Trainees' beliefs about the use of cinema as a tool for EFL ——

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Abstract

Despite the growing presence of cinema in the classroom and the multiple benefits it has been proved to have for the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL), the implementation of films in the English lessons is still an under-researched area, particularly, as regards instructors' views on the adequacy of this material. Thus, the present study delves into trainees' beliefs (N = 121) regarding the potential of cinema for EFL before and after analysing a film-based lesson plan. Questionnaires, open-ended questions, and focus groups were employed to obtain quantitative and qualitative data on the perceived linguistic, intercultural, and motivational advantages of films. The results reveal that, at the outset of the research, trainees held cinema especially useful for eliciting linguistic and intercultural knowledge. However, they were unaware of how to exploit this textual modality and considered some of its characteristics problematic for class use. In the post-analysis stage, the participants assigned similar rates of importance to the three analysed dimensions, reflecting an even more favourable attitude towards this resource. This positive change trend seems to stem from a broadened awareness of the proper exploitation of film after examining the lesson plan provided. Pedagogical and research implications are also defined.

Keywords: EFL; cinema; benefits; trainees' opinion; teacher education.

Resumen

A pesar de la creciente presencia del cine en el aula y de los numerosos beneficios que tiene para la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE), la implementación de películas es un tema poco investigado, especialmente, en cuanto a las percepciones de los docentes sobre la adecuación de este material. Así, el presente estudio explora las opiniones del profesorado de inglés en formación (N = 121) sobre el potencial del cine para la enseñanza de ILE antes y después de analizar una unidad curricular basada en una película. Se emplearon cuestionarios, preguntas de respuesta abierta y grupos focales para obtener datos cuantitativos y cualitativos sobre las ventajas lingüísticas, interculturales y motivacionales de las películas. Antes del análisis, los participantes consideraban que el cine era especialmente útil para generar conocimiento lingüístico e intercultural. No obstante, no sabían cómo explotar esta modalidad textual, considerando problemática la implementación en clase de algunas de sus características. Tras el análisis, las tres dimensiones recibieron valoraciones similares, reflejando, así, una actitud todavía más favorable hacia este recurso. Este cambio positivo parece deberse a un mayor conocimiento sobre la correcta explotación de películas tras examinar la unidad curricular. Se establecen también implicaciones pedagógicas y de investigación.

Palabras clave: Enseñanza de inglés como lengua extranjera; cine; beneficios; opinión de futuros profesores; formación docente.

1. Introduction

Cinema is rarely exploited in the contemporary English as a foreign language class owing to time, cost, and syllabus constraints, the difficulty of film selection, and, particularly, teachers' lack of pedagogical training (Carney & Foss, 2008; Ismaili, 2013; Kabooha, 2016; Shahani et al., 2014). Most English instructors regard film screening as a backup activity, and, therefore, they simply play a whole film and let students watch it passively, as a time filler or as a reward for good behaviour (Albiladi et al., 2018; Hobbs, 2006). Learners have noticed this improper implementation of cinema and urge teachers to make a more frequent and comprehensive use of films in English lessons (Kabooha, 2016; Shahani et al., 2014; Tuncay, 2014; Yue, 2019).

Considering teachers' and students' interest in the cinema-based approach, the scarcity of research on this topic comes as a surprise. Much of the existing academic production on the use of films for EFL is theoretical and didactic, and the few empirical studies conducted to date are inconclusive due to multiple methodological limitations. This applies especially to the examination of teachers' and students' perceptions. Given the paucity of empirical research in the field, exploring trainees' views about the advantages existing research has conceptualised when it comes to the use of cinema

for EFL emerges as a relevant line of research. As future teachers, and, therefore, instrumental stakeholders in formal educational processes, trainees might contribute valuable insights into the viability of cinema-based EFL. In fact, their perceived advantages and disadvantages, some of which might also be misperceptions, might help develop a pedagogy of cinema-based EFL. Against this background, the present study explores EFL trainees' opinions on a cinema-based lesson plan. Questionnaires, open-ended questions and focus groups were used to this end.

2. Literature review

2.1. The advantages of using cinema for EFL

2.1.1. Linguistic advantages

It has been argued that films may help EFL learners to enhance their linguistic ability since they can practice the four English-language skills while learning grammar, vocabulary, and pragmatics (Canning-Wilson, 2000; Fernández-Guerra, 2013; Kaiser, 2011). According to several researchers, cinema allows students to hone their listening skills since the paralinguistic cues of films help them to better comprehend what they hear (Chapple & Curtis, 2000; Kabooha, 2016; Shahani et al., 2014), and also because learners can practice extensive listening as they are exposed to longer stretches of discourse than they are used to (Tuncay, 2014). English instructors have highlighted the great utility of the film-based approach to teaching listening skills (Aksu-Ataç & Günay-Köprülü, 2018), which has been confirmed by EFL learners in numerous studies (Chao, 2013; Chapple & Curtis, 2000; Shahani et al., 2014). Likewise, Chao's (2013) and Ismaili's (2013) investigations reported that, after watching films with subtitles, students' reading skills had improved as they had had the opportunity to read a large amount of text at normal speed.

EFL students have also acknowledged they have learnt to speak more fluently after attending cinema-based lessons (Aksu-Ataç & Günay-Köprülü, 2018; Chiu, 2012). This is because, in films, they can see native speakers interacting in authentic contexts and using varied dialects and accents (Argynbayev et al., 2014; Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki, 2015; Tuncay, 2014). Furthermore, as students are interested in films, they are more willing to express their views on what they are watching, and even less-advanced and shy learners feel less anxious to participate in class (Chao, 2013; Kabooha, 2016). In Chapple and Curtis's research, students rated confidence when speaking in English as the most noticeable benefit of the film-based approach (2000). Academics have also supported the use of cinema to develop writing skills, mainly, on the grounds that it allows English teachers to design activities like writing a summary or a review of the film (Fluitt-Dupuy, 2001; Gallagher, 1988; Scacco, 2007). Besides, EFL students have

declared that, when cinema is used in the classroom, they can identify and reduce negative language transfer in writing tasks (Argynbayev et al., 2014).

Multiple scholars have alleged that cinema fosters lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic acquisition because films show students how words, linguistic structures, and discourse strategies are used in a real communicative situation, which facilitates meaning inference and memorisation (Albiladi et al., 2018; Ismaili, 2013; Kabooha, 2016; Shahani et al., 2014). Vocabulary learning is one of the advantages of the film-based approach EFL instructors and students value the most. They emphasise the varied range of English vocabulary in films, especially, colloquial expressions, which are not normally included in textbooks (Aksu-Ataç & Günay-Köprülü, 2018; Chapple & Curtis, 2000; Chiu, 2012; Christopley, 2017; Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki, 2015). Similarly, Cetinavci's study (2019) reported how explicit instruction from dialogues in films, among other audio-visual materials, had led the Turkish EFL trainees in the experimental group to improve their capacity to interpret implied meaning in comparison to participants in the control group.

2.1.2. Intercultural advantages

Cinema also enhances intercultural awareness. As held by Argynbayev et al. (2014), Kabooha (2016), and Shahani et al. (2014), films show English-speaking people's behaviour, values, customs, social relationships, history, and food in a more visual and effective way than any other didactic material. Additionally, cinema may present complex cultural issues like racism and sexism, which helps EFL students to better comprehend the L2 society. A student in Albiladi et al.'s research stressed that she started to reflect more deeply on women's role in American society after watching American films featuring Julia Roberts (2018). When discovering such cultural factors in films, English students widen their knowledge of the target culture and feel more confident in intercultural exchanges (Chao, 2013).

Some academics affirm that cinema allows EFL students to become more conscious of their community. The links learners establish between what they see on the screen and the L1 culture result in a deeper understanding of the students' own context (Kaiser, 2011; Sturm, 2012). An English learner in Chao's study explained how comparing two similar tragedies in Poland and Taiwan while watching a film had helped them to better appreciate the current improved situation of their country (2013).

2.1.3. Motivational advantages

Most of the scant data on the film-based approach are related to the purported motivating nature of the seventh art. Experts in the field maintain that, since English

students are already familiar with this material and enjoy it frequently, films stimulate them to learn (Anas & Zakaria, 2019; Chapple & Curtis, 2000; Shahani et al., 2014). Christopley (2017) explains how watching cartoon films helped students to relax, and thus they were more enthusiastic about the vocabulary activities afterwards. EFL learners have confirmed this in several investigations (Chao, 2013; Ismaili, 2013).

Researchers have underlined additional reasons why cinema may be such a stimulating pedagogical tool in the EFL classroom: (i) the authenticity of the English language in films, contrasted with the adapted L2 input EFL learners normally receive in formal instruction (Albiladi et al., 2018; Anas & Zakaria, 2019; Chao, 2013; Fernández-Guerra, 2013; Stewart, 2006); (ii) the aesthetic pleasure students experience when watching films (Allan, 1985; Alwehaibi, 2015); (iii) the nontrivial topics cinema often depicts — like sexism, homophobia or environmental degradation, which encourage them to fight for a better world (Anas & Zakaria, 2019; Kaiser, 2011; Sturm, 2012); (iv) the development of creative and critical thinking skills (Kabooha, 2016; Lonergan, 1984; Shahani et al., 2014); and (v) the understanding of emotions, since students can analyse the actors' feelings and express their own affective responses (Berk, 2009; Jurkovič & Mertelj, 2015; Kaiser, 2011).

2.2. A need for more empirical research

By and large, the studies reviewed in the previous section have adopted a narrow focus for a series of reasons. First, the teaching sequences used to explore the participants' perceptions of cinema-based benefits were so fleetingly described that, in some cases, it was difficult to determine their purpose (Argynbayev et al. 2014; Chao, 2013; Chiu, 2012; Ismaili, 2013; Kabooha, 2016; Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki, 2015; Shahani et al., 2014; Tuncay, 2014). Second, these investigations examined the participants' thoughts on only some of the benefits this method may have for EFL (Aksu-Ataç & Günay-Köprülü, 2018; Chiu, 2012; Christopley, 2017; Ismaili, 2013; Kabooha, 2016; Shahani et al., 2014). In contrast to the above-mentioned research, Sánchez-Auñón and Férez-Mora's (2021) study investigated the whole spectrum of advantages of cinema-based EFL as perceived by a high school teacher before and after observing a lesson plan whose contents were thoroughly detailed. The teacher's perception evolved from an anecdotal and minimal use of cinema in her lessons to a clear and nuanced awareness of the pedagogical potential of this resource along with a willingness to incorporate it into her teaching. Although the findings of the study were promising, its small sample leads to consider it as a pilot study.

Given these methodological shortcomings, further empirical research is needed on teachers' and students' views regarding the implementation of cinema in the EFL class. Targeting trainees' perceptions seems to be a priority because, among the sources

reviewed, only one study has targeted this population (Aksu-Ataç & Günay-Köprülü, 2018). However, the digital-native environment of these future teachers might bring up fresh and innovative insights on the use of film in EFL. At the same time, they might entertain misconceptions and limitations stemming from a still-forming grasp of what is feasible in a foreign language class (Goodnough et al., 2009). This study also intends to advance research in the field by: (i) tapping into the whole spectrum of cinema-based advantages as theoretically defined; (ii) using a pre- post-test design to move beyond one-shot studies, thus allowing for exploring change in the participants' perception; and (iii) using a combination of research instruments (a questionnaire, open questions and focus groups) which, to date, has not been applied in the field.

The following research questions guide this study:

1. What are trainees' views about the use of films in EFL?

2. Do trainees' views change after analysing a cinema-based lesson plan?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants in the study were 121 trainee teachers (63% women and 37% men) pursuing a master's degree in EFL teacher training at a university in Southeast Spain. The sample included students from three groups (39, 40 and 41 students, respectively). The study was conducted in the innovation course of this academic programme in which there was a module on the use of film for EFL. The ages of the participants ranged from 22 to 39, with most in their mid-20s. All the participants had completed a degree in English or Translation Studies and had, at least, a C1 level according to the Common European Framework for Languages.

3.2. Data collection

The data collection instruments consisted of a questionnaire (Likert scale), two open-ended questions and a focus group conducted with volunteering participants. The three instruments were piloted with a group of 20 students at the same university. Participants did not express any concerns regarding the clarity of the instruments. This triangulation mixed-methods research design was selected on the grounds that its three-fold orientation leads to the collection of richer and more nuanced data from which robust findings can be derived (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014).

The questionnaire (see Table 3 and Appendix 2) explored the trainees' beliefs concerning the potential of cinema as a resource for learning English before and after

the analysis of a cinema-based lesson plan. It contained 17 statements to be scored on a 4-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating complete disagreement and 4 full agreement. The questionnaire was adapted from that administered in Férez Mora et al. (2020), which tapped into students' perceptions regarding the use of a poem as a tool for EFL. These researchers concluded that the advantages of conducting EFL from literary texts could be grouped within a linguistic, an intercultural, and a motivational construct. That questionnaire was chosen to conduct this study because, with the exception of one of the items in the questionnaire, the advantages for literary texts surveyed in Férez Mora et al. (2020) overlapped with those which scholarly research had theoretically established for cinematic texts. Three adjustments were made to the original questionnaire. First, items 8 — "Poems elicit knowledge of the L2 culture" — and 9 — "Poems elicit knowledge of the L2 people" — were merged into one item given their similarity. Second, item 12 in Férez et al. (2020) — "Poems motivate students to learn EFL because they tend to be short texts" — was discarded as irrelevant to films. Third, another item was introduced which referred to the audio-visual nature of films (item 17: "Cinema is a useful resource for the teaching of English as a foreign language because it is audio-visual material").

Open Question 1 targeted trainees' raw views about the potential of cinema for EFL — "What is your view about the potential of cinema for EFL?" — while Open Question 2 focused on experienced change — "Has your perception of the potential of film for EFL changed after analysing the lesson plan?". Focus groups were initiated by a general prompt which was left as open as possible to foster free interaction (Dörnyei, 2007): "Once you have analysed the lesson plan provided, can you assess the usefulness of film as a tool for EFL?". Twelve trainees participated in the first group of students (one focus group), 20 in the second one (two focus groups) and 9 in the third one (one focus group).

The lesson plan these teacher candidates assessed was designed around the film *Bridge to Terabithia* (Csupó, 2007), which addresses school bullying (Appendix 1). The advantages present in the questionnaire were embedded in the lesson plan. The film, which was pedagogically exploited for a B1 level (see Appendix 1 for contents), was chosen following considerations of scholars' proposed criteria for film selection — the learners' needs and personal characteristics, their English language level, the instructor's pedagogical aims, and the film's ideological content (Asyidiq & Akmal, 2020; Tuncay, 2014; Wang, 2009). To be more specific, *Bridge to Terabithia* was selected, on the one hand, because, based on its unambiguous and straightforward plot, the film is an adequate platform from which to design activities targeting lexical and grammatical contents in line with those established in the Spanish Official Curriculum for Secondary Education EFL. On the other hand, the film deals with a topic of social justice that is of utmost importance in secondary education as bullying

is a worldwide scourge. Therefore, prompting trainees to reflect on a lesson plan that focuses on bullying can provide them with ideas and resources that might be useful in their future careers, and also with an example of socio-critical EFL (EFL that targets students' motivation to learn the FL by eliciting empathy, higher thinking evaluative skills, and personal growth) (Crookes, 2021; Fairclough, 2015; Pennycook, 2014).

To validate the research instruments, we sent the questionnaire, the two open questions, and the prompt for the focus group to three specialist experienced EFL professors; they gave their approval to these research instruments without requiring any modifications. Furthermore, the lesson plan was also sent to these professors to check its suitability.

After obtaining trainees' consent to participate in the study, data were gathered in three 90-minute sessions. Trainees devoted the first half of the first session to completing Open Question 1 to avoid contamination of participants' raw perceptions by the items in the questionnaire. Then, they completed the pre-test questionnaire. In the second session, trainees analysed the lesson plan. They were asked to find examples of activities which reflected each of the 17 advantages included in the questionnaire and to assess their pedagogical relevance (or lack thereof). No explanation of the advantages of cinema for EFL was provided. Therefore, any changes reported in Open Question 2, the focus groups, or the post-test questionnaire were due to the trainees' own perception following the analysis of the lesson plan. Finally, 60 minutes of the third session were allocated for trainees to complete the post-test questionnaire and Open Question 2. Focus groups were conducted that same day with volunteers (9 students participated in the first year, 8 in the second, and 11 in the third).

3.3. Data analyses

The quantitative sample was studied by means of parametric statistics. The mean frequencies and the standard deviations of the participants' responses to the questionnaires were calculated. Paired sample t-tests (with a significance level of 0.05) were run for pre- and post-test scores for the three components to indicate any statistically significant change in the trainees' beliefs. Size effects were also calculated. Before conducting the t-tests, the normality of the sample was confirmed through a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test ($p > .005$).

Responses to the open questions and the focus groups were transcribed and then analysed qualitatively by all three researchers separately. These responses were open-coded line by line (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) to identify the main actions in the sentences, which were coded with simple words reflecting these actions. Then, codes which referred to similar actions were grouped under concepts. Finally, related

concepts were collected within categories. Interrater agreement in this respect was found to be 85% and any disagreements were resolved by discussion between the three raters. Table 1 below presents the thematic categories which were identified in relation to the two Open Questions and the codes employed, while Table 2 provides an example of how coding was undertaken for both Open Questions:

Table 1: Examples of categories and codes for both open questions

Open Question	Category and Code
Trainees' views on the potential of cinema for EFL	(i) perceived usefulness of cinema-based EFL, especially for improving linguistic competence (USEF) (ii) diffuse awareness of the potential of film for EFL (AW) (iii) perceived problems of using film for EFL (PROB)
Change in trainees' perceptions after analysing the lesson plan	(i) heightened understanding of the advantages of cinema-based EFL (ADV) (ii) marked emergence of methodological awareness (METHOD) (iii) importance of seeing in the practice (PRACT)

Table 2: Examples of trainees' comments and coding for both open questions

Example
Open Question 1 (perceived potential of cinema): "It is just obvious that watching films helps enhance **students' listening skills". (USEF)**
Open Question 2 (change in perceptions): "Now I feel capable of using a film for the English class but only because **we saw how to do so** in the lesson plan we had to analyse". **(PRACT)**

4. Results

4.1. Quantitative results

As shown in Table 3 and Figure 1, the participants' views about the usefulness of cinema for EFL were favourable in the pre-test and the post-test stages both as a whole (M = 3.11, SD = 0.28; M = 3.69, SD = 0.23) and for the three specific dimensions analysed: linguistic (M = 3.10, SD = 0.32; M = 3.67, SD = 0.24), intercultural (M = 03.23, SD = 0.46; M = 3.72, SD = 0.42), and motivational (M = 2.99, SD = 0.39; M = 3.68, SD = 0.69). Statistically significant increases in mean scores were reported in the post-test for all dimensions (p<0.001) and in general as well. Effect sizes were large

in all four cases, with values over 0.8. At both test times, the most valued was the intercultural dimension, followed by the linguistic and the motivational dimensions in the pre-test, and by the motivational and linguistic ones in the post-test. Mean scores for the three dimensions were less homogeneous in the pre-test than in the post-test since, in this latter stage, agreement rates were almost coincidental, ranging from 3.67 (linguistic dimension) to 3.72 (intercultural dimension). This means that, in the post-test, cinema-based EFL was perceived as almost equally useful for the development of linguistic and intercultural contents and for boosting students' motivation.

Table 3: Pre- and post-test results regarding trainees' views towards cinema-based EFL

DIMENSIONS AND ITEMS	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean change	t	p -value	d
Films can help improve students' linguistic competence:	**3.10 (0.32)**	**3.67 (0.24)**	**0.57**	-18.52	**< 0.001**	**-1.69**
Their writing (item 1)	2.23 (0.71)	3.30 (0.74)	1.07	-12.32	< 0.001	-1.12
Their speaking (item 2)	3.31 (0.71)	3.82 (0.41)	0.50	-7.37	< 0.001	-0.67
Their reading (item 3)	2.67 (0.81)	3.36 (0.71)	0.69	-8.47	< 0.001	-0.77
Their listening (item 4)	3.63 (0.52)	3.92 (0.31)	0.29	-5.33	< 0.001	-0.49
Their lexis (item 5)	3.64 (0.48)	3.92 (0.26)	0.28	-6.36	< 0.001	-0.58
Their grammar (item 6)	2.58 (0.73)	3.53 (0.65)	0.95	-12.72	< 0.001	-1.16
Their pronunciation (item 7)	3.63 (0.59)	3.84 (0.41)	0.21	-3.68	< 0.001	-0.34
Films can help improve students' intercultural competence:	**3.23 (0.46)**	**3.72 (0.42)**	**0.49**	-9.68	**< 0.001**	**-0.88**
Their knowledge of the L2 culture (item 8)	3.58 (0.56)	3.81 (0.40)	0.23	-4.14	< 0.001	-0.38
Their knowledge of the L1 culture (item 9)	2.88 (0.65)	3.62 (0.61)	0.74	-10.37	< 0.001	-0.95
Films can foster students' motivation to learn EFL:	**2.99 (0.39)**	**3.68 (0.28)**	**0.69**	-15.81	**< 0.001**	**-1.44**
Because they can express their own opinions and feelings (item 10)	2.87 (0.76)	3.68 (0.60)	0.81	-9.54	< 0.001	-0.87

| DIMENSIONS AND ITEMS	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean change	t	*p* -value	d
Because they can understand others' opinions and feelings (item 11)	3.13 (0.60)	3.74 (0.48)	0.62	-9.19	< 0.001	-0.84
Because social justice can be promoted (item12)	2.84 (0.73)	3.59 (0.53)	0.75	-10.12	< 0.001	-0.92
Because high order thinking skills can be promoted (item 13)	3.18 (0.66)	3.72 (0.47)	0.54	-7.64	< 0.001	-0.70
Because it elicits aesthetic pleasure (item 14)	2.97 (0.87)	3.64 (0.56)	0.68	-7.82	< 0.001	-0.71
Because it is authentic material (item 15)	3.23 (0.71)	3.75 (0.45)	0.52	-7.18	< 0.001	-0.66
Because it deals with nontrivial topics (item16)	2.21 (0.88)	3.48 (0.61)	1.27	-13.73	< 0.001	-1.25
Because of its audio-visual condition (item17)	3.50 (0.61)	3.81 (0.42)	0.31	-4.86	< 0.001	-0.44
Total score	**3.11 (0.28)**	**3.69 (0.23)**	**0.58**	**-18.99**	**< 0.001**	**-1.7**

Figure 1: Pre- and post-test total mean values for the linguistic, intercultural and motivational dimensions
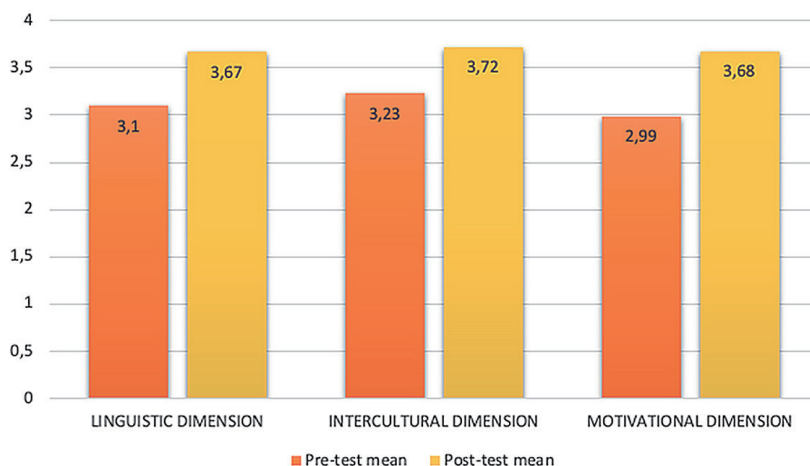
4.1.1. Linguistic dimension

Focusing on the linguistic dimension (See items 1-7 in Table 3 and Figure 2 below), the highest means in the pre-test were reported for vocabulary (item 5: M = 3.64, SD = 0.48), listening (item 4: M = 3.63, SD = 0.52), and pronunciation (item 7: M = 3.63, SD = 0.59). The lowest values were for writing (item 1: M = 2.23, SD = 0.71), grammar acquisition (item 6: M = 2.58, SD = 0.73), and reading (item 3: M = 2.67, SD = 0.81). This same trend was reported in the post-test: vocabulary (item 5: M = 3.92, SD = 0.26), listening (item 4: M = 3.92, SD = 0.31), and pronunciation (item 7: M = 3.84, SD = 0.41) received the highest values, while, once again, writing (item 1: M = 3.30, SD = 0.74), grammar acquisition (item 6: M = 3.53, SD = 0.65), and reading (item 3: M = 3.36, SD = 0.71) received the lowest. However, the gaps between the highest and the lowest rates were bridged in the post-test since all items were assigned values within the 3.30–3.92 spectrum, while pre-test means ranged from 2.23 to 3.64. The most accented mean changes between the pre-test and post-test were for writing (1.07) and grammar (0.95), and the least accented for pronunciation (0.21), vocabulary (0.28), and listening (0.29). All effect sizes were large, with d values between -1.16 and -0.49, with the exception of pronunciation, whose effect size was medium (d = -0.34).

Figure 2: Pre- and post-test mean values for each of the items within the linguistic dimension
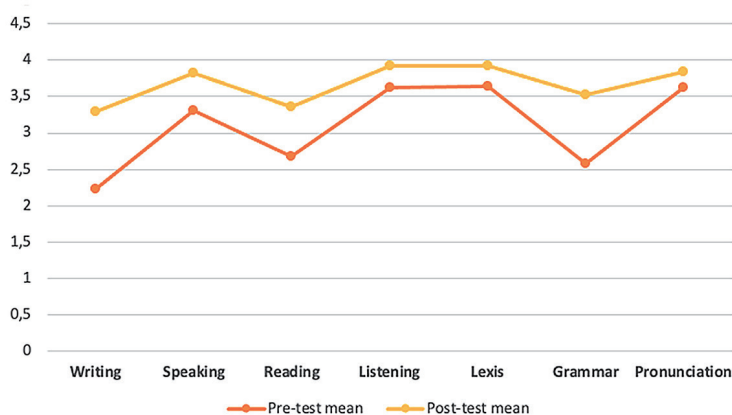

4.1.2. Intercultural dimension

As presented in Table 3 and Figure 3, the trainees' views were positive for the two items within the intercultural dimension at both test times. Change trends were statistically significant, with p values <0.001 for the two items (acquiring L2 cultural

knowledge [item 8: M = 3.58, SD = 0.56; M = 3.81, SD = 0.40]; and heightened awareness of one's own culture [item 9: M = 2.88, SD = 0.65; M = 3.62, SD = 0.61]). Effect sizes were large for item 9 (*d* = -0.95) and medium for item 8 (*d* = -0.38). Although item 8 obtained higher agreement rates than item 9 both in the pre-test and the post-test, the difference between these two items in the post-test was greatly reduced because item 9 experienced one of the most remarkable mean increases of all surveyed advantages (0.74).

Figure 3: Pre- and post-test mean values for each of the items within the intercultural dimension
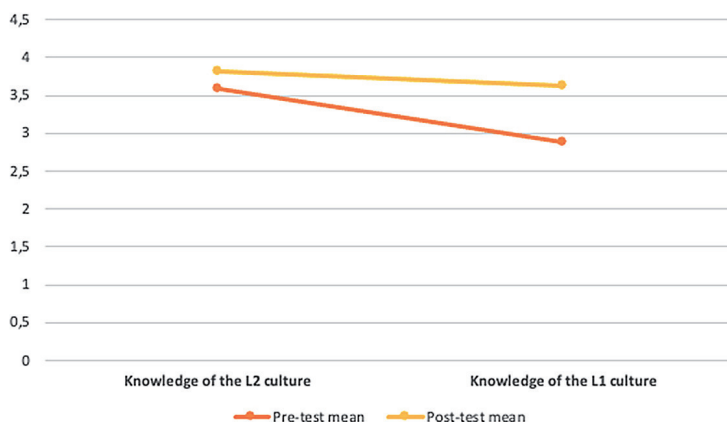
4.1.3. *Motivational dimension*

With regard to the motivational dimension, all the changes between the pre-test and the post-test were positive and statistically significant (p<0.001 for all items; see items 10-17 in Table 3 and Figure 4). All size effects were large, ranging from -0.44 to -1.25. The highest means in the pre-test and post-test stages were assigned to the audio-visual aspect of cinema (item 17: M = 3.50, SD = 0.61; M = 3.81, SD = 0.42) and the facts that films are authentic materials (item 15: M = 3.23, SD = 0.71; M = 3.75, SD = 0.45) and adequate tools for understanding alterity (item 11: M = 3.13, SD = 0.60; M = 3.72, SD = 0.48). The ability of films to deal with nontrivial topics (item 16: M = 2.21, SD = 0.88; M = 3.48, SD = 0.61) and introduce issues of social justice (item 12: M = 2.84, SD = 0.73; M = 3.59, SD = 0.53) were held as the least advantageous contributions of cinema-based EFL at the two test times. Despite obtaining the lowest scores, mean changes for these two items experienced the first and the third most important increases within the motivational dimension, 1.27 (item 16) and 0.75 (item 12).

Figure 4: Pre- and post-test mean values for each of the items within the motivational dimension
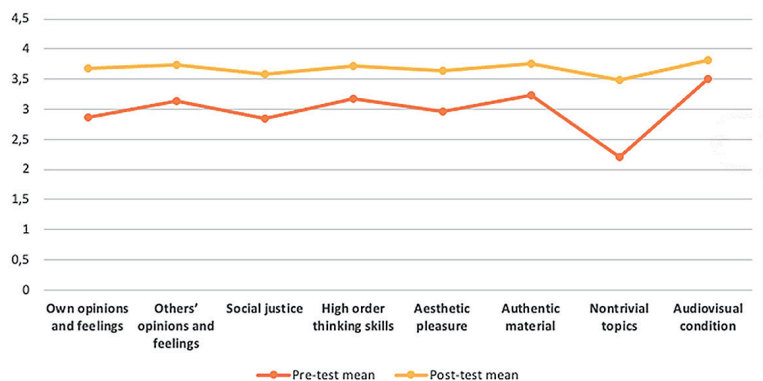
4.2. Qualitative results

4.2.1. Open Question 1

The trainees' responses to Open Question 1 — "What is your view about the potential of cinema for EFL?" — can be classified within three categories: perceived usefulness of cinema-based EFL, especially for improving linguistic competence; diffuse awareness of the potential of film for EFL; and perceived problems of using film for EFL.

4.2.1.1. Perceived usefulness of cinema-based EFL

Most comments in Open Question 1 referred to the perceived usefulness of film-based EFL for enhancing the linguistic competence. All 121 participants highlighted this usefulness, especially for listening, pronunciation, and vocabulary acquisition — mentioned by 121, 104, and 89 trainees, respectively. Eighteen trainees asserted that, with English subtitles, students could also improve their reading skills. However, output-based linguistic gains did not have such a good reception, with remarkably fewer trainees highlighting the potential of cinema to improve speaking (10 trainees), writing (8 trainees), or grammar acquisition (6 trainees). Example 1 illustrates the most common attitude towards the advantages of cinema-based EFL for improving the linguistic competence.

Example 1

I would say [cinema] is a very helpful tool as it can be used, especially, to develop listening skills and pronunciation, but also to learn vocabulary and practice reading if subtitles are shown.

Films' ability to illustrate cultural aspects of the L2 was mentioned by 63 trainees. In one participant's words, "films constitute a privileged window into the way of living of English-speaking people". Motivational factors were mentioned less often than linguistic and intercultural advantages. The participants considered film-based EFL might encourage students to learn for three reasons. First, because it is a novel approach that does not rely on textbooks (7 participants); second, because, as films are an authentic material, learners feel they are experiencing "the real thing" instead of "artificial" dialogues in textbooks (18 participants); and, third, due to cinema's audio-visual component, which learners enjoy because "video is simply their natural medium" (10 participants). No comments were reported for the other aspects included within the motivational dimension of cinema. Similar to the tendency reported for quantitative data, most of the participants' reflections were related to the intercultural and linguistic benefits.

4.2.1.2. Diffuse awareness of the potential of film for EFL

In their responses, 15 trainees evidenced an intuitive awareness that cinema could be useful for EFL in ways other than the enhancement of input-related aspects and the portrayal of the culture of English-speaking countries — the approach to language instruction they were most familiar with. However, they did not know what these other ways might be (Example 2). Twelve of these students also related their diffuse perceptions on this matter to the absence of cinema in their previous EFL schooling (5 participants, Example 3) or the lack of pedagogical purpose of the films screened (7 participants, Example 4).

Example 2

I think that cinema is a very powerful resource for foreign language teaching (FLT), but I'm not quite sure how to exploit it. A student can watch a film and learn some vocabulary but I am not aware of the potential activities that could be done.

Example 3

I am not very informed about the potential that cinema may have for EFL as I cannot recall having been taught English by means of a film. Therefore, this leads me to state that it may not have a remarkable influence on FLT.

Example 4

Cinema was always used as an extra activity to mark the end of the semester or as a sort of reward when the students behaved well. Thus, teachers never went further than playing a movie with subtitles in Spanish. They never exploited the film pedagogically to start a debate or whatever. So, watching a film always ended up being an activity to which students did not even pay attention.

4.2.1.3. Perceived problems of using film for EFL

Trainees also found the use of films for the English class might involve problems. Five reasons were identified. First, 21 participants considered a film was too long. As one of them asserted, "only watching a film would take, at least, two sessions, let alone exploiting it pedagogically". Second, 13 participants regarded the authentic nature of films as a hindrance to the teaching-learning process since extensive work with language might be necessary before the text could be used in class (Example 5). Third, they stated that finding a film that deals exactly with the target contents is highly unlikely (8 trainees). This, in the words of a trainee, "is time-consuming because the academic programme would have to be adjusted". The fourth problem, expressed by 7 trainees, was that using films in class would involve an extra effort on the part of the teacher, because there might be a shortage of teaching material and teachers would have to design their own activities (Example 6). While these four problems were related to time and the added pressure for teachers, the fifth problem emphasized the fact that learners might prefer TV series to films (5 participants). According to them, this might be because learners "are used to watching" TV series or because "films are too long to maintain teenagers' span of attention, no matter how interesting the film is".

Example 5

I don't think students can understand [the language in the film] unless they have a high level of English or they do many vocabulary activities before watching it to facilitate comprehension. I see it problematic in both cases. If the film is screened directly, learners might get frustrated. However, if vocabulary is practised previously, much time will be devoted to controlled tasks, which may demotivate them too.

Example 6

I have never seen a textbook which includes films and, consequently, teachers would have to do everything from scratch, whether finding a film and designing the activities. And this is too time-consuming.

4.2.2. Open Question 2

The analysis of responses to Open Question 2 — "Has your perception of the potential of film for EFL changed after analysing the lesson plan? Why? Why not?"— allowed us to attest that trainees' views changed positively following the analysis of the film-based lesson plan. Three categories explained these positive changes: heightened understanding of the advantages of cinema-based EFL, marked emergence of methodological awareness, and the usefulness of analysing a practical example of a cinema-based EFL lesson plan.

4.2.2.1. Heightened understanding of the advantages of cinema-based EFL

While in Open Question 1, the majority of participants commented on the linguistic and intercultural benefits of films, responses to Open Question 2 evidenced a marked increase in the number of the motivational advantages brought up, some of which had not been mentioned at all in the pre-analysis stage. The latter was the case for the two most frequently reported motivational incorporations. Sixty participants (49.5% of the total sample) considered that focusing the lesson plan on an issue of social justice, bullying in this case, might be highly motivational for students because, in such a way, the EFL class "becomes useful as bullying is a very relevant topic", "helps improve students' lives", or "contributes to making students more critical". Besides, 13 of these 60 trainees expressed their surprise at social justice not being more frequently present in EFL lessons:

Example 7

I don't understand why this approach is hardly implemented. It is a "win-win" because students learn English at the same time as they discover key concepts about bullying which may be highly useful.

Cinema's ability to activate high-order thinking skills, an aspect which emerged in trainees' reaction to the social justice component of the lesson plan on *Bridge to Terabithia*, was the second most common type of comment in Open Question 2 (49 trainees):

Example 8

I reckon that the activities in which students have to make hypotheses and create questionnaires are quite relevant because, apart from learning grammar, they are encouraged to analyse their own situation.

In contrast, the frequency of linguistic-related opinions, computed as a whole, experienced a marked decrease in the post-analysis stage (113 comments in the post-test versus 235 comments in the pre-test). The increase in qualitative motivational comments seems to be explained by a trade-off towards the items within this dimension which trainees might have perceived as more novel. Still, the heightened perception of motivational advantages did not imply trainees stopped noticing linguistic benefits; as reported before, in quantitative terms, these were still assigned the highest values at the post-test stage. What transpired was a levelling out of the linguistic, intercultural and motivational dimensions in the post-analysis stage, which, therefore, were perceived as almost equally important.

4.2.2.2. Marked emergence of methodological awareness

In Open Question 2, 81 trainees (66.9% of the total sample) referred to methodological aspects regarding the use of cinema for EFL. This implied a remarkable difference from Open Question 1, in which no such comments were recorded at all beyond the previously mentioned intuition that cinema could be used in other ways. In fact, six trainees explicitly expressed that, after the analysis of the lesson plan based on *Bridge to Terabithia*, they could finally understand and verbalise that marginal intuition they had in the pre-analysis stage that cinema could be used more profitably in the English class. This can be seen by comparing Example 2 with Example 9:

Example 9

The analysis of the lesson plan has widely expanded my views on using cinema for English teaching and learning. Thanks to this, I have realised that my views were too traditional since there are several ways to exploit a film of which I was totally unaware. I knew that cinema was a potentially powerful resource but I did not know how to exploit it.

This methodological awareness defused some of the problems of the film-based approach mentioned in the pre-analysis stage, to the extent that no problems were mentioned anymore in the post-test. A remarkable number of methodological comments (21 trainees, 17.3% of the total sample) highlighted the fact that the lesson plan had included short excerpts instead of the whole film. This was perceived by 14 of these 21 trainees to address the most common problem mentioned in responses to Open Question 1, namely, that films were unsuitably long for one-hour English classes. "My opinion has changed because using short fragments does really allow you to use films in class", one trainee said. Another methodological aspect which 19 trainees mentioned focused on the fact that, in the sample lesson plan, the fragments used had been pasted together by means of a narrative told orally by the teacher during the

sessions that provided the film with cohesion. In the trainees' own words, proceeding this way resulted in students not "getting lost in the plot" (5 participants) and feeling that "there was a beginning and an end to the plot instead of unconnected fragments, which would surely demotivate them to learn" (7 participants). This strategy was also observed by seven trainees as the solution to another problem stated in the pre-analysis comments: the concern that the authentic and, therefore, demanding nature of films could put off students. Through this narrative technique, "the teacher could adapt the film to whichever target level and direct the learners' attention to those specific excerpts of authentic language in the film from which [they want] to work".

Eighteen trainees (14.8% of the total sample) also mentioned that examining the lesson plan had made them aware of the fact that the exploitation of cinema did not necessarily rely on contents present "in" the film (e.g., vocabulary or grammatical patterns included in a specific scene). Instead, activities could be designed by establishing lines of flight "from" the film. Eight trainees explicitly stated that this "from" strategy made them see how films could be used for teaching writing or speaking skills, activating critical thinking, or exploring issues of social justice. As one participant said, "the film works as an excuse to deal with any content from it. Now, it is clear to me that a film can help students to practice their writing. This is as easy as asking students to react to any aspect in the film".

4.2.2.3. Usefulness of analysing a practical example of a cinema-based EFL lesson plan

Lastly, trainees asserted that the methodological gains detailed had been elicited from examining a practical application of the advantages of cinema-based EFL as developed in the sample lesson plan (29 participants, 23.9% of the total sample). One participant referred to this as follows: "if I hadn't seen a concrete and comprehensive example of how to use cinema for EFL, I would still be unaware of most of its advantages. While analysing the lesson plan, I have realised that films may be exploited beyond the typical listening or vocabulary tasks. I have missed the practical side in this master's degree. I can't understand how most of the contents are theoretical in a teacher training programme".

4.2.3. Qualitative results for focus groups

To respond to the question that guided the focus groups — "Once you have analysed the lesson plan provided, can you assess the usefulness of film as a tool for EFL?" — all four groups referred to arguments they had already expressed in Open Question 2. In fact, the contributions of Groups 1 and 3 did not add any new data and, therefore, they are not reproduced again. Interactions in Groups 2 and 4 offer some

new categories worth exploring: the importance of topics and the conflict between dealing with issues of social justice and parental authorisation.

4.2.3.1. The importance of topics

Groups 2 and 4 brought up the importance of topic selection for cinema to be successfully used in the EFL class on two different grounds: attractiveness and emotional resonances. As shown in Interaction 1, Group 2 related the well-functioning of cinema in EFL to films dealing with topics learners found interesting.

Interaction 1

T1: I think students feel attracted to films naturally because of their audio-visual component and the fact that they are not normally used as pedagogical material. However, if the topic of the film does not engage them, the class is not going to work, no matter how many films are screened.

T2: I could not agree more with you. The topics in the English class are not attractive at all. At least, I never found them attractive.

T3: I really think using topics such as bullying might engage EFL learners to a greater extent.

Group 4 also engaged in a discussion on the importance of the topics portrayed in films. Interaction 2 shows that this group considered that, while teachers' knowledge of methodological guidelines is essential to motivate students, it is not enough. The topic of the film is equally important. These trainees referred specifically to topics which appeal to students' emotions. They considered this so relevant that they even proposed that teachers should use a questionnaire to learn about their students' needs in this respect.

Interaction 2

T1: Knowing how to implement cinema in the English class is useless if the film topic is not chosen properly. Teachers must select subjects which strike a chord with learners. In textbooks, topics are so ridiculous that it is impossible to get emotionally involved with them.

T2: That is true! Bullying is something that touches us all either because we have experienced it or because we have seen it. A textbook would never include such a theme.

T3: I think a solution to this might be administering a questionnaire to ask students about the topics they are concerned with. In such a way, they could continue learning English in class but through appealing themes.

T2: Yes, but this is not just about textbooks. Teachers are not willing to deal with these topics either. They explain grammar and then leave the classroom. Generally speaking, instructors do not care about learners' emotional state. I mean, they do not even know your name, and they do not deign to ask how you are doing.

T4: What you mention is typical of the English classroom because, in other subjects like history, I did have teachers that triggered the students' emotional reactions through the historical facts they explained. They also made us establish links between historical events and our own lives and context.

4.2.3.2. Social justice and parental authorisation

Parental authorisation was brought up by both groups when talking about the topic of social justice present in *Bridge to Terabithia* (bullying). While the participants agreed that including such topics in the EFL class might make the lessons more interesting and more meaningful to students, they also expressed their concerns that targeting such contents might be controversial, especially, if they related to gender or sexual orientation. This was so on the grounds that the Education Authority of the Region of Murcia might consider that these learners are being indoctrinated and, consequently, the teacher might be in legal trouble. This concern elicited various reactions, the most numerous in Group 3, as reported next.

Interaction 3

T1: Tackling social matters is very interesting, but watch out! The students' parents may denounce you on the grounds that you are brainwashing their children. Some of them ask teachers to stop beating around the bush and focus on the content instead of on social issues. If this happens… you may get into trouble with inspection.

T2: So what? My mother is a teacher and, if the educational centre has a progressist policy and supports you, it is okay. Instructors have academic freedom. I am not going to leave these topics aside for the fear of a parent's complaint, because they help us to grow up as citizens.

T1: Well, you do what you want to! But I am not going to be in trouble however relevant I find these topics, especially at the beginning of my teaching career when I have just started at a high school and I am an underdog.

Group 4 also considered parental authorisation as a problem. The mention of parental authorisation was followed by an uncomfortable pause, which the conductor of the focus group perceived as participants' reluctance to express their opinions on this issue. Instead, the trainees debated the safeness of the topics included in textbooks and even in certification exams and how discouraging this safeness is when it comes to expressing proper opinions.

Interaction 4

T1: Personally, dealing with values in the EFL class makes me rather nervous because of parental authorisation! I think we all understand what I am talking about, don't we?

[Uncomfortable pause]

T2: The topics included in textbooks and even in certification exams like those offered by Cambridge are so silly that it is difficult to feel motivated to talk about them, which should be the objective.

T3: You are right! If topics were more charged and you had to personally engage with them, it would be easier to have more substantial opinions!

5. Discussion

The research questions that guided the present study are: RQ1. What are trainees' views about the use of films in EFL, and RQ2. Do these views change as a result of trainees analysing a cinema-based lesson plan?

The results showed agreement rates were positive at both test times, although significantly higher in statistical terms and closer to full agreement after students had analysed the lesson plan. The academic production that thus far has examined the advantages of film-based EFL as perceived by students, teachers, or trainees has also revealed positive results. Specifically, favourable views were mostly reported for the enhancement of learners' linguistic competence (Aksu-Ataç & Günay-Köprülü, 2018; Albiladi et al, 2018; Anas & Zakaria, 2019; Chapple & Curtis, 2000; Chiu, 2012; Christopley, 2017; Ismaili, 2013; Kabooha, 2016; Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki, 2015; Shahani et al., 2014; Tuncay, 2014); followed by the motivational aspects of cinema, particularly, the depiction of authentic language and relevant topics (Albiladi et al., 2018; Anas & Zakaria, 2019; Chapple & Curtis, 2000; Tuncay, 2014); and the development of intercultural awareness (Albiladi et al., 2018; Argynbayev et al., 2014; Chao, 2013; Tuncay, 2014).

The methodological awareness acquired through the analysis of the lesson plan (using short excerpts of the film, narrating the rest of the plot, and working "in" and "from" the film) seems to be an important factor. It explains the levelling out in the post-intervention stage regarding the perception of the three dimensions under study and the fact that the agreement rate for the three dimensions in the post-intervention stage was closer to full agreement. The trainees reported that this heightened methodological awareness broadened their perceptions on how cinema could be used in EFL: as a tool to improve input-based skills and knowledge of the L2 culture, but also encompassing output-based skills and a wide array of motivational advantages. On the other hand, methodological awareness was also considered instrumental in deactivating the problems they had previously identified (the length of a film, the complex authentic nature of its language, or the shortage of cinema-based materials). On the whole, it seems that any doubts about the usefulness of cinema for EFL reported in the pre-intervention stage were assuaged by the clear emergence of methodological awareness following the analysis of the cinema-based lesson plan.

To date, existing research in the field had never reported participants' methodological insights, not even in the empirical studies which tapped into teachers' perceptions (Aksu-Ataç & Günay-Köprülü, 2018; Ismaili, 2013; Kabooha, 2016; Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki, 2015; Sánchez-Auñón & Férez-Mora, 2021). This seems to be because most of this research did not explore change in participants' perceptions as it focused on the epistemological exploration of film-based EFL through one-shot designs. Although the latter is obviously a fundamental endeavour, the clear practical methodological guidelines on this method are equally important since such cues might help EFL teachers alleviate the difficulties which lead them to implement cinema as a time filler instead of a resource of its own right (Albiladi et al., 2018; Hobbs, 2006). As argued by Martínez Agudo (2017) and Peacock (2009), EFL teacher training programmes should prioritise the generation of methodological awareness since the innovative development of teaching/learning processes depends upon it. Unfortunately, it seems this aspect does not receive enough attention in these programmes, and trainees highlighted it as an important deficiency (Martínez Agudo, 2017; Peacock, 2009). Teachers have also emphasized the absence of specific training on the exploitation of film for EFL (Anas & Zakaria, 2019; Chapple & Curtis, 2000), which students have noticed as well (Kabooha, 2016; Shahani et al., 2014; Tuncay, 2014; Yue, 2019).

It is important to note that these trainees associated their enhanced methodological awareness with seeing a practical application of the advantages of cinema-based EFL, as presented in the lesson plan they had to analyse. In doing so, they are acknowledging a well-known principle of teacher training: the analysis of practical models fosters

willingness to learn, which, in turn, results in more solid learning processes (Mosley Wetzel et al., 2017). This led us to revise the lesson plans included in previous studies. As emphasized earlier, it seems existing scholarship had put up a limited application of the "in practice" factor. Aksu-Ataç & Günay-Köprülü (2018), Albiladi et al. (2018), and Anas and Zakaria (2019) tapped into English instructors' and students' perceptions on the use of cinema only in the abstract since no pedagogical intervention was included. In contrast, Argynbayev et al. (2014), Chao (2013), Chiu (2012), Kabooha (2016), Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki (2015), Shahani et al. (2014), and Tuncay (2014) explored the participants' views after implementing a cinema-based lesson. However, they looked into a limited range of advantages and failed to provide the lesson plan used. This research gap (and weakness) in the field is worth attending to in future studies since the absence or very limited presence of lesson plans undermines the solidity of reported data in that it is unclear what the pedagogical intervention consisted of.

The changes reported in the participants' perceptions as regards the use of films in EFL highlight other pertinent areas which to date have also remained uninformed or under-informed in the field: socio-critical approaches to EFL and trainees' professional voice.

5.1. Trainees' views of EFL evolve from a traditional language-based to a more socio-critical understanding

Following the analysis of the lesson plan, film-based EFL was perceived as almost equally useful for enhancing linguistic, intercultural, and motivational dimensions. This seems to indicate that trainees' perceptions evolved from considering film as a tool which mainly generated linguistic and intercultural competences to a platform for a much broader range of contents related to a socio-critical agenda, including the exploration of one's own emotions and those of others, social justice, or creativity and critical thinking. English teachers' and students' thoughts on the impact of films as regards these last four contents have been minimally explored to date, albeit with very positive results: Anas and Zakaria (2019) tapped into social justice; and Anas and Zakaria (2019), Chapple and Curtis (2000), and Tuncay (2014) delved into creative and critical thinking skills. This shows that surveyed trainees were willing to understand EFL beyond linguistic instrumentality. In turn, their interest in the socio-critical agenda situated them in line with principles of critical applied linguistics. This approach purports FLT should not only aim at addressing the correct use of an abstract linguistic system but, instead, should be understood as social practice and target personal growth, critical awareness, self-empowerment, and engagement with social justice, which communication should activate (Crookes, 2021; Fairclough, 2015; Pennycook, 2014).

Lately, this socio-critical approach to EFL has been gaining momentum on the grounds that FL classrooms should connect "world and word" indissolubly (Safari & Rashidi, 2015). One of the most common lines along which this socio-critical approach to FL has materialized, and also the one adopted by the present study, has involved the design of and the instruction with lesson plans addressing topics of social justice. These socio-critically oriented lesson plans, towards which learners showed manifestly positive views, have tended to explore forms of alterity, whether based on gender (Hayik, 2015), sexual orientation (Férez Mora et al., 2022), race (Curtis & Romney, 2006), or social class (Vandrick, 2010). Given its focus on bullying, a practice which stems from the basic failure to accept alterity (Rivers, 2011), the present study fully connects with this socio-critical orientation to EFL, thus testifying to an increasing research interest in moving FL beyond a merely linguistic understanding.

5.2. Emergence of trainees' professional voice

In the open questions, and especially in the focus groups, these trainees' own voices as future teachers started emerging. They began to reflect about what EFL education is and should be, what sort of educators they want to become, what problems they might face as teachers and how they would address such problems. Some of the trainees did not even hesitate to critically approach current educational practices. The clearest instance of this was some trainees' conviction that they would include issues of social justice into their lessons, no matter the concern about parental authorisation.

As with most of the findings thus far defined, the emergence of trainees' professional voices had not been reported before in the field of film-based EFL. However, this is one of the most important objectives of teacher training programmes because, as held by Furlong and Maynard (2012), the consolidation of a voice of one's own is likely to determine whether pre-service teachers are ready to start teaching.

6. Conclusions

This study revealed that, before the pedagogical intervention, trainees had a limited understanding of the potential of cinema for EFL since they tended to conceive this textual modality as useful mostly for eliciting the linguistic and intercultural competences. However, following the analysis of a film-based lesson plan, trainees broadened their understanding, considering film useful not only for students' linguistic and intercultural enhancement but also for fostering their autonomy as thinkers and their awareness of issues of social justice — among other motivational variables. This amplification of trainees' views seemed to stem from the deactivation of perceived problems of the cinema-based approach and the rise of methodological awareness. As confirmed by the participants, both operations emerged from their first-

hand experience of the cinema-based lesson plan as it allowed them to develop a more holistic, critical, and personalised conception of EFL. Considering Lamie's assertion (2004) that instructors tend to apply new teaching strategies once they notice their positive impact, these future teachers are likely to introduce into their own practice everything they have learnt during this research on the use of film. Indeed, the critical understanding of EFL they have developed runs counter to traditional approaches which look at EFL as a mere instrumental endeavour.

The pedagogical implications of the present study seem to unfold from a specific insight: if the surveyed trainees' regard for cinema-based EFL was high, then why are films not a popular resource in the EFL class? Textbook-centred instructional practice might be one of the reasons as textbooks commonly fail to include cinema-based materials (Boufahja, 2019; Tajeddin & Teimournezhad, 2015). Another relevant reason seems to be the paucity of empirical research as EFL practitioners might feel the inclusion of cinema-based EFL does not sit at sound foundations. Likewise, the dearth of practice-oriented examples and guidelines, especially when it comes to designing lesson plans and not merely one-off activities, might hinder the incorporation of films into instructional practice. The lack of teacher training specifically aimed at designing cinema-based lesson plans also emerges as a significant factor because, without such training, teachers are likely to exclude film from their English lessons (or to use it unsuitably, as reported before).

The present study is not without its limitations. A larger sample of trainees including other Spanish and international universities would have contributed to more generalizable findings. Although the experimental design employed rendered positive results, implementing a longer lesson plan might have led to more fine-grained results as we could have undertaken a more nuanced exploitation of the advantages of film-based EFL. Also, conducting a delayed post-test questionnaire might have revealed the extent to which trainees' favourable opinions lasted over time, thus indicating the internalization of positive change. In addition to the research lines which unfold from the previously-mentioned limitations, other lines of enquiry stemming from the present study include: undertaking further studies with a training focus which incorporates comprehensive practical applications of the film-based approach; exploring the opinions of both experienced and novel EFL instructors on this textual modality and comparing them with that of English learners; analysing students' attitudes towards the motivational aspects of cinema, a dimension commonly left aside, as revealed by this study; and carrying out contrastive research on EFL learners' linguistic, inter/cultural, and motivational gains as a result of film-based instruction.

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Appendix 1. Lesson plan

Objectives: Students will be able to describe actions; students will be able to participate in a debate on bullying; students will be able to reflect on bullying; students will be able to establish and play roles; students will be able to create a questionnaire; students will be able to describe places; students will be able to do a group presentation; students will be able to promote anti-bullying actions.

Linguistic contents: When clauses, modal verbs, question formation, adjectives of emotions, vocabulary to make descriptions, vocabulary to express and justify opinions, linkers, report-writing conventions.

Intercultural and socio-critical contents: Bullying, social isolation, critical thinking, North American education system, appreciation of beauty, fantasy, others' and one's own emotions.

Activities for "Bridge to Terabithia"

1. Students are prompted to make hypotheses about the plot of the film from its cover.

2. To illustrate the topic of the film, students are shown short clips from the first 20 minutes. They have to identify the disagreeable actions portrayed, why they are disagreeable and what is common to all the depicted situations. It is expected that students identify the clips that show bullying scenes occurring at a school in the United States. Then, the class has to engage in a debate to decide why bullying happens in general.

3. The teacher provides a brief summary of the main characters and main events for the first half an hour of the film.

4. Drawing on the bullying scenes presented before, students have to establish the roles of the different people involved in the scene (bully, victim or bystander) and define their emotional states through the technique "flow of feelings."

5. The teacher informs the class about a key to prevent bullying, the three Rs: refuse to be a bully bystander, recognise bullying, report bullying.

6. The teacher asks students in groups to come up with a list of typical actions that can be related to bullying and they have gone through or have seen in class and/ or school. In a whole-class activity, they all decide which items must be included in a questionnaire (one enquiring about students as victims and the other enquiring about students as bullies). The items of the questionnaires have to be formulated as questions.

7. The teacher gathers all the answers anonymously and computes data. They provide the data to the students, who, in groups, have to write a report about the bullying climate in class.

8. Excerpts from the fantastic events in the forest are projected. In pairs, students are asked to answer the following questions: "What is Terabithia?" "Why do Lesley and Jess go there?" "Do Lesley and Jess have a safe relationship with fantasy?" "Can you connect Terabithia with yourself?" "Have you ever created a fantasy world where to take refuge when things are not going well in life?"

9. As a final task, students are asked to prepare group presentations to inform the head of the school in *Bridge to Terabithia* of a plan to stop bullying in the school, so that Lesley and Jess can put their own private bridge to Terabithia to an end.

Appendix 2. Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS IN THE MDTT (ENGLISH) CONCERNING THE USE OF CINEMA AS A TOOL FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE*

This questionnaire is aimed at exploring your views on the use of cinema as a tool for the teaching of English as a foreign language. There is not any right or wrong answer. Remember to answer **all the questions** and to select the corresponding options quicky, based on your immediate reactions to the statements. Indicate your level of agreement with each statement according to the following scale:

Stronly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4

This is an **anonymous** questionnaire, and all the information provided will be handled **confidentially**. If you are interested in knowing the results obtained, please, contact Professor... from the Department..., University of...

I IDENTIFICATION DATA

IDENTIFIER: _____ (six numbers from your birth date, e.g., 010100 if you were born on the 1st January 2000) to be able to match your questionnaire with subsequent data sets.

QUALIFICATION: Degree [ ] Master's degree [ ] in _____

YEAR: 1º [ ]   2º [ ]   3º [ ]   4º [ ]

SEX: Male [ ]   Female [ ]   Other [ ]   **AGE**: _____

PRIOR TEACHING EXPERIENCE (not as a private teacher): Yes [ ]   No [ ]

IF SO, PLEASE, SPECIFY: Educational level: _____(e.g., Primary Education).

Time:_____ months / years (select).

ANSWER THE QUESTIONNAIRE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT HOW YOU THINK CINEMA CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

(1) Strongly disagree (2) Disagree (3) Agree (4) Strongly agree				
Cinema is a useful resource for the teaching of English as a foreign language because				
1. it helps improve students' writing skills	1	2	3	4
2. it helps improve students' speaking skills	1	2	3	4
3. it helps improve students' reading skills	1	2	3	4
4. it helps improve students' listening skills	1	2	3	4
5. it helps improve students' lexical knowledge	1	2	3	4
6. it helps improve students' grammatical knowledge	1	2	3	4
7. it helps improve students' pronunciation	1	2	3	4
8. it helps improve students' knowledge of the L2 culture	1	2	3	4
9. it helps improve students' knowledge of their own (L1) culture	1	2	3	4
10. it allows students to express their own opinions and feelings	1	2	3	4
11. it allows students to understand other people's emotions and feelings	1	2	3	4
12. it allows for the promotion of social justice	1	2	3	4
13. it allows for the development of students' higher order thinking skills	1	2	3	4
14. it elicits aesthetic pleasure	1	2	3	4
15. it is authentic material	1	2	3	4
16. it tends to deal with nontrivial topics	1	2	3	4
17. it is audio-visual material	1	2	3	4

PLEASE, CHECK YOU HAVE ANSWERED ALL THE QUESTIONS

_____

*Adapted from Férez Mora et al. (2020).