their experiences, critically examine their assumptions, and consider multiple perspectives in making sense of linguistic and cultural diversity. Lastly, *interacting* means that learners engage with others to communicate, negotiate, and co-construct meanings across diverse perspectives.

In the classroom, the five principles of ILTL and the four interconnected processes can be manifested through the expansion of the notion of tasks. Within an intercultural perspective, tasks are understood not simply as opportunities for communicative language use but as interactions and experiences through which learners engage in interpreting, reflecting on, and negotiating meanings across linguistic and cultural boundaries (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). In ILTL, tasks can serve as vehicles that provide opportunities for learners and teachers to interpret and co-construct meanings while fostering awareness of the relationships between language, culture, meaning, and communication.

The discussion above highlights the integral role of interpretation in ILTL. From ILTL perspective, language learning is understood as a process of moving between linguistic and cultural systems, where learners draw on their existing linguistic, cultural, experiential, and knowledge repertoires to interpret and negotiate meanings in interactions with others (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Learning languages therefore involves developing an awareness of how meanings are constructed, interpreted, and negotiated across diverse cultural perspectives. Language learners then continually interpret themselves, others, and their language learning experiences. As such, interpretation is not simply an outcome of learning but a fundamental dimension through which intercultural learning occurs.

Interpretive Resources in ILTL

Within ILTL, interpretation is understood as a process that is shaped by the linguistic, cultural, experiential, affective, and knowledge repertoires that learners bring to encounters with language and culture (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). There is acknowledgement that individuals do not interpret new meanings and experiences from a neutral standpoint but rather actively draw upon existing understandings that have been formed through prior linguistic, cultural, educational, and social experiences (Fairclough, 2015; Gadamer, 2004; McConachy, 2017). These interpretive resources influence how learners notice, compare, evaluate, and negotiate meanings, and consequently occupy a central place in intercultural learning.

This view is grounded in hermeneutic perspectives on interpretation. Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) draw on Gadamer's (2004) notion of fore-understandings to explain that learners always approach new linguistic and cultural experiences through pre-existing assumptions and experiences. Interpretation therefore involves an ongoing dialogue between new experiences and existing understandings rather than the simple acquisition of new cultural knowledge. Building on this perspective, McConachy (2017) conceptualises learners' interpretive resources as an "interpretive architecture" comprising culturally constituted knowledge, values, schemas, and representations that shape how communicative encounters are understood. His study showed that classroom interaction centred on processes of noticing, comparing, and reflection helped make learners' interpretive resources visible for further reflection. This included assumptions about 'polite' ways to carry out speech acts, interactional scripts for customer-service encounters, and dichotomous comparisons between 'Japanese' and 'Foreigners'.

Other scholars have expanded the range of interpretive resources involved in intercultural meaning-making. Wang (2023) demonstrates that learners' interpretations of face mask practices were influenced by existing cultural knowledge and perceptions of what constitutes 'protecting oneself' (p. 63), prior experiences of wearing and buying masks, and awareness of media discourses shaping these perceptions. Through analysis of online intercultural workshops, the study highlights that limited semi-otic resources and essentialised national-cultural perspectives constrained learners' opportunities to construct richer and more dialogic interpretations. The study accentuates the importance of providing learners with diverse linguistic and cultural resources to support interpretation and points to the need for greater understanding of the interpretive resources that teachers and learners draw upon during classroom interaction.

Research on intercultural literary learning similarly demonstrates that interpretation depends upon learners' existing cultural, emotional, and ideological understandings (Porto & Byram, 2017). Porto and Zembylas (2022) discuss that learners' interpretations of literary texts are mediated by prior cultural knowledge, identities, and experiences, while also arguing that intercultural reading requires learners to move beyond surface comprehension towards critical engagement with culturally embedded meanings. Likewise, Schat et al. (2022) conceptualise critical cultural awareness as requiring learners to draw upon knowledge of social justice, conflict, cultural representation, emotions, and transformation when responding to literary texts. Together, these studies illustrate that interpretation involves mobilising a wide range of linguistic, cultural, experiential, emotional, and ideological resources rather than simply decoding textual meanings. However, many of these studies focus on learners, leaving scope for examining teachers' interpretive resources, how these shape their mediation of learners' interpretive resources, and how this interaction contributes to the process of interpretation in intercultural learning.

Collectively, these studies demonstrate that interpretation in ILTL is inseparable from the interpretive resources that learners bring to intercultural encounters. Across the literature, these resources have

been conceptualised as fore-understandings (Gadamer, 2004), interpretive architecture (McConachy, 2017), cultural knowledge and identities (Porto & Byram, 2017), and critical understandings of culture, emotion, and social justice (Porto & Zembylas, 2022; Schat et al., 2022). Despite differences in terminology, they share the assumption that interpretation is mediated by learners' existing repertoires rather than generated solely by texts or classroom activities. In this study, such repertoires are conceptualised as interpretive resources. Furthermore, this existing scholarship provides a strong foundation for examining how interpretive resources are activated, negotiated, and reshaped through classroom practice and interactions among teachers, learners, and pedagogical activities.

Interpretive Vehicles in ILTL

While interpretive resources explain what learners and teachers draw upon in making sense of intercultural experiences, interpretation also depends on the pedagogical and semiotic means through which meaning becomes available for interpretation. In this study, these means are conceptualised as interpretive vehicles. Interpretive vehicles include texts, classroom tasks, multimodal materials, teacher questioning, dialogue, and other pedagogical designs that invite learners to notice, compare, reflect upon, and negotiate meanings across linguistic and cultural boundaries. The metaphor of "vehicle" foregrounds the dynamic process of moving between languages and cultures, a core characteristic of ILTL (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013), highlighting how pedagogical designs enable learners to traverse, negotiate, and move between multiple meaning systems rather than remain within a single linguistic or cultural frame. These vehicles create opportunities for learners to move between different linguistic and cultural perspectives and engage in intercultural meaning-making.

A growing body of ILTL scholarship has explored how particular pedagogical vehicles support interpretation. Kearney (2015), for example, demonstrates how classroom activities centred on cultural representations function as interpretive vehicles by guiding learners from identifying literal meanings towards constructing increasingly complex understandings of cultural symbolism. Through teacher questioning, text analysis, "Identifications" activities, voicing, and embodiment, learners are encouraged to inhabit alternative subjectivities and explore multiple interpretations of cultural representations. Similarly, Wang (2023) highlights the importance of designing learning environments that provide rich semiotic opportunities for interpretation. Her analysis suggests that when teaching materials and classroom activities offer only limited opportunities to engage with multiple linguistic and cultural perspectives, learners' interpretations are more likely to remain essentialised and less dialogic. Together, these studies position pedagogical design as central to creating opportunities for intercultural interpretation.

Literature-based studies have likewise conceptualised literary and multimodal texts as powerful interpretive vehicles. Hoff (2016, 2019) reconceptualises the intercultural reader as someone who engages dialogically with literary texts, arguing that ambiguity, conflict, and multiple voices create productive spaces for interpretation. Literary texts become vehicles through which learners encounter alternative perspectives, question existing assumptions, and negotiate meanings that resist singular interpretation. Likewise, Hoff and Habegger-Conti (2022) demonstrate how multimodal texts, particularly film, invite learners to interpret through the interaction of visual, linguistic, auditory, and cultural semiotic resources. Their work illustrates that different semiotic modes do not simply communicate information but actively shape how learners construct understandings of culture, identity, and power. The study establishes literary and multimodal texts as important interpretive vehicles in ILTL and provide a valuable foundation for further examining how such vehicles are enacted in classroom interaction and how they mediate the negotiation of learners' interpretive resources.

Other scholars have focused on classroom tasks as interpretive vehicles. Porto and Byram (2017) conceptualise literary reading as an intercultural and interpretive process rather than the retrieval of fixed

textual meanings. Drawing on a sociocultural perspective, they argue that learners' interpretations are mediated by their prior cultural knowledge, identities, experiences, emotions, and understandings as they move between their own cultural perspective (C1) and the culture represented in the text (C2). To make these interpretive processes visible, they propose the Model of Cultural Understanding and develop pedagogical tasks, including the Reading Response Task and the Visual Representation Task, which encourage learners to articulate, reflect upon, and negotiate their interpretations. Their empirical findings demonstrate that literary interpretation is dynamic and often involves multiple possible meanings, highlighting the complex process through which learners interpret texts from different cultural perspectives. Building on this insight, the present study extends this line of inquiry by examining both the interpretive resources and interpretive vehicles that teachers and learners draw upon in mediating literary interpretation.

Similarly, Porto and Zembylas (2022) demonstrate how literary discussions, reflective writing, multimodal activities, and action-oriented projects provide opportunities for learners to engage emotionally and critically with themes of suffering, injustice, and social responsibility. Both studies therefore conceptualise tasks not simply as assessment or language-learning activities but as pedagogical vehicles that mediate intercultural interpretation.

Collectively, these studies demonstrate that while interpretation is an inherent part of engaging with texts, it also requires mediation through a range of pedagogical and semiotic vehicles, including classroom tasks, literary texts, multimodal resources, teacher questioning, reflective discussions, and interactional activities. It is from this perspective that interpretive vehicles are conceptualised in this paper. The metaphor of "vehicle" foregrounds the dynamic process of moving between languages and cultures, a core characteristic of ILTL (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013), highlighting how pedagogical designs enable learners to traverse, negotiate, and move between multiple meaning systems rather than remain within a single linguistic or cultural frame.

Across the body of work discussed in this section, interpretive vehicles are consistently presented as creating opportunities for learners to engage with linguistic and cultural difference, develop multiple perspectives, and construct intercultural meanings. Together, these studies provide a strong foundation for further examining how interpretive vehicles are enacted through ongoing classroom interaction, how teachers mediate learners' engagement with them, and how these vehicles interact with participants' interpretive resources to shape intercultural meaning-making.

Towards an Integrated Understanding of Interpretation

The literature reviewed above suggests that interpretation in ILTL cannot be understood solely through interpretive resources or interpretive vehicles. Rather, interpretation emerges through their continual interaction. Interpretive vehicles provide the pedagogical and semiotic means that invite learners to engage with linguistic and cultural meanings, while interpretive resources comprise the linguistic, cultural, experiential, affective, and knowledge repertoires that teachers and learners draw upon in responding to these vehicles. Interpretation therefore develops not from either dimension independently but from the dynamic relationship between what is encountered in classroom practice and the resources participants engage with in making sense of those encounters.

Viewed from this perspective, the ILTL principles proposed by Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) provide an important pedagogical mechanism through which interpretive vehicles and interpretive resources are brought into relationship. Pedagogical vehicles such as texts, classroom tasks, multimodal resources, questioning, and dialogue create opportunities for learners to notice linguistic and cultural phenomena, compare these with their existing understandings, reflect on alternative perspectives, and interact with

others in negotiating meaning. Throughout these processes, learners and teachers continually draw upon and reshape their interpretive resources, allowing interpretation to remain dynamic, relational, and socially mediated rather than fixed or individual.

Building on existing scholarship on interpretive resources and interpretive vehicles, this study conceptualises interpretation as a dynamic process emerging through their interaction in classroom practice. While previous research has substantially advanced understanding of these two dimensions, there remains considerable scope for examining how teachers and learners mobilise and negotiate interpretive resources through pedagogical vehicles during naturally occurring classroom interaction. By analysing classroom discourse, this study investigates how the ILTL principles are enacted to scaffold learners' interpretive engagement and support the collaborative construction of intercultural understanding in practice.

Methodology

Research Design

This study addresses the following research question:

How do interpretive vehicles and interpretive resources interact in teachers' enactment of ILTL in literature-based English courses in an Indonesian higher education context?

The study adopts a qualitative, interpretive design informed by an intercultural orientation to English language education (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). It forms part of a broader doctoral project investigating how ILTL was enacted to provide meaningful English language teaching and learning in Indonesia (Setiawan, 2026). Within that larger study, a series of teacher-led classroom interventions were collaboratively designed with the researcher and implemented to explore how intercultural principles could be localised within existing curricula.

The study aligns with an interpretive-constructivist paradigm (Schwandt, 1994), viewing teaching and learning as socially situated meaning-making practices. The purpose was not statistical generalisation, but analytic understanding of how intercultural pedagogy is realised through teachers' interpretive judgment, pedagogical reasoning, classroom mediation, and negotiation of institutional constraints.

Research Context and Participants

The study was conducted at a private Indonesian university offering dual-degree programs in partnership with American institutions. English functioned as the medium of instruction, and syllabi and assessments were imported from institutional partners. Within this transnational education model, local teachers were required to implement externally developed course outlines, materials, and assignments.

Two literature-based English language courses were selected: Introduction to Literature and Composition II. Although the stated aims of these courses included academic writing development such as grammar, vocabulary, essay structure, and MLA conventions, both courses relied heavily on literary texts as vehicles for engagement, analysis, and interpretation (see Setiawan, 2024). Beyond structural and technical skill development, students were invited to explore ethical, social, historical, and philosophical dimensions of literary texts.

The teacher participants were two local Indonesian lecturers:

- Po (pseudonym), teaching *Introduction to Literature*, had previously studied American Studies.
- Rhae (pseudonym), who taught *Composition II*, also had a degree in American Studies.

The focus on literature-based language course, although incidental as these were the courses that the participants taught during the data collection period, provided a rich context for observing interpretive processes. Literature in these courses functioned not merely as content but as a semiotic space in which interpretation was central. Literary-based language teaching has been recognised for its potential to support intercultural engagement through narrative, perspective-taking, and textual response (Hossain, 2024), making it an appropriate site for examining interpretive enactment.

The two courses were selected purposively from four English courses offered during the data collection period (Composition I, Composition II, EAP 4 – Communication Skills, and Introduction to Literature). Purposive sampling enabled depth of contextual understanding and coherence between research question, design, and data (Ahmad & Wilkins, 2024).

Due to prior professional connections, the researcher occupied an insider–outsider position: culturally and linguistically proximate to participants yet institutionally positioned as a researcher affiliated with an Australian university. This positionality required reflexive engagement with how the researcher’s own interpretive assumptions shaped facilitation and analysis. Field notes and analytic memos were maintained throughout.

Data Collection

Data in this study included:

1. Preliminary interviews exploring teachers’ beliefs about English, literature, and intercultural learning
2. Collaborative design meetings in which intercultural concepts were discussed and adapted into course design
3. Classroom observations and artefacts (lesson plans, slides, student tasks, written work)
4. Post-intervention debriefing interviews reflecting on enactment and constraints

One full cycle of design, enactment, and reflection was conducted with each teacher.

This study is part of broader doctoral research of the Setiawan (2024). Other findings of this research using similar analysis frameworks were reported in Setiawan (2023), focusing on selection of ELTL materials from an intercultural perspective, and Setiawan (2026), exploring the understanding of interculturality in Indonesian ELT.

Due to COVID-19, lessons were conducted online via Zoom or Microsoft Teams. All observations and interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Artefacts and observation notes were compiled to capture both intended design and enacted practice.

Ethics approval was obtained from the author’s doctoral institution. Teachers signed consent forms, and students provided verbal consent at the start of observed lessons. Pseudonyms are used throughout.

Data Analysis

Analysis followed an interpretive thematic approach (Braun & Clarke, 2022), guided by the theoretical constructs of ILTL. Data were first organised chronologically into design, enactment, and student engagement. The analytical framework of the study, as shown in Figure 1, consisted of the five principles of ILTL (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013) and a conceptual distinction between interpretive resources and interpretive vehicles proposed by this author based on research on the interpretive dimensions of ILTL (Hoff, 2016, 2019; Hoff & Habegger-Conti, 2022; Kearney, 2015; McConachy, 2017; Porto & Byram, 2017; Porto & Zembylas, 2022; Schat et al., 2022; Wang, 2023).

Figure 1 represents a conceptual modelling of interpretation in ILTL as emerging through the dynamic interaction between interpretive vehicles, the five ILTL principles, and interpretive resources. Interpretive vehicles provide the semiotic and pedagogical means that invite, prompt, and mediate interpretation, while interpretive resources refer to the linguistic, cultural, experiential, affective, and knowledge-based understandings that teachers and learners bring to meaning-making. Situated between these two dimensions, the five ILTL principles of active construction, making connections, social interaction, reflection, and responsibility (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013) mediate how participants engage with cultural meanings, draw on their interpretive resources, and construct intercultural understandings.

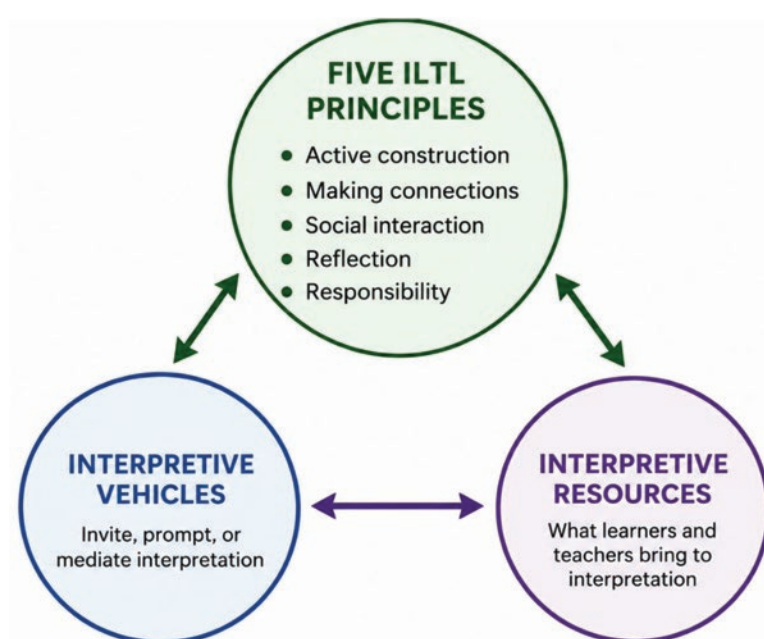


Figure 1 *Analytical Framework for Interpretation in ILTL*

Findings

The analysis is organised into two cases, Po and Rhae. It first analyses the design process between the researcher and the teacher participants, particularly in how the participants interpreted ILTL. It then examines the designs, followed by analysis of the enactment.

Po's Case: From Personal Histories to Designing and Enacting Interpretive Vehicles

In designing the intervention with the researcher, Po frequently reflected on her previous experiences of learning English and how these shaped her understanding of language learning.

I develop interest in English, but not through classrooms, because my teacher, my English teacher, didn't really engage. Didn't really create the enjoyable and meaningful learning environment. Back then we were to memorise vocabulary items, and then we were forced to understand certain meanings. We did some textbooks, worksheets. And for me, they were not fun. It made me under pressure to, you know, I didn't get it, I didn't get this language. Especially when, you know, they were formulas, they were like, 16 tenses all over. And then the teacher didn't really explain how to use it. And it was more of filling blanks or presenting something in English and as for me, who didn't really understand the language, it was kind of torture. (Po, first interview, March 2021)

Figure 2 *Extract 1 from Po's Intervention Design*

She recalled ("back then") learning English through activities that focused heavily on memorising vocabulary and grammatical rules, often without opportunities to connect language to students' experiences or social realities (Figure 2). In reflecting on these experiences, Po described feeling disengaged and pressured, characterising the learning process as disconnected from meaningful communication. These reflections, including emotions ('torture'), reveal how her own experiences as a language learner functioned as interpretive resources that shaped her understanding of meaningful language education. Po's personal histories provided the interpretive lens through which she made sense of ILTL and served as the fore-understandings (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013) of what she believed as meaningful language learning. Her critique of grammar-focused instruction was therefore not simply a rejection of particular teaching methods but an interpretation of language learning as a process that should enable learners to connect language with their lived realities.

Furthermore, her critique of the grammar-translation method reflects dissatisfaction with pedagogical affordances that offered minimal space for meaning-making; tasks centred on memorisation and teacher transmission did not create structured opportunities for interpretative engagement or for connecting language to lived experience. When she states that "my English teacher didn't really engage, didn't really create the enjoyable and meaningful learning environment," she foregrounds the centrality of teacher mediation as a powerful interpretive vehicle. In her view, it is not the content alone but the way teachers design tasks, pose questions, and facilitate dialogue that enables learners to interpret language as socially situated practice rather than as abstract form.

Such understandings shaped Po's idea of interpretation in learning English through literary texts. Po stated:

... and to relate the poem to their experience. They [students] never thought that the poem could be so interrelated with their experience. So, that is a very interesting thing. For example, when I mentioned some types of birds, none of them were familiar with them. I asked them to Google it. When they did, they said, 'Oh, this is called this in my area, Miss.' This is called this in my area. They just knew the names of the birds and could imagine how they represented words in society. Some of them also said that they had never seen a bird in their life. Never. This information should not be taken for granted. If the content of English materials is not relatable to their lives, it will create disengagement. Then there's the torture that I feel. Teachers or facilitators really need to create a bridge. Yes, it's a process of getting to know the content that teachers choose. (Po, first interview, March 2021)

Figure 3 *Extract 2 from Po's Intervention Design*

The extract in Figure 3 further illustrates how Po understood interpretation in ILTL. Central to her account is the ILTL principle of *making connections* (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013), as she repeatedly emphasised the importance of relating the poem to students' experiences. For Po, interpretation did not involve simply understanding the content of the poem but establishing relationships between the world represented in the text and learners' own realities. Her observation that students "never thought that the poem could be so interrelated with their experience" suggests that interpretation emerged when learners connected new meanings encountered in the poem with their existing experiences and understandings. Po demonstrated an understanding that interpretation is mediated by learners' prior cultural knowledge, identities, and experiences (Porto & Byram, 2017), rather than involving the fixed textual meanings alone. Po's emphasis on "[t]his information should not be taken for granted" highlights the importance of drawing on students' interpretive resources to support deeper engagement with literary and intercultural meanings.

The extract also demonstrates Po's awareness that to create opportunities interpretation, teachers need to draw on a range of 'interpretive vehicles'. The text itself, teacher questioning, Google searches, comparative prompts, and classroom dialogue functioned as pedagogical means that invited students to engage with meanings beyond the text. For example, when students encountered unfamiliar references to birds in the poem, Po asked them to search for information and discuss equivalent birds found in their own local environments. Similar to the pedagogical vehicles discussed by Kearney (2015), these activities structured learners' engagement with unfamiliar cultural meanings and supported their movement between textual representations and their own experiences.

Based on such understanding, Po designed a series of tasks for the intervention. Po selected Langston Hughes' poem *Life is Fine*, a text that explores adversity, resilience, and discrimination. Her choice of text was informed by her belief that students would be able to connect aspects of Hughes' experiences with challenges in their own lives. Drawing on her understanding of Indonesian students and their social realities, Po anticipated that the poem would create opportunities for learners to relate textual meanings to their own experiences. The selection of the poem therefore reflects the ILTL principle of *making connections*, as learning was conceptualised not as engagement with a culturally distant literary text but as an opportunity to establish relationships between the experiences represented in the poem and learners' own lifeworlds. The poem itself functioned as a key interpretive vehicle through which such connections could be explored.

Task	ILTL principle(s) enacted	Interpretive vehicles
Selection of poem: <i>Life is Fine</i> Students engage with a poem about adversity, resilience, and discrimination that Po believed would resonate with their own experiences.	Making connections	A text (the poem)
Getting to know the poem Students share initial impressions, discuss emotional responses, and infer the identity of the poetic voice through guided reading and dialogue.	Active construction	Guided reading; teacher questioning; classroom dialogue
Timeline infographic Students research Langston Hughes' life and the socio-historical conditions that shaped his writing.	Making connections	Task; research activity
I hear you, Langston: Connecting texts and the world Students identify related texts, cultural artefacts, and contemporary social issues and connect them to the poem.	Making connections	Related texts; multimodal resources; comparative discussion prompts
A letter (pen pal) to Langston Students write a letter to the poet connecting the poem to their own experiences and perspectives.	Reflection; social interaction	Letter-writing task; imagined dialogue with the poet

Figure 4 Overview of Po's Intervention Design Showing the Relationship between Learning Tasks, ILTL Principles, and Interpretive Vehicles

Building on the poem, Po designed a sequence of tasks that created multiple interpretive vehicles for students' engagement with the text (Figure 4). In *Getting to know the poem*, students were invited to share initial impressions, discuss emotional responses, and infer the identity of the poetic voice through guided reading and classroom dialogue. These activities encouraged students to actively construct interpretations by drawing on their own understandings and responses, resonating with the ILTL principle of *active construction* of meaning (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013).

The *Timeline infographic* activity introduced students to Langston Hughes' life and the socio-historical conditions that shaped his writing. Through research and discussion, students were encouraged to situate the poem within broader historical and cultural contexts. The task therefore functioned as an interpretive vehicle that expanded the range of meanings available for interpretation by connecting the text to social realities beyond the classroom. In doing so, it supported learners in moving beyond the immediate content of the poem to consider how language, identity, and experience are shaped by wider historical circumstances, a relationship emphasised in intercultural approaches to language learning.

Similarly, *I hear you, Langston: Connecting texts and the world* functioned as an interpretive vehicle that foregrounded the ILTL principle of *making connections*. By inviting students to identify related texts, cultural artefacts, and contemporary social issues, the activity encouraged learners to establish connections across texts, contexts, and experiences. Students were prompted to consider how similar themes might emerge in other contexts and how literary meanings resonate across different social realities rather than treating the poet's experiences as isolated or culturally distant.

Finally, *A letter (pen pal) to Langston* acted as an interpretive vehicle through which students connected the poem to their own experiences and perspectives. By writing directly to the author, students were positioned not as passive recipients of literary meanings but as participants in a dialogic encounter with the text. This task foregrounded interaction and reflection, two ILTL principles, by encouraging learners to examine their own experiences in relation to those represented in the poem and to articulate these connections through writing to the poet. Interpretation is then viewed as a dialogic engagement between reader and text, the activity created opportunities for students to construct meaning through the relationship between textual representations and their own lived realities (Hoff, 2016, 2019).

Enactment and Student Engagement

Po carried out all activities that she had planned for the intervention. In leading students to complete the tasks, Po created "Brainstorm template" that consisted of the following prompts:

- Self-introduction
- My (students') own understanding of the poem
- Experience that connects me (students) to the poem
- My (students') perspective of what kind of person the poet is
- Questions that connect my (students') understanding of the poem and the life of the poet
- My (students') experience that connects to the poet's life

The brainstorming prompts enacted several ILTL principles by creating opportunities for students to engage with the poem through their own experiences and perspectives. Prompts such as "my own understanding of the poem and my perspective of what kind of person the poet is" encouraged *active construction* by inviting students to develop and articulate their own interpretations of both the text and the author. The prompts "experience that connects me to the poem and my experience that connects to the poet's life" foregrounded the principle of *making connections*, encouraging learners to relate the

experiences represented in the poem and the poet's biography to their own lived realities. Meanwhile, the prompt "questions that connect my understanding of the poem and the life of the poet" supported *reflection* by encouraging students to examine relationships between textual meanings, the author's experiences, and their own understandings. Collectively, these prompts functioned as interpretive vehicles that mediated engagement between the literary text and students' interpretive resources, as evident in the following analysis.

The following discussion is based on the analysis of students' engagement in Po's class, drawing primarily on student artefacts produced during the intervention, including thirty-six artefacts from *I hear you, Langston: Connecting texts to the world* and thirty-five artefacts from each of the brainstorming and *Pen Pal to Langston* tasks. To illustrate how intercultural interpretation was realised in practice, this section focuses on selected information-rich cases (Patton, 2015) that demonstrate nuanced engagement with interpretive resources within ILTL.

Students' artefacts revealed interpretive resources that they drew on when interpreting the English texts they were learning in the classroom.

or character/s who is/are inspired in writing poetry?
 When I read the story of your life as a black American who wants to tell the stories of your people in ways that reflect the actual culture, I feel we have in common as minority. This happened when I, as a Sundanese, studied in an environment that was mostly Javanese. At that time I was very difficult to get along with them because there were so many differences between us. But, I did not give up on introducing them while playing or studying about culture in Indonesia is diverse through traditional games and songs from West Java. These methods are very effective for me who is a minority to join the social circle of the majority

Figure 5 Screenshot from a Student's (Rahmi's) Work in Po's Class: *Pen pal to Langston*

For example, in a letter that a student (Rahmi) wrote to the author (Figure 5), she drew parallels between her experience as a Sundanese student studying in a Javanese-dominant environment and Langston Hughes's position as an African American writer. Her response illustrates the enactment of the ILTL principle of *making connections* through the interpretation of Hughes' experiences in relation to her own social and cultural realities. The statement, "I feel we have in common as minority", demonstrates how the student interpreted the poem by identifying shared experiences of minority status across different cultural contexts. Rahmi's interpretation also reflects the affective dimension of literary meaning-making discussed by Porto and Zembylas (2022). By identifying with Hughes' experiences through their own experiences as a minority, the student responded emotionally to issues of exclusion, difference, and belonging, demonstrating how engagement with literature can involve personal and affective connections to experiences of social injustice.

The interpretation was made possible through drawing upon both experiential and affective interpretive resources. Most prominent were the student's experiences of being a Sundanese minority in a predominantly Javanese environment, cultural knowledge of West Javanese traditions, and emotional responses associated with navigating minority-majority relationships. These resources enabled the

student to connect with Hughes' experiences and make sense of the poem through perceived similarities in experiences of difference, belonging, and social participation. Consequently, the student's understanding of the poem was mediated by both prior experiences and emotional engagement, which shaped how the text was interpreted and related to their own life.

Similarly, Rizki, another student, interpreted Hughes' experiences of racial discrimination through the lens of his own experiences of being perceived as different because of his skin colour, revealing how personal experiences shaped his interpretation of the poem.

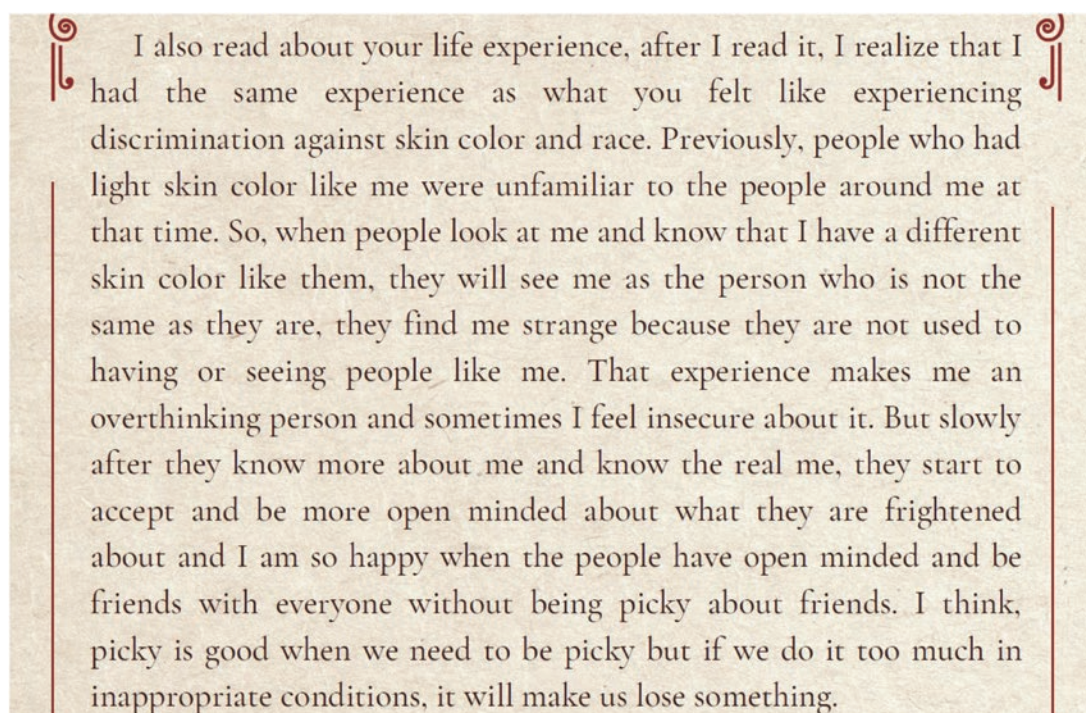


Figure 6 Rizki's Letter to Langston Hughes

In Figure 6, Rizki's response demonstrates a strong enactment of the ILTL principle of *making connections*. In interpreting Hughes' experiences of racial discrimination, the student drew parallels with his own experiences of being perceived as different because of their skin colour. The statement, "I realize that I had the same experience as what you felt", illustrates how interpretation was grounded in the student's efforts to relate the poem to their own lived experiences.

Collectively, both interpretations were made possible through the engagement with experiential and affective interpretive resources. Rahmi drew on her experiences as a Sundanese minority in a predominantly Javanese environment, together with her cultural knowledge of West Javanese traditions and emotional responses to navigating minority-majority relationships. Similarly, Rizki mobilised experiences of being perceived as different because of his appearance, feelings of insecurity and overthinking, and memories of gradually gaining acceptance from others. In both cases, these resources enabled the students to interpret Hughes' experiences not as distant accounts of racial discrimination but as experiences that resonated with their own lives, demonstrating how prior experiences and affective engagement mediated literary interpretation. This finding aligns with Porto and Zembylas' (2022) argument that engagement with literature involves affective responses to experiences of suffering, injustice, and discrimination.

Furthermore, Rahmi's and Rizki's letters illustrate how interpretation emerged through the interaction between interpretive vehicles, interpretive resources, and the ILTL principles embedded in Po's lesson design. Prior to writing the letters, students engaged with a series of prompts that invited them to articulate their own understanding of the poem, reflect on their experiences that connect to the poem and the poet's life, develop their perspective of what kind of person the poet is, and formulate questions that connect their understanding of the poem and the life of the poet. These prompts functioned as interpretive vehicles that encouraged *active construction*, *making connections*, and *reflection* by directing students' attention towards relationships between the text, the poet, and their own experiences. In responding to these prompts and subsequently composing the pen-pal letters, students mobilised a range of interpretive resources, including personal experiences, cultural knowledge, identities, beliefs, and emotional responses. Rahmi drew on her experiences as a Sundanese student in a predominantly Javanese environment to make sense of Hughes' experiences of marginalisation, while Rizki interpreted the poem through experiences of being perceived as different because of his skin colour. These responses demonstrate how the interpretive vehicles embedded within the task created opportunities for students to activate and draw upon experiential, cultural, and affective resources in constructing meanings from the poem. Such findings are consistent with a substantial body of literature showing that literary interpretation is mediated by learners' prior experiences, identities, and fore-understandings (Gadamer, 2004; McConachy, 2017; Porto & Byram, 2017). As Porto and Byram (2017) argue, learners do not approach literary texts as neutral readers; rather, they draw on existing knowledge, experiences, and identities in constructing meanings from texts.

At the same time, the nature of the interpretations produced reveals certain limitations in how interpretation was mediated. While the task successfully activated students' interpretive resources and supported meaningful personal engagement with the poem, there was limited evidence that students were encouraged to interrogate their assumptions, explore alternative interpretations, or engage with perspectives beyond their own experiences. Interpretation was largely grounded in students' existing cultural, affective, and experiential resources, where meanings are shaped by pre-existing understandings and experiences. However, there was less evidence of the kind of dialogic engagement with ambiguity, multiple perspectives, and alternative subject positions emphasised by Hoff (2016, 2019) and Hoff and Habegger-Conti (2022).

This limitation highlights that tasks alone are not sufficient interpretive vehicles for fostering deeper intercultural interpretation. While the pen-pal letter successfully created opportunities for students to draw upon their interpretive resources and connect the poem to their own experiences, additional vehicles are needed to extend interpretation beyond personal reflection. Teacher questioning, classroom dialogue, comparative activities, and opportunities to engage with alternative perspectives can further mediate interpretation by prompting learners to examine their assumptions, consider multiple meanings, and explore the broader cultural, historical, and ideological issues represented in the text. Such pedagogical mediation may create greater opportunities for students to engage more critically with literary meanings and move towards the reflective, dialogic, and multiperspectival forms of interpretation advocated in intercultural language education (Porto & Zembylas, 2022; Schat et al., 2022).

Rhae' Case: Pedagogical Re-Orientation Through Interpretive Vehicles

The intervention with Rhae was developed in response to tensions she experienced between her pedagogical beliefs and the technical orientation of the Composition II curriculum. Figure 7 illustrates how Rhae interpreted the challenges of literature teaching through her own pedagogical experiences and understandings of students' prior learning.

The goal was to focus on the technical [aspect, especially in my class]. If we talk about connection, they have to learn approaches such as reader response and Marxism to create that connection. In Composition II, we don't learn those kinds of approaches; it's more about technical writing in literary analysis. I actually think it's not enough. This should be extended not only in this course, but in any other course. Unfortunately, it just introduces how to write a response essay. It's just an introduction to responding to literature, reading literature and creating a good analytical essay. It's not enough to just learn about fiction as a technical issue ... In Indonesia, we have a very different culture where some students may only study literature in Bahasa Indonesia. They might not study it in depth, focusing more on rhetorical functions and figurative language. What is the theme? But they may have a different experience of analysing literature in Bahasa Indonesia. So that is the challenge. (Rhae, second interview, May 2021)

Figure 7 *Extract from Rhae's Interview*

Rhae's comments reveal that her understanding of literature teaching was shaped by a range of interpretive resources, including her pedagogical beliefs about the purpose of literary learning and her knowledge of students' previous experiences of studying literature in Bahasa Indonesia. Although the curriculum emphasised technical aspects of literary analysis and response writing, Rhae questioned whether this focus alone was sufficient for meaningful engagement with literature. Her concern that students were learning "how to write a response essay" rather than engaging more deeply with literary meanings suggests an alternative understanding of literature education in which interpretation, rather than technical mastery alone, occupies a central role. At the same time, her observation that students may have "a different experience of analysing literature in Bahasa Indonesia" indicates an awareness that learners enter the classroom with existing interpretive resources shaped by previous educational, linguistic, and cultural experiences.

From an ILTL perspective, Rhae's concerns reflect the principles of *active construction* and *making connections*. Rather than viewing literary learning as the acquisition of analytical techniques, she emphasised the need for students to connect literary texts with their own experiences and understandings. Interpretation was therefore conceptualised as a process through which learners actively construct meanings by drawing on resources developed across different linguistic and cultural contexts. In this sense, Rhae recognised that students' prior encounters with literature in Bahasa Indonesia could influence how they approached literary texts in English and therefore needed to be incorporated into the learning process rather than treated as separate from it.

In response to these concerns, the intervention was designed around a series of interpretive vehicles intended to create opportunities for students to engage with literary meanings in more personally and culturally meaningful ways. Table 1 provides an overview of the lesson design.

A notable feature of the intervention was the deliberate selection of interpretive vehicles that encouraged students to engage with a range of interpretive resources. The concept of love functioned as an initial vehicle through which students could draw on personal experiences, cultural understandings, and existing beliefs about relationships. This thematic focus aimed to provide a point of entry into literary interpretation that was familiar to students while simultaneously opening possibilities for exploring how meanings are shaped across different contexts. The activity therefore enacted the ILTL principle of *making connections* by positioning students' prior experiences and understandings as resources for engaging with literary texts.

The comparative reading of Emily Dickinson's *Wild Nights! Wild Nights!* and Amir Hamzah's *Padamu Jua (To You, and Only You)* aimed to further these opportunities for interpretation. Through engagement with texts originating from different linguistic and cultural traditions, students were invited to

Table 1 *Rhae's Lesson Design*

Task	ILTL Principle(s) Enacted	Interpretive Vehicles
Exploring the concept of love Students discuss their understandings, experiences, and beliefs about love before engaging with the literary texts.	Making connections	Thematic prompt; classroom discussion
Comparative reading of <i>Wild Nights! Wild Nights!</i> and <i>Padamu Jua (To You, and Only You)</i> Students read and compare representations of love across English and Indonesian literary traditions.	Active construction; making connections	Literary texts; comparative reading activity
Post-reading discussion Students discuss similarities, differences, and meanings emerging from the two poems.	Active construction; making connections; reflection	Teacher questioning; classroom dialogue; comparative discussion prompts
Creative rewriting activity Students reinterpret or rewrite aspects of the poems from their own perspectives and experiences.	Active construction; reflection	Creative writing task
Reflection prompts Students reflect on how their perspectives influenced their interpretations and relate literary meanings to contemporary experiences.	Reflection; making connections	Reflective questions

consider how similar themes could be represented in different ways. The paired texts functioned as interpretive vehicles that encouraged learners to move between English and Indonesian literary traditions while drawing on cultural knowledge, prior literary experiences, and affective responses to the theme of love. In doing so, the activity enacted both *active construction* and *making connections*, as students were required to construct interpretations through relationships established across texts, languages, and cultural contexts.

The post-reading discussions, creative rewriting activities, and reflection prompts aimed to provide further opportunities for interpretation by encouraging students to articulate, reconsider, and extend their understandings. These vehicles particularly foregrounded the ILTL principle of *reflection*. Students were invited to examine how their own perspectives shaped their interpretations, relate literary representations to contemporary experiences, and reconsider meanings from alternative viewpoints. The creative rewriting task was especially significant because it positioned students not simply as readers of literary texts but as active participants in the construction of meaning. Interpretation therefore became a process of engagement between literary representations and students' own experiential, cultural, linguistic, and affective resources.

The following analysis examines how interpretation emerged during the enactment of the intervention, including activities that were modified or not enacted as originally planned, and how the interpretive vehicles embedded within the lesson design supported students in mobilising their interpretive resources.

Enactment and Students' Engagement: Mediating Interpretation within Curricular Constraints

Analysis of Rhae's enactment draws primarily on the classroom interactions between her and the students. Due to curricular constraints and the need to fulfil prescribed requirements in the

Composition II course, only the first three planned activities were enacted: (1) exploring the concept of love, (2) the comparative reading of *Wild Nights! Wild Nights!* and *Padamu Jua*, and (3) the post-reading discussion. The analysis below therefore focuses on how interpretation was mediated through these enacted activities.

The interaction in Figure 8 illustrates how interpretation was mediated through the interplay of interpretive vehicles, interpretive resources, and ILTL principles. Rhae's questioning functioned as a key interpretive vehicle by inviting students to reconsider the meaning of "night" across different textual contexts rather than treating it as a fixed concept. By drawing students back to their earlier discussion of *The Owl*, she encouraged them to compare meanings associated with "night" and explore how the phrase *Wild Nights* might generate different interpretations. In doing so, the interaction enacted the ILTL principles of *active construction* and *making connections*, as students were required to construct meanings by relating the current text to both previously encountered texts and existing understandings. The discussion of *The Owl* also served as an interpretive resource, demonstrating how prior learning experiences can be mobilised in subsequent acts of interpretation.

Ragil's response demonstrates how students drew on multiple interpretive resources in this process. In suggesting that *Wild Nights* could be interpreted as "romantic" because it resembled *dongeng* (fairy tales), he drew upon cultural knowledge and prior experiences with Indonesian storytelling traditions to make sense of the poem. These cultural and experiential resources, together with resources

Participant	Dialogue
Rhae	Previously stating that if this is just one single word ["night"], it is bad because we see something dangerous, from Ragil, out of the rule, like what Adit said and then crazy things just like Selin said that is putting this part into something bad connotation. So, if we have another phrase which is "Wild Nights", remember when we talked about "The Owl" and some of you say it's different meaning about being in the evening ... being in the night. When some of you say being in the night is something that is relaxing, something that is calming or something that is bitter. But in this case after we have the poem from "The Owl" written by Arthur Sze and then we have another similar idea about the night which is "Wild Nights" here. Is it still something bad or it can be something different just like the poem "The Owl" that we discussed in the last two weeks? Is it still bad or it may have a different ...?
Ragil	May I, Miss?
Rhae	Sure
<u>Ragil</u>	I think "Wild Nights" can be romantic, Miss. I think, in my opinion because it is like a story like the " <u>dongeng</u> " [fairy tale]. <u>Dongeng-dongeng kaya puteri itu</u> . Miss [like fairy tales about princess].
Rhae	Oh, fairy tales.
Ragil	Ya, kaya <u>gitu</u> [something like that], Miss. <u>Cerita-cerita</u> ... [stories of ...]
Rhae	So, it might be something romantic. So, it is getting a transition in your opinion from something that is dangerous and then we move to something that is romantic, which is related to fairy tales. How about other students? Do you have the transitional meaning when we put it as "Wild Nights"?

Figure 8 Extract from Rhae's Intervention, Lesson 1

developed through previous classroom discussions, enabled him to move beyond literal associations of “night” as dangerous and develop an alternative interpretation grounded in familiar cultural narratives. Interpretation therefore emerged through the interaction between the teacher’s questioning (interpretive vehicle) and students’ prior learning experiences, and their existing cultural knowledge (interpretive resources). In this sense, Rhae’s questioning functioned as a pedagogical vehicle that scaffolded students’ active construction of meaning and encouraged them to make connections across texts, prior learning experiences, and cultural contexts (Gadamer, 2004; McConachy, 2017; Porto & Byram, 2017), emphasising the important role of teacher mediation (Kearney, 2015; Kohler, 2015) in supporting increasingly complex interpretations within ILTL.

The emphasis on students’ interpretive resources is further illustrated in Figure 8, which demonstrates how Rhae foregrounded students’ personal experiences as resources for literary interpretation.

In Figure 9, Rhae explicitly positioned students’ experiences as interpretive resources for literary meaning-making. Through a series of reflective prompts such as “What does this poem make you feel?”, “What is the effect to you as a reader?”, and “interpreting the poem by relating that to your experience”, Rhae used teacher questioning as an interpretive vehicle to encourage students to connect the poem to their everyday lives. These prompts enacted the ILTL principles of *making connections* and *reflection* by inviting students to relate literary meanings to what they “do every day”, “see every day”, and experience in their daily lives. Rather than directing students towards a predetermined interpretation, the questions created opportunities for learners to actively construct meanings through engagement with their own experiences and perspectives.

At the same time, the extract demonstrates how interpretation was mediated through the mobilisation of experiential and affective interpretive resources. Rhae repeatedly emphasised that understanding the poem should involve personal engagement with its themes and emotional impact, suggesting that

Participant
Rhae

Dialogue

... let’s make this poem more personal through your experience. As what we learn in the theme, we have to relate the theme as a message from our experience. So, let us try to be more personal when we learn about thematic exploration. What does this poem make you feel? What is the effect to you as a reader especially if you place your position as the speaker ... This is very good when you can explain the impact to you personally. Okay, from the different words so it means that everyone in this class later will be able to create a very personal thematic in which you can have a different way to write or even to discuss the poem ... So, this is very good, when you can make it something very personal ... it can be relatable with our experience ... So, experience, like I said before, it can be what we do every day. It can be also from what we see every day. So, what you do every day, what you see every day, will also contribute you to the feeling of the poem, to the meaning of the poem itself. So, that can be a practice that you can use in my class, interpreting the poem by relating that to your experience on what you do, what you see and what you say in your daily life.

Figure 9 Extract from Rhae’s Intervention, Lesson 1

students' feelings, observations, and everyday experiences were legitimate resources for interpretation. In doing so, she enacted the ILTL principles of making connections and reflection by encouraging students to relate the poem to what they experience, observe, and feel in their own lives. This emphasis aligns with Hoff's (2016, 2019) conception of interpretation as a process in which learners engage with texts through their existing experiences and understandings, as well as the role of emotions or affective engagement in literary text interpretation (Porto & Zembylas, 2022).

Beyond drawing on experiential and affective resources, students also mobilised ideological resources in constructing interpretations of the poem, as seen in the following extract.

In Figure 10, student's interpretation drew on ideological interpretive resources, specifically religious values, to make sense of the poem. While most group members understood the poem as expressing the theme of love, the student interpreted it through a religious lens, suggesting that the poem reflected religious values rather than solely romantic meanings. In noting that while "most of us agree that it still talks about love," one group member interpreted the poem as connected to "religious values," the student recognised that meaning was not singular but shaped by differing perspectives. It shows that interpretations are mediated by their prior cultural knowledge, identities, and fore-understandings, and that meaning emerges through the interaction between the text and the diverse repertoires that learners bring to interpretation (Porto & Byram, 2017) as resources. By introducing a value-based interpretation that differed from those of other group members, the student's response opened up possibilities for more critical engagement with the poem, creating opportunities to examine how different beliefs, values, and worldviews shape literary interpretation. In this sense, the discussion created conditions for the kind of critical reflection on values and assumptions highlighted by Porto and Zembylas (2022) and Schat et al. (2022), even though such critical engagement was yet to fully develop in the interaction itself.

"... most of us agree that it still has the same value that it still talks about love. However, there is one of our members [who] thinks that it is a different value because he thinks that it's connected with religious values."

Figure 10 Extract from *Rhae's Intervention, Lesson 2*

The previous extracts have shown how students drew on personal, experiential, and cultural resources in interpreting literary texts. The extract in Figure 11 below highlights students' developing awareness of semiotic resources, particularly how linguistic choices and contextual meanings influence interpretation across languages.

The extract illustrates students' developing awareness that meaning cannot always be transferred directly across languages. In explaining why the translated version differed from the original, Fathan argued that translation "can't do it word by word" and instead "should be contextual." In doing so, he mobilised linguistic and knowledge-based interpretive resources, drawing on his understanding of how translation operates across languages and how linguistic structures influence meaning. His comments suggest an awareness that meaning is shaped not only by individual lexical items but also by the linguistic and cultural contexts in which they are embedded. By recognising that Indonesian and English have different structures and that these differences affect how meanings are represented, he demonstrated an understanding that interpretation involves more than linguistic decoding. Rather than focusing solely on what the text means, Fathan reflected on how meanings are constructed, negotiated, and transformed through the linguistic resources available in different languages. The extract also highlights the role of awareness of semiotic resources in shaping interpretation.

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Dialogue</i>
Rhae	I think Fathan <u>wanna</u> add something?
Fathan	Ya, Miss. Well, I think when we try to translate a language to another, we can't do it word by word. I mean, the translation should be contextual. So, you know, Indonesian and English have different structures. So, when we ... when we translate it word by word, it will, you know, change the meaning. So, <u>yeah</u> I mean, that's why it's different because the translation should be contextual instead of word by word.
Rhae	Ok, thank you, Fathan. I agree with Fathan. Translating from one language to another language, we need to consider the context <u>and also</u> whether the impact will be the same or not with the original one ... The purpose is the same impact and of course with the same imagination in the readers' mind when they see the translated version too.

Figure 11 Extract from Rhae's Intervention, Lesson 2

Furthermore, the interaction reflects the ILTL principles of *active construction* and *making connections*. Fathan actively constructed an explanation for the differences between the texts by connecting his understanding of translation to the literary texts under discussion. Rhae's uptake of the response further extended this awareness by emphasising the importance of context and considering whether a translated version can create a similar impact on readers as the original. Through this dialogue, teacher questioning and classroom discussion functioned as interpretive vehicles that encouraged students to attend to the semiotic dimensions of interpretation. This finding echoes other studies that discuss the role of semiotic resources in interpretation (Hoff & Habegger-Conti 2022; Wang, 2023) and emphasises that interpretation requires engagement with the multiple semiotic resources through which meanings are communicated and understood (Kearney, 2015).

Taken together, Rhae's intervention demonstrates how interpretation was mediated through the interaction between interpretive vehicles, interpretive resources, and the ILTL principles of active construction, making connections, and reflection (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Across the enacted activities, teacher questioning, classroom dialogue, comparative literary texts, and contextual prompts functioned as interpretive vehicles that created opportunities for students to actively construct meanings, connect literary texts with their own experiences and prior learning, and reflect on their developing interpretations. In engaging with these vehicles, students drew upon a diverse range of interpretive resources, including prior learning experiences, cultural knowledge, personal and affective experiences, ideological beliefs, linguistic knowledge, and awareness of semiotic resources in meaning-making across languages. Consistent with Gadamer's (2004) notion of fore-understandings and McConachy's (2017) concept of interpretive architecture, students' interpretations were mediated by the resources they brought to the classroom rather than emerging from the literary texts alone.

At the same time, the intervention illustrates how carefully designed interpretive vehicles can scaffold the mobilisation of these resources, echoing Kearney's (2015) emphasis on pedagogical mediation and Wang's (2023) argument that opportunity. However, the enactment also highlights the influence of curricular constraints. As Rhae was required to fulfil the prescribed requirements of the Composition II curriculum, not all planned interpretive vehicles could be enacted, limiting opportunities for students to engage in the later reflective and creative activities that had been designed to further extend their interpretive engagement. es for interpretation must be deliberately created and supported in classroom interaction.

Discussion

This study set out to examine the interactions between ILTL principles, interpretive vehicles, and interpretive resources in the enactment of ILTL in literature-based English courses within an Indonesian higher education context. To illustrate these interactions, Tables 2 and 3 provide an overview of the relationships between the key elements identified in Po's and Rhae's intervention, respectively. The tables map the relationships between the classroom tasks, the ILTL principles enacted through these tasks, the types of interpretive vehicles used to facilitate interpretation, and the interpretive resources that students drew on. Together, they provide a basis for comparing how these elements interacted across the two interventions.

As illustrated in Tables 2 and 3, interpretation in ILTL emerged through the interaction between ILTL principles, interpretive vehicles, and interpretive resources rather than from literary texts alone. Across both interventions, the principles of active construction, making connections, reflection, and social interaction (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013) were enacted through a range of interpretive vehicles, including literary texts, teacher questioning, classroom dialogue, comparative reading, reflective writing, multi-modal resources, and thematic prompts. These vehicles created opportunities for students to mobilise diverse interpretive resources, including prior learning experiences, cultural knowledge, experiential, affective, ideological, linguistic, and semiotic resources, in constructing literary meanings. The findings therefore support previous research showing that interpretation is mediated by learners' fore-understandings and interpretive architectures (Gadamer, 2004; McConachy, 2017) and by the identities, experiences, and cultural repertoires they bring to literary encounters (Porto & Byram, 2017). At the same time, the comparison between the two interventions extends existing ILTL literature by demonstrating more explicitly how particular interpretive vehicles mediate the mobilisation of different

Table 2 *Interactions Between Tasks, ILTL Principles Enacted, Interpretive Vehicles, and Interpretive Resources Mobilised in Po's Intervention*

Task	ILTL Principle(s) Enacted	Interpretive Vehicles	Interpretive Resources Mobilised
Selection of poem: <i>Life is Fine</i>	Making connections	A text (the poem)	Teacher's pedagogical beliefs; teacher's knowledge of students' lifeworlds and social realities
Getting to know the poem	Active construction	Guided reading; teacher questioning; classroom dialogue	Student's emotional responses; prior experiences
Timeline infographic	Making connections	Task; research activity	Historical and cultural knowledge; contextual knowledge
I hear you, Langston: Connecting texts and the world	Making connections	Related texts; multimodal resources; comparative discussion prompts	Cultural knowledge; prior experiences; knowledge of contemporary social issues
A letter (pen pal) to Langston (including the brainstorm prompts)	Reflection; social interaction	Letter-writing task; imagined dialogue with the poet	Personal experiences; prior understandings; cultural knowledge; perspectives on the poet; experiential, cultural, and affective resources (e.g., minority experiences, discrimination, belonging)

Table 3 *Interactions between Tasks, ILTL Principles Enacted, Interpretive Vehicles, and Interpretive Resources Mobilised in Rhae's Intervention*

Task	ILTL Principle(s) Enacted	Interpretive Vehicles	Interpretive Resources Mobilised
Exploring the concept of love	Making connections	Thematic prompt; classroom discussion	Personal experiences; cultural understandings; beliefs and values about love
Comparative reading of <i>Wild Nights! Wild Nights!</i> and <i>Padamu Jua (To You, and Only You)</i>	Active construction; making connections	Literary texts; comparative reading activity	Prior literary experiences; cultural knowledge; experiential and affective resources
Post-reading discussion	Active construction; making connections; reflection	Teacher questioning; classroom dialogue; comparative discussion prompts	Ideological resources (religious values); cultural knowledge; prior understandings; linguistic and knowledge-based resources; awareness of semiotic resources across languages
Creative rewriting activity	Active construction; reflection	Creative writing task	[activity not enacted]
Reflection prompts	Reflection; making connections	Reflective questions	[activity not enacted]

interpretive resources in classroom interaction. While previous studies have identified the interpretive potential of pedagogical activities and literary tasks (Hoff, 2016, 2019; Kearney, 2015; Wang, 2023), the present study shows that different vehicles afford different forms of interpretive engagement and activate different resources. This suggests that interpretation in ILTL is not simply a consequence of selecting appropriate texts or designing meaningful tasks, but of how teachers orchestrate pedagogical vehicles that enable learners to mobilise, negotiate, and extend the interpretive resources they already possess.

Building on the patterns identified across Po's and Rhae's interventions, the following Figure (Figure 12) synthesises the relationships between ILTL principles, interpretive vehicles, and interpretive resources identified in this study. It illustrates how ILTL principles are enacted through different interpretive vehicles, which in turn enable learners to draw on a range of experiential, cultural, prior learning, ideological, linguistic and knowledge-based, and semiotic resources in constructing and interpreting meanings.

Figure 14 synthesises the findings of this study through an updated modelling interpretation in ILTL as emerging through the interaction between ILTL principles, interpretive vehicles, and interpretive resources. Positioned at the centre of the framework, interpretive vehicles, including literary texts, teacher questioning, classroom dialogue, comparative activities, reflective writing, and multimodal tasks, mediate opportunities for interpretation, while the ILTL principles of *active construction*, *making connections*, *reflection*, and *social interaction* (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013) provide the pedagogical orientation through which these vehicles are enacted. As demonstrated across Po's and Rhae's classrooms, these vehicles prompted learners to engage with a wide range of interpretive resources, including experiential, affective, cultural, ideological, prior learning, linguistic, knowledge-based, and

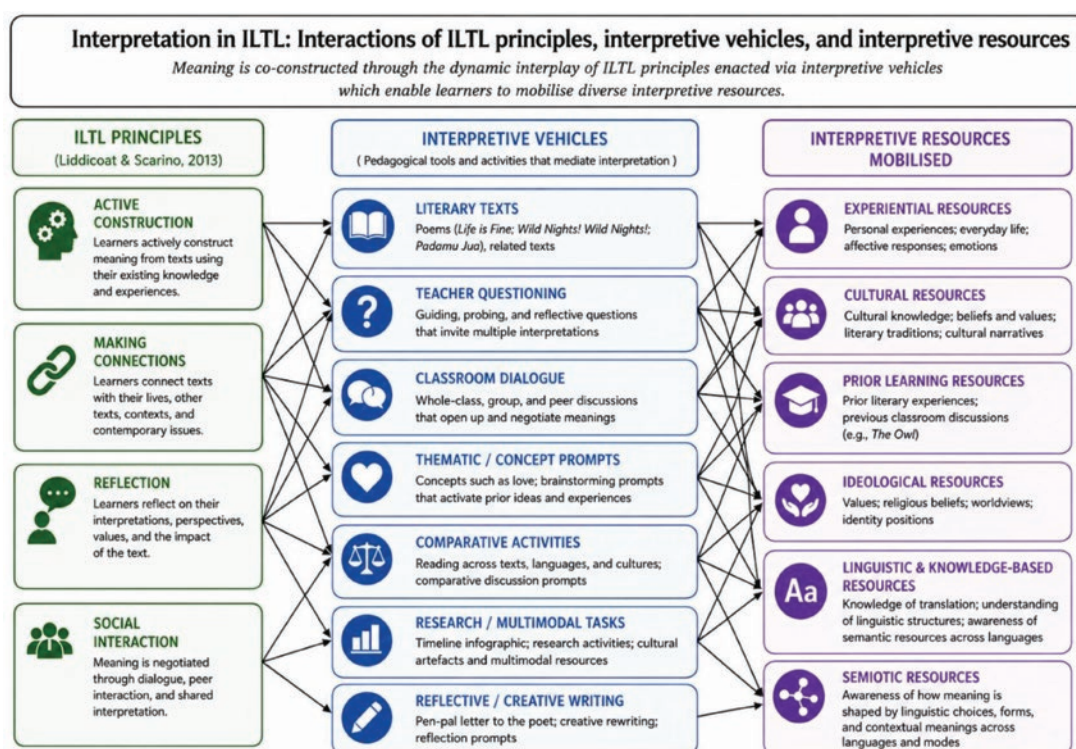


Figure 12 *Interpretation in ILTL*

semiotic resources. The framework illustrates that interpretation is collaboratively constructed through the continual interaction between pedagogical mediation and the diverse resources that teachers and learners bring to classroom encounters. In this sense, the figure extends Liddicoat and Scarino's (2013) conceptualisation of interpretation by making explicit the pedagogical mechanisms through which interpretive engagement is enacted in classroom practice.

The framework also brings together two complementary strands of ILTL scholarship. Existing studies have richly conceptualised interpretive resources as learners' fore-understandings, interpretive architectures, identities, and cultural repertoires (Gadamer, 2004; McConachy, 2017; Porto & Byram, 2017), while other work has demonstrated the interpretive affordances of literary texts, classroom tasks, multimodal resources, and teacher questioning (Hoff, 2016, 2019; Kearney, 2015; Porto & Zembylas, 2022; Wang, 2023). Building on these contributions, the present framework integrates interpretive resources and interpretive vehicles within a single analytical lens, showing how pedagogical vehicles, enacted through the ILTL principles, invite, mediate, and shape the mobilisation and negotiation of teachers' and learners' interpretive resources during classroom interaction. In doing so, the framework demonstrates not only what interpretive resources participants draw upon, but also how these resources interact with pedagogical design to support the collaborative construction of intercultural interpretation in practice.

Conclusion

This study has shown that interpretation in literature-based intercultural language teaching and learning emerges through the dynamic interaction between ILTL principles, interpretive vehicles, and interpretive resources. Across Po's and Rhae's classrooms, literary texts, teacher questioning, classroom dialogue, comparative activities, and reflective tasks functioned as interpretive vehicles through which the ILTL principles of active construction, making connections, reflection, and social interaction were

enacted. These pedagogical opportunities encouraged learners to engage their linguistic, cultural, experiential, affective, ideological, and semiotic interpretive resources in constructing meanings from literary texts. By making these interactions explicit, the study contributes an integrated framework for understanding how interpretation is collaboratively constructed in classroom practice.

The findings further demonstrate that the enactment of ILTL depends not only on teachers' pedagogical intentions but also on the institutional and curricular contexts in which teaching occurs. While Po was able to enact the planned sequence of interpretive vehicles, Rhae's intervention illustrates how curricular requirements constrained the implementation of some planned activities, highlighting the situated nature of pedagogical enactment. Nevertheless, both cases demonstrate that meaningful opportunities for intercultural interpretation can be created when teachers deliberately design and mediate interpretive vehicles that encourage learners to engage their existing interpretive resources. These findings have implications for teacher education by emphasising the importance of preparing teachers to recognise, value, and build upon learners' interpretive resources, and for curriculum design by highlighting the need for sufficient pedagogical flexibility to support interpretive engagement within language classrooms.

Future research could examine how the interaction between ILTL principles, interpretive vehicles, and interpretive resources is enacted across different educational contexts, languages, and curriculum settings. Longitudinal research would also provide valuable insights into how learners' interpretive resources develop over time through sustained engagement with ILTL pedagogies and how teachers' mediation of interpretive vehicles evolves as they negotiate changing classroom and institutional contexts. Such research would further refine understanding of interpretation as a dynamic, socially mediated, and contextually situated process at the heart of intercultural language teaching and learning.

Use of Generative AI

This manuscript made use of ChatGPT to assist in improving the clarity of text. The final manuscript was authored and reviewed by the author without additional AI input.

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